

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS COMMISSION

# REPORT OF THE STUDY TEAM

A CHINERY OF THE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AND ITS PROCEDURES OF WORK

PART II  
(Vol. I)

FEBRUARY 1968

~~This report~~ Team appointed  
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The report of the Commission on the same  
subject is a separate document.

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ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS COMMISSION



# REPORT

## OF THE STUDY TEAM

M A C H I N E R Y O F T H E  
G O V E R N M E N T O F I N D I A  
A N D I T S P R O C E D U R E S O F W O R K

PART II  
(Vol. I)

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FEBRUARY 1968

**STUDY TEAM ON MACHINERY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND ITS PROCEDURES OF WORK**

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Government of India,  
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*Sardar Patel Bhavan,  
New Delhi.*

February 9, 1968.

DEAR SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA,

I have pleasure in sending herewith the final report of the study team on the machinery of the Government of India and its procedures of work. It has taken us longer to complete our task than we had originally expected. This is mainly because we were anxious to make the report as complete and thorough as possible. Some of our recommendations fall in the area already covered by the Commission's report on finance, accounts and audit. We had given thought to these matters before the Commission made its report and felt that the result of our thinking should find a place in this report.

I should like to say that no praise is too high for the assistance given to us by the secretariat of the team. Detailed acknowledgements mentioning the names of those who helped us will be found at the appropriate place in our report. But I take this opportunity of placing on record our appreciation of the outstanding contribution made by the member-secretary of our team, Shri N. K. Mukarji. Not only has he organised efficiently the work of the team despite the heavy preoccupations of the day to day work of the Department of Administrative Reforms, but he has also borne a great deal of the responsibility for the preparation of the various working papers and the drafting of the team's report.

Yours sincerely,

C. D. DESHMUKH

SHRI K. HANUMANTHAIYA,  
*Chairman,  
Administrative Reforms Commission.*

## FOREWORD

This is the second and final report of the study team appointed by the Administrative Reforms Commission to examine the machinery of the Government of India and its procedures of work.

The draft of the first report, as discussed and approved by the team, was given to the Chairman, Shri S. G. Barve, who wished to go through it personally and give it finishing touches. He was in the midst of this task in March 1967 when the tragic event occurred that took him away. We consider it our foremost duty to pay homage to the memory of a very distinguished gentleman, who guided the work of this team during the first part of its labours with great ability and charm. His sudden and unexpected passing away was a personal loss to each one of those who had the privilege of working under his leadership in this venture.

Shri K. C. Pant joined the Government of India as a Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance in March 1967 and decided consequently that he could not carry on as a member of the team.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh accepted the Chairmanship of the team in March, 1967.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

1.1 The study team was required to examine the machinery of the Government of India and its procedures of work. Some of the issues to be examined under this head were listed in the schedule to the resolution setting up the Administrative Reforms Commission as below.

- (i) The grouping of subjects in departments.
- (ii) The role of the Cabinet Secretariat.
- (iii) Problems of inter-ministry co-ordination.
- (iv) Staffing patterns and methods of work within ministries and departments.
- (v) Relationship between ministries and their attached and subordinate offices.

A limited view of our assignment could have been that we were to examine problems of machinery and procedures with particular reference to these five points. But a wider interpretation was possible. The terms of reference of the Commission required that consideration should be given to the need for ensuring the highest standards of efficiency and integrity in the public services and for making public administration a fit instrument for carrying out the social and economic policies of the government. Another objective was to make the administration responsive to the people. We felt that the scope of our assignment should be viewed in this wider setting.

1.2 Another consideration influenced our not taking a narrow view. This was that ours was the only study team with terms of reference encompassing the whole field of functioning of the Central Government, other study teams appointed by the Commission having been given specified functional or sectoral charges. We inferred from this that it was for us to develop a coherent picture of machinery and procedures in a reorganised situation and that, in this process, it would not be inappropriate for us to traverse ground allotted to functional or sectoral study teams, if that was necessary to our task. Thus, for instance, the problems of personnel administration are entrusted to three other study teams, but we could not for that reason leave the subject untouched, as structures cannot be examined in isolation from personnel. Again, questions relating to public enterprises have been looked into by a study team specifically formed for this purpose, but we still felt it necessary to examine how best the work relating to such enterprises should be handled at the level of the government. We also felt entitled to explore, if we considered this to be of relevance to our assignment, fields not specifically allotted



to any study team and therefore of a residual character. We thus found ourselves examining matters ranging from the relationship between Parliament, Government and the Administration to the problems of office staff loitering during working hours in canteens and elsewhere. If parts of our report appear to go beyond what is strictly covered by machinery and procedures, this is the explanation.

1.3 We submitted a first report in March 1967 because we thought that our thinking about how subjects should be grouped into ministries and departments might be of use at the time the new Government was to be formed after the last general election. But it was decided not to hold a "lame duck" session of the previous Parliament and to constitute the new government earlier than was originally envisaged. This made it practically impossible for the Commission to consider our report and make its views available on the layout of ministries in time for them to be of use. Possibly because of this our report was not taken up for consideration at that time. It has remained unconsidered since then, we suppose, because the matter lost the pressing urgency it had in March. Our present report suffers, as a result, from the handicap that we do not know whether the Commission is in agreement with our general approach as presented in the earlier report or not. We have gone ahead on the assumption that the framework we suggested there will be found broadly acceptable. But this is not to say that the recommendations of this report necessarily hang on the acceptance of those of the earlier report.

1.4 Three broad tasks were identified in our first report as essential to an examination of the machinery of the Government of India and its procedures of work:

- (a) remodelling the layout of ministries and departments by regrouping subjects;
- (b) reviewing the machinery and procedures for handling business above the level of individual ministries; and
- (c) reviewing intra-ministry structures and procedures, and other connected matters.

The first two were dealt with in the earlier report. It was now for us to address ourselves to the third. But when we came to doing so we found it necessary to go beyond reviewing intra-ministry structures and procedures and to cover a wider ground consistent with the broad scope we adopted for our assignment as explained earlier.

1.5 It was clear to us from the beginning that there would have to be a selective approach in our work. In this respect this second stage of our labours is qualitatively different to the first, where the nature of tasks looked into was such that the question of selectivity did not arise. It does arise in the present stage because it is impossible for any team to go comprehensively into every aspect

of the problems of machinery and procedures in a vast organisation like the Government of India. Some of the principles that we kept in mind for selecting areas for study were as below.

- (a) Points to be taken up should be inherently and fundamentally important.
- (b) Points of overall or general importance should receive priority as compared with points of localised importance.
- (c) The attempt should be to cover points which are beyond the reach of reform effort through the normal standing organisation of the Government of India.
- (d) The sequential factor should be borne in mind, *i.e.*, points requiring first action should be taken up first so that foundational attention is given to reconstructing administration.
- (e) At the same time, there should be an attempt to make an impact at visible points, even though this may not be foundational from the sequential point of view.

What we have selected applying these principles represents our own judgment about what is important. Our selection could be criticised as leaving many important matters out, but that would be the case for any selection. The important thing to recognise is that selective action in this field is not only inevitable but also in a sense, desirable as ensuring concentrated attention at key points.

1.6 Before entering the field of intra-ministry structures and procedures, we have first examined the relationship between Parliament, Government and the Administration, because that is what sets the stage for the administrative process. We have then discussed questions of structure and methods in a generalised way with reference to a possible reorganisation at the headquarters of non-staff ministries. Our discussion here is in two chapters, one dealing with the macro-problem of overall reorganisation of ministries and the other with the micro-problem of reorganisation at the level of a typical operating wing. There is a short chapter on the special problems of structures and methods in staff ministries. Since what we have said about structures is closely connected with the system of personnel management in the Government of India, we have next dealt with the problem of reform in personnel administration. This is followed by another problem connected with reorganisation, namely the delegation of authority and powers to appropriate levels and the fixation of responsibility at those levels. Then we have dealt with public relations, the need for an adequate policy in this area and the machinery required for handling the subject. In the last chapter, we have examined the important question of a machinery for 'administration' and inspection; the word 'administration' has been used in that chapter to cover items like enforcement of discipline in the matter of attendance, prevention of loitering in canteens and elsewhere, caretaking and control over accommodation and office layout.

1.7 In our earlier report (para 3.3.5), we referred to the problem of locating individual public sector enterprises as amongst different ministries and indicated that we might offer views on the subject in the present report. We have not had the time to examine the problem in sufficient detail and consequently have no recommendation to make in this area.

1.8 It is necessary to mention that ours is not an academic exercise aimed at producing broad principles and general counsels of wisdom and nothing more. Nor is it a detailed reorganisational exercise. We saw our task as lying midway between these extremes. Our recommendations therefore constitute what we consider to be a practical set of reform measures which could provide a basis for a detailed reorganisation to be undertaken by the government. What we have to say should consequently be viewed in this light. Down-to-earth administrators might find an excess of generalised statements in our report and too little of detailed working out of the proposals that we have made. Academically minded readers might, on the other hand, find too little of principles and philosophy and too great an involvement in detail.

1.9 What the above leads to is that if the concepts put forward in this report are found to be acceptable, a good deal of follow-up work will need to be done within the government itself. This underlines the importance of setting up an adequate machinery in the government for the processing and implementation of such reform measures as are suggested by the Administrative Reforms Commission. While this report does concern itself, as it must, with a proper organisation for the Department of Administrative Reforms for its effective functioning and also how some of the more important of our recommendations should be phased and implemented, it does not deal with what should be an appropriate machinery for implementing the Commission's reports on various aspects of public administration other than those remitted to us, because this was not considered as falling legitimately within the scope of our work. We would suggest, however, that the Commission may consider making appropriate recommendations on this point to the Government.

## CHAPTER II

### PARLIAMENT, GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1 In a well ordered parliamentary democracy there is a place and role for the Parliament, for the Government and for the Administration. The correct functioning of each of these and the right inter-relationship between them are essential prerequisites to desirable standards of efficiency in public administration. No amount of reform measures internal to the administration is likely to produce satisfactory enough results unless it is accompanied, or perhaps preceded, by a review of the working of the two other components of the total arrangement, namely Parliament and Government, and their impact on public administration. This chapter discusses the respective roles of the three institutions and suggests a few measures to strengthen the whole system. Some of the measures may seem to go beyond the area of administrative reform as such, and some may even be considered measures of parliamentary rather than administrative reform. But they have a vital bearing on the healthy functioning of the public administration and cannot therefore be left out.

#### *Roles of Parliament, Government and Administration*

2.2 The roles meant to be played by Parliament, Government and the Administration in the scheme of governance of the country are set out in the Constitution.

*Parliament* consists of the President and the two Houses, Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha [Art. 79]. It can make laws in a defined area [Art. 246]; the powers of the two Houses are otherwise the same as those of the House of Commons in the U.K. [Art. 105(3)]. Of the two Houses the Lok Sabha has a special significance. It is that which has the power to assent or refuse to assent to the budget demands of the Government [Art. 113(2)]. The crucial provision which links Parliament with Government is that the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha [Art. 75(3)].

The executive power of the Union vests in the President [Art. 53(1)], aided and advised by a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head [Art. 74(1)]. This is what constitutes the *Government*. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President and the other ministers are then appointed on his advice, which gives him a pre-eminent position in relation to his colleagues [Art. 75(1)]. The business of Government is allocated amongst ministers by rules made by the President [Art. 77(3)]. Each minister thus has a portfolio, and is required to take an oath or affirmation that he will

faithfully and conscientiously discharge his duties as a minister in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

Presidential power is exercised through officers subordinate to him [Art. 53(1)], who function in accordance with the rules made by the President for the more convenient transaction of business [Art. 77(3)]. Civil servants hold office during the pleasure of the President [Art. 310], but cannot be dismissed without inquiry [Art. 311] and, except where jurisdiction has been excluded by regulation, prior consultation with the Union Public Service Commission [Art. 320]. The latter is a constitutional body created specifically and entrusted with important functions relating to the civil services for ensuring quality and giving a sense of security to the services. The civil servants as a group constitute, the *Administration*.

2.3 In addition to what is laid down in the Constitution, several practices and conventions have been established over the years, and are still developing. These, together with the Constitutional provisions, set the framework within which the administrative process takes place. It consequently becomes important to see whether the process of development of practices and conventions, which goes on continuously, can be steered in such a way as to result in the best possible functioning of the administrative machine.

2.4 The more important of the practices and conventions that have come into existence are listed below.

- Executive power, which vests constitutionally in the President is in fact exercised by the Council of Ministers.
- The Prime Minister enjoys a powerful position in the administrative set up because of his position as the head of the Council of Ministers. Certainly, the civil services regard him as their effective head.
- The principle of collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers is reflected in the convention that individual ministers give deference to Cabinet decisions and, in public at least, even to the decisions of their colleagues in their departmental functioning.
- Ideas of collective responsibility notwithstanding individual ministers take responsibility for their portfolios, both in the sense of explaining facts and answering questions in Parliament as also in a wider sense. There have been instances of ministers resigning because of parliamentary criticism or disapproval of their departmental functioning. Occasionally, ministers have also had to accept changes in portfolios for similar reasons.
- As a corollary, ministers have almost full powers in the management of their departments. They lay down policy and

oversee implementation. Civil servants assist in policy-making, and subsequently implement the policy that is actually formulated. Ministers have an important voice in the selection of their secretaries, although the final decision is that of the Prime Minister. There is close rapport and mutual trust between ministers and civil servants. Ministers defend *bona fide* decisions and actions of their civil servants. The latter try their best to implement the minister's policies faithfully, even when individual decisions of the minister are contrary to the advice tendered by them.

- Civil servants are non-political, and loyal to the government in power. Their loyalty extends, at least in theory, to the Government of India as a whole going beyond the department in which, and the minister under whom, they serve. Thus all secretaries of ministries are designated secretaries to the Government of India.
- Civil servants are faceless and nameless in Parliament.
- Parliament's right to review governmental action is fully respected, and information is freely given to members, both in reply to questions and *suo moto* in the shape of departmental reports circulated to members. In a few areas Parliament works through committees which report to Parliament. Apart from the two traditionally powerful committees—the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee—and the ones not usually in the limelight like those on assurances, subordinate legislation and petitions, there is a relatively new Committee on Public Undertakings. Civil servants appear before such committees to give evidence and explain departmental points of view. Ministers normally do not.

2.5 The picture that emerges is one in which each of the three great constitutional institutions—Parliament, Government and the Administration—have important and honoured roles. Parliament is the sovereign body which controls the functioning of governments. In the discharge of this duty, it keeps governmental action, or the lack of it, under continuous review, with the Administration remaining in the background. Government is the seat of executive power and stands mid-way between Parliament and the Administration, directing the latter and being itself supervised by the former. Although situated at the tail-end of the sequence, the Administration is important as an institution because it is the tool of the whole process of governance. Its contact is mainly with the Government which gives it policy to implement and broadly supervises its doings. It has little to do directly with Parliament, but is influenced greatly by what happens there.

2.6 Although the practices and conventions listed above have in a large measure made for orderly governance of the country,

it is not as if they are adequate in themselves or there have been no deviations causing stresses and strains in the working of the system. Three kinds of shortcomings can be noted. Firstly, some of the conventions are not always observed faithfully. A prominent example is the discussion in Parliament in one or two recent cases of the conduct of individual civil servants contrary to the "faceless, nameless" convention. Secondly, some practices are taken too far. For instance, the portfolio system has often led to ministers becoming a prey to departmental attitudes. Thirdly, some practices would seem to require being refined and developed further in order to get the maximum advantage from them. Departmental reports prepared for the use of Members of Parliament, for example, could be a great deal more informative than at present.

2.7 We consider that a concerted attempt to identify and remove the major shortcomings could help to make the whole system more efficient and, as an important part of this outcome, produce greater efficiency in the Administration also. It is from this angle that the practices and conventions referred to in para 2.4 are discussed below.

#### *The Prime Minister's position*

2.8 In theory the Prime Minister is nothing more than first among equals; but in practice he has a powerful position, both in respect of his colleagues in the Government as well as in relation to civil servants. This should be recognised as desirable for the purpose of ensuring effective government. The complexities of modern administration and the need for co-ordinated action covering many fields have led to powerful positions for prime ministers of parliamentary democracies all over the world. Proposals have already been made in our first report to strengthen the Prime Minister's hands administratively.

2.9 If the Prime Minister is politically weak, the remedy lies in the political sphere and the issue does not concern this report. But subject to this, here are a few suggestions which might, by confirming the position which the Prime Minister has come to occupy, make in the long run for better administration.

- (1) As the head of the Government, the Prime Minister carries a special responsibility in regard to the efficiency and good health of the administrative machinery. We stressed this in our earlier report and take this opportunity to re-emphasise the point. Some of the suggestions our first report made in regard to the Prime Minister's relationship with the Administration are listed below.

- Institutional support to enable the Prime Minister to keep a watchful eye on the efficiency of the Administration and to promote administrative reform where necessary should

be provided by allocating the Department of Administrative Reforms to his charge. This should be accompanied by measures to strengthen the department functionally and organisationally. (Additional proposals on this last point are contained at the appropriate place in this report also).

- The Prime Minister's association with the work of making key appointments should continue and a convention should be developed under which the Cabinet Secretary (who is after all the Prime Minister's main secretary) should be regarded as a kind of secretary-general of the proposed Department of Personnel without being styled so.
- The Prime Minister should meet the secretaries and heads of departments individually by rotation at least once in two months.

We would reiterate all these suggestions. It is particularly important that the Prime Minister should find the time to get to know senior civil servants. This would establish a personal rapport from which the Administration cannot but benefit. It may also start a process of bridging the gulf that has in some shape or the other existed between the political executive and the civil servant.

- (2) The Prime Minister carries an equally major responsibility in regard to ensuring a high level of performance on the part of his colleagues and his party in Parliament. The political consequences of poor performance are outside the scope of this study. But it is important to recognise that there are administrative consequences as well. However high-minded civil servants may be, they cannot but be affected by the Government's showing in Parliament. Good performance there, particularly in the matter of fair presentation and defence of the Administration's actions, can be expected to bring out the best in civil servants. Poor performance can produce attitudes of discouragement amongst them which must necessarily lead to unenthusiastic implementation of governmental policies. Our earlier report suggested that the Prime Minister should be leader of the House and should handle the subject of parliamentary affairs. We would like to reaffirm this view. As was stated in our earlier report, through the handling of two subjects (parliamentary affairs and administrative reforms), "the Prime Minister would have in his hands the reins of control over the political and the administrative processes, which after all meet at his level. Good government is very largely a question of adjusting these two processes to fit in with each other so that both work towards a common end in a co-ordinated manner.



It is important that not only should the significance of this be recognised but that the Prime Minister should be enabled to act effectively in this field”.

- (3) As the head of the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister is entitled to expect whole-hearted support from those who accept positions in the Council. When ministers have reservations and do not hesitate to speak to civil servants and others outside the Council of Ministers against their chief, an impression is created of a Government divided internally. Apart from resulting in poor performance in Parliament, this causes confusion and uncertainty in the Administration. Decisions on major issues are delayed, and when taken are not implemented vigorously enough. It is an essential prerequisite of good public administration that there should be directions from a harmonious team at the level of Government, and the whole-hearted acceptance by ministers of the Prime Minister's leadership is the least that is necessary for this. Those ministers who find it difficult to accept this position should have the courage to leave the Government.

#### *Collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers*

2.10 The principle of collective responsibility operates through the Cabinet form of Government. On the whole, this has worked well and a whole range of salutary practices has grown in this area. Our earlier report contains a number of recommendations for improving arrangements, including proposals for Cabinet committees and for strengthening the Cabinet Secretariat. We would reiterate these recommendations for ensuring more integrated and effective working of the Cabinet. The following are important, though obvious, principles to be observed in a healthy functioning of collective responsibility:

- (1) The Cabinet should be agreed on fundamentals. This presupposes that all matters of fundamental importance should be discussed in the Cabinet and not settled by individual ministers.
- (2) A minister should not announce new policy of a basic character without the prior consent of the Cabinet. If he does, there should ordinarily be only two options; either the Cabinet should support him or he should resign.
- (3) A minister should not ordinarily speak or make announcements on matters not within his portfolio. If, however, circumstances compel him to do so, it should be his duty to brief himself about the correct position from the ministry concerned. It would help greatly if all ministries were to bring out well-articulated policy statements on important

topics. Whether these are published or not, they could assist ministers in keeping within the confines of accepted policy when speaking in public.

*Individual responsibility of ministers*

2.11 The Constitution speaks only of the collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers to Parliament. In practice, mainly because of the portfolio system but also because it is after all individuals who constitute the group, the doctrine of individual responsibility of ministers as an adjunct to collective responsibility has become well established. More importantly, though less obviously, the growth of this doctrine has had an immense impact on the Administration. On the positive side, it has proved a formidable restraint on the temptations which do sometimes beset ministers to abuse power, and has generally kept them and their departments on their toes. On the negative side, it has often tended to make ministers over-nervous about possible parliamentary reactions. This has frequently led to decisions on important issues being inordinately delayed or wrongly taken. The nervousness of ministers often gets transmitted to their departments and greatly affects the promptness and quality of the Administration. It is important to consider how the positive impact can be strengthened and systematised, and at the same time the negative kept in check.

2.12 Let us first consider the impact of the doctrine of individual responsibility on the minister. Where there are circumstances constituting a case of personal responsibility, such as allegations of corruption or abuse of power ascribable to the minister himself, there is no manner of doubt that it is the minister who is answerable and that it is he who should pay the penalty if the case is brought home to him. The difficulty here springs from the apparent lack of reliable arrangements for the investigation of such allegations. In view of the increasing number of instances of ministers having to face personal charges, Parliament may find it advantageous to develop suitable machinery to deal objectively with allegations of corruption or abuse of power. The proposal for the appointment of a Lokpal may provide an answer. An adequate machinery to probe charges against ministers would bring incalculable advantages as it would expose the unworthy minister, and by protecting the good one give the right lead to the Administration.

2.13 In cases other than those involving personal responsibility, there is considerable uncertainty. Volumes have been written on constructive responsibility, mostly in the British context, but the concept still remains imprecise. We have a case of one Railway Minister resigning immediately after a single train disaster, while another did not see any reason to do so even when there were three in a row. It is important that, despite the difficulty in bringing precision into this area, an attempt should be made to clarify the broad principles that should obtain. Theoretically, a minister is responsible

for all acts of commission and omission under his charge. But making him accountable, in the sense of having to suffer political penalties, for every single default in his ministry is neither fair nor realistic nor, what is most important, conducive to good administration. Constructive accountability of ministers is a salutary principle, because its absence would weaken Parliament's control over the executive. But unless its operation is kept within reasonable limits, it is likely to make ministers act as magnets pulling work upwards, thus defeating the purpose of delegation orders and indeed rendering significant administrative reform virtually impossible. What this means is that Parliament should take a balanced view and not expect too many things to be handled by ministers personally, lest erroneous decisions should be taken by those to whom in the interest of efficient administration the minister has devolved powers. What it has a right to expect is that ministers should take the trouble to formulate policy on all major problems within their portfolios, and see to its correct articulation. Furthermore, it has a right to expect that they should personally apply themselves to major matters other than the formulation of policy, such as planning the efficient implementation of policy, working out its implications, watching performance and dealing with prominent events that may arise in the process. They should also take responsibility for making arrangements for the efficient handling of work by others under them for reviewing the manner in which delegated powers are exercised. In this view of the matter we consider that ministers should ordinarily be held accountable only in three kinds of situations:

- (a) when they fail to formulate and articulate policy in respect of major problems in their portfolios, or when there are major weaknesses in the policy actually articulated;
- (b) when important issues (other than the formulation of policy) which ought, in the judgment of Parliament, to have received their personal attention, have been neglected or having received attention have been wrongly handled; and
- (c) when there is general or major mismanagement or maladministration in their departments.

Strict enforcement of accountability in these situations would help to make ministers more aware of their administrative responsibilities, and this could prove a powerful instrument for ensuring good administration in the departments under their charge.

2.14 The doctrine of individual responsibility can thus produce a highly favourable impact on the department of a minister. Apart from the indirect impact mentioned above, it is possible to think of a direct one based on arrangements for Parliament to review the working of individual departments on a continuing basis. The point is discussed later in this chapter.

2.15 The doctrine of individual responsibility often produces undesirable results and its capacity to do so is a function of the attitudes of those who become ministers. There is everything to be said for ministers having a wholesome respect for the reactions of Parliament to their deeds and words. But when wholesome respect gives way to a feeling almost of fright, the situation is unhealthy. Such feelings on the part of ministers seem to spring from an inordinate love of office, because of which they tend to become excessively, almost nervously, careful not to give offence in any way to Parliament or to their own party. Decisions are then taken, and sometimes frequently revised, not from the angle of what is good for the country but from the consideration of what will best satisfy powerfully placed individuals or groups in Parliament who might otherwise create difficulties for the minister. Sometimes it is difficult to reconcile conflicting views, and here decisions get held up for long periods. To some extent, all this is inherent in the democratic process. But we have no doubt in our minds that the quality of administration greatly improves where ministers are not afraid to take decisions according to what they consider right, and are prepared to face the consequences of their decisions. In the long run, it is such ministers who get the backing of Parliament and of public opinion. As a recommendation, all that can be suggested is that these considerations should be borne in mind by future Prime Ministers when selecting ministers.

#### *Ministers and their departments*

2.16 In any parliamentary democracy based on universal franchise, ministers are often not familiar with administrative processes and the role of the civil service is to fill the gap through its accumulated administrative experience. This is particularly so in India, since parliamentary democracy is still new to the country and since the general level of education, which is not yet as high as in the more advanced countries, gets inevitably reflected in the Parliament and perhaps also in the Government. The average minister in India, though equal to his counterparts elsewhere in political sagacity, may thus in many cases lack the modicum of administrative capability that an efficiently working system of parliamentary democracy requires and often provides where it is mature. This results in more being expected of the civil servant than might be the case in other countries with higher educational standards and a greater maturity of democratic experience amongst politicians. The civil service here, in other words, carries a specially onerous burden of responsibility. Consequently its top ranks, particularly secretaries of ministries, must be of the highest calibre; some thoughts on this subject are presented in a later chapter dealing with personnel matters.

2.17 Thus, because the administrative capability of ministers varies greatly, there is a considerable flexibility in the relationship between ministers and their secretaries. We consider that, while it is

best to leave things largely flexible and undefined, the following principles distilled from the best of current practices should govern this relationship:

- (1) It is the minister's privilege to have the last word in both policy-making and administration. But in practice he should work in close partnership with his secretary so far as policy-making goes, and should ordinarily leave administration almost entirely to the latter. This should not mean that the minister divests himself of responsibility for keeping himself informed about the progress of implementation or for promoting good administration generally in his ministry. In fact, these should be regarded as some of his prime functions, but to be discharged by encouraging his secretary to act rather than intervening himself.
- (2) It is the secretary's duty to tender advice to the minister when asked, and his right to do so whenever he considers it necessary. It is further his duty to implement the decisions of the minister as faithfully as possible and to keep him informed of the progress of implementation and of important happenings generally. Any tendency on the part of secretaries to shape their advice to fit in with what they think their ministers want is to be severely deprecated.
- (3) As far as possible, a minimum record should be kept of discussions on all important matters between the minister and the secretary. If there is a difference of opinion on an important issue, the secretary's view as well as the minister's decision should both be recorded.
- (4) Secretaries should keep in mind their responsibility as secretaries to the Government of India. Advice tendered by them to the ministers must consequently take account of the interests of the Government of India as a whole. If a minister passes an order which a secretary considers seriously prejudicial to the public interest from the point of view of the Government of India as a whole, he should have the right, and in fact it should be his duty, to bring the matter to the notice of the Cabinet Secretary. A cognate practice obtaining in the United Kingdom is worth mentioning here. A permanent secretary there, if forced to carry out orders in spite of his objection to them on financial grounds, can bring the situation to the notice of the Treasury and the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- (5) Giving ministers full latitude to select their secretaries is not desirable, since this may open the door to selection on the basis of caste and region rather than on merits. The ministers should have a say in the selection out of a panel prepared by the Cabinet Secretary and the proposed Department of Personnel, with the final decision resting with

the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister's decision should be accepted and worked by ministers in the right spirit.

- (6) If the secretaries panel has been carefully prepared and a selection made keeping the minister's wishes in mind, there should ordinarily be no question of a minister asking for a change of his secretary.
- (7) Nor should there be any question of a forum of appeal for a secretary in the event of differences cropping up with his minister. Our earlier report suggests that both the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Secretary should meet secretaries periodically. This procedure, if brought into being, should bring to light any possible trouble at the earliest stage, and it should be possible to smooth matters over at that very stage.

### *Civil servants and the Government*

2.18 The civil service is as important, as an institution, as the other two components of the scheme of governance, *viz.* Government and Parliament. But members of both the Government and Parliament tend sometimes to denigrate it. Several factors contribute towards this.

There is first the historical fact that the civil service was founded under alien dispensation. Politicians of the independence struggle-vintage find it difficult therefore to give it an honoured place. This factor is diminishing in importance as the year of independence recedes into history, and there is fresh blood coming into the ranks of politicians as well as the civil services themselves.

Secondly, there is the unfortunate fact that, in the early stages of our democratic development, the average minister or Member of Parliament is not always the equal of the average civil servant of the higher services in educational attainments and administrative experience. This creates complexes and unhealthy attitudes on both sides, the former becoming too aggressive or critical and the latter too complacent or even disrespectful. Fortunately such attitudes are the exception rather than the rule.

Thirdly, when things begin to go wrong the civil service becomes a convenient scapegoat for ministers and politicians to fasten blame upon. There is much that can be validly criticised in the civil service, but civil servants consider that that is true for the Government and Parliament also, with only this difference that they are debarred from voicing any criticism.

Fourthly, politicians and civil servants tend to move in different social groups, and there is little inter-mixing at the social level.

We consider that, while it is important that members of the Government and Parliament should at all times be treated by the civil service with respect and consideration, it is equally important that they should give to the civil service the same measure of respect and consideration that they expect for themselves. Political and civil service leadership should constantly work towards the upholding of this convention. Opportunities should be explored and developed which bring politicians and civil servants together more frequently, particularly at the social level.

2.19 By and large civil servants at the Centre have remained non-political, and have loyally carried out the programme of the Government in power. But the real test will come if and when there is the prospect of governments of different political colour coming into power. Given correct leadership within the Administration and the right attitudes amongst political leaders, the civil service will no doubt pass the test when the time comes. It is of basic importance that the civil service should remain non-political, though loyal to the Government in power.

2.20 A deplorable trend is the development of loyalties amongst some civil servants for individual ministers on regional or caste considerations. Such regional and caste networks of civil servants do damage to both the Government and the Administration. Considerations other than merit begin to come into policy-making and also into administrative decisions. It should be regarded as un-ethical for a minister to act in such a way as to encourage the formation of unhealthy loyalties round him, and equally unhealthy for civil servants to join any such groups. It should be a special responsibility of the Prime Minister, assisted by the Cabinet Secretary and the Department of Personnel, to spot out and deal effectively with such situations.

2.21 The civil service cannot expect to be treated with respect unless it shows a continuous concern for improving the quality and integrity of its members. As noted in our earlier report, there is much in the realm of personnel administration that has not received progressive enough attention. If a Department of Personnel comes into being it should involve service leadership in its thinking out of plans and policies for improving the calibre and performance of civil servants as also for inculcating a true spirit of service in them. There is a distressing fall in the standards, morale and *esprit de corps* of the civil service. Not all of this is ascribable to the negligence of the Government to problems of administration. The civil service itself has also been negligent. Here is another area in which civil service leadership needs to be animated into purposeful action.

#### *Civil servants and Parliament*

2.22 The convention that civil servants are faceless and nameless in Parliament is consistent with the politically neutral role of the civil service. On the whole the convention has been upheld. Still,

a sample survey has shown that there were 16 instances during the last ten years where officers were mentioned by name in Parliament for their acts. Recent pressures in the direction of names being mentioned seem to be due more to the legitimate desire of Parliament to probe individual transactions than to any wish to reverse the convention as such. If Parliament provides itself with a machinery for probing doubtful transactions, such as Lokpal, the pressure to mention names may be deflected. It needs to be stressed that recent cases in which names were mentioned and discussed in Parliament created considerable uneasiness amongst conscientious and honest servants. A good part of this was due to a feeling among them that the civil servants in question, not having been in a position to defend themselves, should have had more prompt and vigorous defence on the floor of the House from the ministers than they did in fact get. We would therefore make the following recommendations:

- (1) The convention that civil servants are faceless and nameless in Parliament should be scrupulously upheld.
- (2) Parliament's desire to probe individual cases should be channelled into a special machinery for investigating such matters, e.g., Lokpal.
- (3) It should be the duty of ministers to investigate individual cases brought to their notice by Members of Parliament, and if they are satisfied that *bona fides* exist, it should be their further duty to defend the civil servants concerned in Parliament, should the matter be raised there.

### *Parliament and Government*

2.23 The position Parliament is allotted in the Constitution and has in fact come to acquire during the years in its relationship with Government has the potential of becoming one of the most powerful influences for keeping a check on administrative efficiency and promoting administrative reform, provided as observed in para 2.14 there are efficient arrangements for making systematic reviews of the working of the various departments.

2.24 The first thing to observe in this connection is that, while governmental expenditure and the size of the administrative machinery have grown many times during the last two decades and are still growing, the time at the disposal of Parliament to review governmental activities has remained the same. As against 123 sittings in 1952 involving 880 hours of work, the Lok Sabha had 119 sittings in 1966 involving 810 hours. Parliament must therefore be highly, and increasingly, selective about the problems it seeks to discuss if it wishes to make a significant impact on the Administration. Political issues understandably take first priority in Parliament's programme, but conceding this the two problems Parliament must face are how to find time for administrative matters and how to make



the best use of this time. We would recommend that an inter-party parliamentary select committee on procedures should make a special study of the subject to enable Parliament to review its time-budget from this angle.

2.25 The next thing to note is that, at the moment, Parliament as such does not review the working of departments. The nearest it gets to it is the budget discussions on the demands of individual departments. But these are more in the nature of general policy debates than systematic reviews of departmental activity. And, in any case, a number of demands come to be guillotined, since ministries prominent in the public eye like Home, Food and Agriculture, External Affairs, etc. take up all available time, and consequently several departments escape even this kind of scrutiny. Scrutiny through the Estimates Committee is not a complete substitute for departmental reviews either, and in any case that is too restricted in that only a few departments are covered and even those not year by year.

2.26 Two proposals could be considered. The first is in regard to the annual reports of departments circulated to Members of Parliament during the budget session. Although there has been some improvement over the years in the format and contents of these reports, most of them are still far from satisfactory from the point of view of communicating meaningful information. The basic reason for this is that the departments themselves do not carry out systematic reviews and evaluation of their own working. If they did, they would know what facts to collect, how to make use of them in evaluatory tests and how to present the facts and the conclusions flowing out of them. It is the inadequacy of most departments in this vital area of review and evaluation that gets reflected in their annual reports. There is of course the additional reason that, while not quarrelling with Parliament's right of access to information, both ministers and civil servants tend to join hands in giving out as little information as possible on the theory that the chances of parliamentary trouble for them are directly proportional to the amount of information they divulge. There seems to have been surprisingly little comment in Parliament about the quality of annual reports. Increased parliamentary vigilance here would not only help to keep Members better informed of the real performance of departments, it would also make the departments themselves give better attention to the review and evaluation of their own work. The latter outcome would be a major contribution to improving standards of administration within departments. Perhaps the parliamentary committee suggested in para 2.24 could give consideration to prescribing, if that is possible, the minimum information that departments should supply in their reports and also to suggesting standard formats for groups of departments.

2.27 The second proposal that could be considered is the reform of the committee system of working. The two time-honoured committees, namely the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee, are held in high esteem by the Administration, and their work has a deterrent value in regard to the commission of irregularities and abuses. In spite of this, they do not create the kind of impact Parliament should be able to make on the administrative process. Successive Public Accounts Committees have done extremely useful work but the very worth of their work has produced a distortion by giving to audit a position out of proportion with its real place in the administrative process. Successive Estimates Committees have produced excellent reports, but they were unable to cover wide enough ground. The Committee on Public Undertakings, being responsible for a distinct area of administration, has been able to cover the problems of its field of functioning in a thorough and systematic manner, developing in the process an expertise in the matter of parliamentary review of public administration in this particular sector. This committee could thus be viewed as an effort to break new ground in the committee system of working. The point to consider is whether the time has come to have more sectoral committees.

2.28 The desirability or otherwise of parliamentary committees for the various departments is a well debated issue. If a departmental committee of Parliament is associated with the formulation of policy at the pre-natal stage and it scrutinises legislative proposals before they are formally moved in the House in addition to reviewing the working of the department and examining its budget, there is a danger that it might cut into ministerial responsibility and authority. Professor Laski said of the French committees that "they interfere to nauseation with the administration of the departments", waste endless time in investigation, limit initiative and weaken responsibility. Such committees could, because of their involvement in the work of individual departments, tend to become lobbyists for the activities of their particular departments and thus fail to take large, overall views. Having a parliamentary committee for each department may, for these reasons, involve more difficulties than advantages.

2.29 The problem was recently gone into in the United Kingdom by a group which studied the reform of Parliament. In a memorandum submitted to the Select Committee on Procedures (1964-65) the group recommended the setting up of specialist committees of the Estimates Committee to cover the whole field of government vote-borne operations and to report on the conduct of administration and other matters necessary for the understanding of policy questions. These committees were to be mainly concerned with administration and were to avoid matters of policy which were controversial between the major political parties. The reports were to be fully argued

and their evidence detailed, but it was not visualised that their deliberations would be reported or debated publicly. Initially five committees were envisaged as under :

- Scientific development
- The prevention and punishment of crime
- Machinery and national, regional and local government and administration
- Housing, building and land-use
- Social services

What the group visualised was that as these specialist committees come into existence gradually the Estimates Committee would devolve its relevant functions to them. The functions of the specialist committees were to include the examination of legislative proposals even before the drafting of bills, and also the scrutiny of how delegated legislation was being operated in practice. The group's memorandum started a process which culminated in two parliamentary committees being set up in early 1967, one on science and technology and another on agriculture. It is believed that other committees may be in the offing for subjects like home, education, and defence and foreign affairs.

2.30 In India, while departmental committees of Parliament should be ruled out, it is worth considering whether there should not be committees for broad sectors of administration. Such committees would avoid some of the dangers of department-wise committees. Because of their wider functions, they are less likely to interfere in the responsibilities of individual ministers or the operations of particular departments. Also, if the sectors allotted to them are broad enough, the larger interests of the country are more likely to be taken into account and departmental attitudes can be expected to be avoided. The following could be a possible grouping :

- Committee on social services  
(education, health and family planning, labour, social welfare, rehabilitation, information and broadcasting)
- Committee on economic administration  
(economic affairs, commerce, industries group of ministries, atomic energy)
- Committee on defence and foreign affairs  
(defence and external affairs)
- Committee on food and agriculture  
(irrigation and power, food and agriculture)
- Committee on transport  
(railways, transport, communications, aviation and tourism)

This would leave out a number of subjects like home, law, finance other than economic affairs, planning and so on; but it is not necessary for everything to be covered. And in any case a move in this direction

should be a gradual one. In fact, in the first instance, it may be sufficient to set up any two of the above mentioned committees. The functions of these committees should not include what has been referred to above as association with the formulation of policy at the pre-natal stage. They should function broadly in the same manner as the Committee on Public Undertakings, except that they should not take over the functions of the Public Accounts Committee. The existence of sectoral committees might, however, induce the Public Accounts Committee to restrict its scope of functioning in regard to such sectors. The sectoral committees may find it useful to treat the annual reports of the departments under their charge as the basic agenda paper for their deliberations. In any case it should be their endeavour to review the working of each of the departments entrusted to them every year and to submit reports to Parliament. It should be open to Parliament to debate any portion of the reports of these committees. Operating in this fashion, such committees could perform a constructive and helpful role in the efficient administration of the departments so covered. They would also provide opportunities to Members of Parliament to specialise in broad areas. In particular, they could serve as an outlet for utilising the latent talent in the ruling party with a desirable reduction, as a consequence, in the pressure on the Prime Minister for appointing a large number of junior ministers from the party.

2.31 The device of informal consultative committees for different departments has no relevance to the purpose under discussion, since they are not parliamentary committees and fulfil only the objective of establishing a liaison between the minister and Members of Parliament. They may or may not continue after sectoral committees on the above lines are set up.

2.32 In the past the convention has obtained that ministers do not appear before parliamentary committees. It is civil servants who appear and present facts as also the Government's stand in respect of them. A recent development in the United Kingdom is that ministers have appeared before three of the parliamentary committees, those on nationalised industries, science and technology and agriculture. It is interesting to observe that the three committees which have succeeded in attracting ministers are charged with sectoral responsibilities. Occasional appearances of ministers before at least the new sectoral committees suggested above would help to secure the maximum advantage out of the idea underlying such committees. It would also help to promote the concept of partnership between ministers and civil servants.

## CHAPTER III

### STRUCTURES AND METHODS : AN OVERALL VIEW

#### I

#### Some general considerations

3.1 The words "machinery" and "procedures" appearing in our terms of reference are generally understood to mean the same thing as "structures" and "methods" respectively. But we see a difference, which needs to be explained. "Machinery" is an all-embracing word, covering not only structures but also personnel. The word "procedures", again, has a wide meaning and includes the broad methods of handling work as well as the detailed procedures laid down in the various rules and manuals. Structures and methods thus connote a limited field within the compass of machinery and procedures.

3.2 Reorganising the present system cannot be limited to structures or methods or personnel, because it is all three put together that constitute the system. We have, therefore, taken a comprehensive view covering all the three aspects. But this has faced us with the presentational problem whether to deal with the whole subject at one place in order to preserve an integrated approach or to consider each aspect separately so as to do justice to the details. We have chosen the middle path of first dealing with structures and methods together, and then discussing related problems of personnel in a separate chapter. Even so, the treatment of structures and methods has had to make mention of personnel matters at different points, although the focus here is on the former.

3.3 Not counting the armed forces and internal security forces, the Government of India employs over 2½ million persons. If the employees of the Railways, P & T and Defence Ministry (civilian staff) are excluded, the figure is still as high as 3,70,000. While the number of ministries and departments today totals only 39, the number of offices functioning under them runs into thousands. It was beyond our capacity to examine the system throughout this huge complex; a selective approach therefore became inescapable. We decided to concentrate our efforts on problems of reorganisation at the headquarters of ministries and departments, because we felt that effective reform should start from the central point of the administrative system. What this leaves out is field offices, specialised organisations like those handling research and training, corporations, boards, and so on. The excluded area is certainly not unimportant. Some of it may be covered by other study teams appointed by the Commission. The rest could be left to be examined in due course by the standing machinery of the Government of India for administrative reforms or by committees and study teams appointed by the Government from time to time.

3.4 Even this restricted field has a vast area. Apart from the 39 secretariat offices corresponding to that number of ministries and departments, there are 569 non-secretariat offices having the attributes of headquarters units. Despite some degree of resemblance, each office or unit has its distinctive problems. If we were not to get lost in a mass of detail, a further selective approach was unavoidable. We decided first to consider problems of structures and methods in a generalised way and then to test our ideas in selected ministries. The generalised treatment itself had to be spread over two chapters, the present one dealing with overall issues and the next discussing problems at the more intimate level of operating wings and divisions.

3.5 It is important to recognise that any working machinery of administration is a balanced and consistent mixture of structures, methods and personnel. The present machinery of the Government of India, for instance, reflects this factor of balance and consistency to a remarkable degree. The special position of the secretariat in the structural set-up of a ministry is matched by methods of work which keep up this special position, and by a manning policy which accords with this picture. An attempt to reorganise the existing machinery would be unlikely to succeed if it confined attention to only one or the other of these important ingredients. This, in fact, is the fate which overtakes most reorganisation efforts, because they introduce changes at one or two points and not all along the line. Such isolated changes come under powerful forces of conformism, as a result of which things tend to revert to *status quo*. We have constantly had in mind the need to have a comprehensive approach, so that whatever new system is suggested has an internal balance and consistency of its own which gives it stability and a built-in resistance to reversion tendencies.

3.6 The Government of India performs broadly three kinds of functions :

- (1) *Central List work*.—This is the area where the Government of India operates in its original jurisdiction, as it were, and most of the work done is in the nature of direct administration, although there are instances of Central List work being handled through the states on agency arrangements. In this category also falls work relating to concurrent items which have been centrally activated through central legislation or otherwise.
- (2) *State List work*.—The task here is mostly co-ordinating the work done in the states but there are many direct jobs done also such as training, research, etc. In this category falls also the rest of Concurrent List work, *i.e.*, in relation to items not centrally activated.
- (3) *Work of a staff variety*.—In this category fall items of work like finance, law, services, and so on.

Some ministries handle only the first, the Ministry of Defence being a good example of this. Others, such as the Ministry of Health and Family Planning, are predominantly concerned with the second. Predominantly involved in the third are the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Law. Often there is a mixed situation, involving a combination of any two or all three types of work. The discussion in this chapter and the next is relevant mainly to ministries other than those concerned primarily with staff work.

3.7 Even amongst ministries other than those handling staff work, there is no such thing as a typical ministry, because every ministry has its own peculiar features. An extreme view, therefore, could be that reorganisation must be tackled ministry by ministry taking account of local circumstances, and that any kind of overall approach is meaningless. Overall approaches certainly carry the risk of general prescriptions of a detailed kind being suggested, which may not necessarily improve matters in all situations. But some degree of overall thinking is necessary if only to make an analysis of the present arrangements, which are to a large extent based on a common and almost prescriptive pattern. This would help to clarify the objectives of any reorganisation to be suggested and also to outline the broad pattern, if one can be devised, that should replace the present one. An overall or generalised consideration would still make it necessary for the actual reorganisation task to be undertaken ministry by ministry, with adaptations to suit local circumstances.

## II

### **The present system**

3.8 The core organisation in every ministry is the secretariat. Its importance is illustrated by the fact that in many people's minds the two words "ministry" and "secretariat" are synonymous. Of course this is not so, because a ministry is the entire charge allotted to a minister embracing all organisations under him, not only the secretariat. Ordinarily the secretariat handles three types of work :

- A - Substantive work in an area where there are no non-secretariat organisations.
- B - Substantive work where non-secretariat organisations exist.
- C - Servicing work.

In the secretariat of the Ministry of Commerce, for instance, work relating to international trade is of type A, work concerning textiles and jute of type B and work covering items like establishment, office management, and financial control of type C. Much the same is the position in other non-staff ministries. A computation based on the number of sections doing different kinds of work throughout the secretariat, excluding the staff ministries, shows that type A work constitutes

44% of the total, type B 30% and type C 26%. But the 30% of type B includes a good deal of establishment work, which really belongs to type C.

3.9 Generally a non-staff ministry is organised as below, although there are many variants.

#### POLITICAL LEVEL

- Minister at the top, usually assisted by a single deputy or more

#### SECRETARIAT

- Secretary, as the head of the bureaucratic machinery under the minister

(Special and additional secretaries are organisationally unusual features, although numerous at present)

- Joint secretary (administration) to look after personnel and office management
- Internal financial adviser; this is a rare functionary at the moment, but the Finance Ministry's instructions require each ministry to have such an adviser
- Subject joint secretaries, looking after type A work
- Subject joint secretaries, looking after type B work
- Deputy and under secretaries, to assist the secretary and joint secretaries
- Office, constituting an all-pervading underlay

#### NON-SECRETARIAT ORGANISATIONS

- Head of department
- Director of administration, corresponding functionally to the joint secretary (administration) in the secretariat
- Subject joint or deputy heads
- Assistant directors or equivalents thereof
- Office underlay

This however is not as standard a pattern as the one described for the secretariat, and in any case does not reflect the pattern in specialised organisations like those for research, training etc.

The main advice agency and the channel through which the minister must operate is the secretariat. This is organised pyramidally, one result of that being the concept of a chief adviser in the person of the secretary of the ministry. The chief adviser, his immediate lieutenants and their assistants are all usually generalists, who are supposed to have



a broad appreciation of administration and of national problems, but not necessarily any specialised or technical knowledge. The secretariat has an apex position and is the repository of all powers, except for powers relating to financial and personnel management reserved in the respective nodal agencies. Non-secretariat organisations are arranged pyramidally below the secretariat. Except in urgent situations, access to the minister or his chief adviser is only through the pyramidal ladder.

3.10 A point of special interest is that the effective decision-making level below the minister and the secretary is that of the subject joint secretaries. But subject joint secretaries handling type A work function quite differently to those handling type B work. In the first situation, the joint secretary and the wing he controls are in a strong position, being inside the secretariat. Policy matters can be cleared directly and quickly with the secretary and the minister. Operational matters, such as sanctions involving finance or personnel, can also be settled by direct contact with the appropriate authorities, within the ministry or outside. The joint secretary in this situation carries full responsibility for his sector of work. The position in the other situation is different because responsibility there is divided between the subject joint secretary and the head of the non-secretariat organisation concerned. The latter carries full executive responsibility, but functions through the subject joint secretary when clearance is required for policy or operational issues. The joint secretary's responsibility is mainly in the sphere of policy-making and also in scrutinising proposals made by the head of the non-secretariat organisation. This has the advantage that the subject joint secretary and his secretariat wing provide a second check on the functioning of the non-secretariat organisation, but the duality in the arrangement is often criticised as leading to delays and inefficient working.

3.11 The whole system is thus very much secretariat-centered. The concept of a secretariat-centered machinery was devised under British rule, but has undergone considerable developments since then.

- (a) An important feature of the secretariat then was that it was small, but that is not so now. There has, in fact, been a phenomenal growth, from 1150 persons in 1939 to over 6,000 in 1948 and over 15,000 today. The number of secretaries has risen from 9 in 1939 to 41 (including special secretaries) now; of joint secretaries from 8 in 1939 to 168 (including additional secretaries); of deputy secretaries from 12 to 303; and of under secretaries from 16 to 457. With this scale of growth has come a dilution in quality.
- (b) Decision-making levels in the secretariat then were almost wholly manned by officers of the Indian Civil Service, who belonged to the various provincial cadres and came to the Centre on limited tenures. The picture today is different.

Decision-making levels are staffed principally by the Indian Administrative Service, but there are substantial contributions from the Central Secretariat Service and from other central services, particularly at the lower levels. This is clear from the following table.

	IAS	CSS	Other central services
Secretaries . . . . .	34	1	6
Joint secretaries (including additional secretaries) . . . . .	90	12	66
Deputy secretaries . . . . .	78	99	126
Under secretaries . . . . .	18	295	144

The plus-factor in this picture is that there is an element of stability and continuity not previously available. All CSS personnel, for example, are continuously available in the secretariat; so are many of the others, particularly at the higher levels, since the tenure rule is not strictly applied there. The minus-factor is that a large proportion of the officers do not have executive experience, especially most of those belonging to the CSS.

- (c) Decision-makers in the secretariat then were largely generalists. While that is broadly true today also, the variegation and complexity of governmental tasks have brought with them economists, scientists, statisticians, and in fact experts of different kinds into the secretariat.
- (d) There was then a ministerial cadre in the secretariat which had to be of high quality, because it was the main instrument for maintaining continuity, decision-makers being all tenure men. High quality could be ensured more easily than now because numbers then were small (1,105 including superintendents in 1939). Today the ministerial cadre is large (14,000 including section officers) and mostly not of high quality. It does contribute towards the maintenance of continuity, but is not the only instrument for this, since those at the decision-making levels are not all tenure men now.
- (e) The original concept was that the secretariat looked after policy formulation, execution being the job of non-secretariat organisations. Today there is a very mixed situation. A good deal of executive work is handled in the secretariat; and, on the other side, several non-secretariat organisations participate in policy formulation to a much greater extent than would have been thought appropriate previously.
- (f) The number and variety of non-secretariat organisations has increased greatly. Apart from executive agencies, there are today advice-tendering agencies, research and training

agencies, departmental undertakings, corporations under the company law, corporations and boards under special statutes, registered societies and non-statutory boards and committees.

It is probably correct to say that most of these changes took place under pressure of prevailing circumstances rather than as a result of deliberate, long-range organisational thinking. A stock-taking of advantages and short-comings now is therefore a "must" before a reliable approach to reorganisation can be devised.

3.12 Comments in Parliament and the press, indicative of a growing public dissatisfaction with the administration, might suggest that the existing system is thoroughly bad. That this is not so is borne out by the fact that the system seems to have worked well enough under British rule and in the early years after independence; even after that it has made a not insignificant contribution to the governance and development of the country. Whatever its demerits, it possesses the advantage of a working arrangement; it is carefully elaborated, well understood and does function, howsoever inadequately. It has an internal balance and consistency, as mentioned earlier, which gives it a measure of stability. That in turn acts as a stabilising factor in the affairs of the country generally, and in this way the system fulfils, to an extent, the traditional role of the civil service in a parliamentary democracy. More concretely, the notion of a secretariat, structured and manned in more or less the same way in every ministry, helps to secure inter-ministry co-ordination and assists the process of Cabinet functioning on the basis of collective responsibility. The manning of the secretariat largely by generalists provides, at least in theory, an objective thinking-machine for policy formulation and an impartial administrative supervising-machine for the non-secretariat organisations. The centralisation of policy-making and administrative supervision in the secretariat of a particular ministry ensures a co-ordinated approach within the ministry and acts as a facility for the minister, who would otherwise have to operate through several channels. Keeping executive functioning outside the secretariat at once secures cool detachment for policy makers in the secretariat and operational freedom for those responsible for execution outside it. This then is an account of the broad advantages of the present system.

3.13 There is unfortunately a debit side also. The system worked satisfactorily in relation to the tasks to be performed in a previous era, but seems to many people to be inadequate for today's more numerous and complex tasks. Some of its conspicuous short-comings are listed and discussed below.

- (1) A secretariat-centered machinery must rest on a clear role for the secretariat. As observed earlier, the secretariat has expanded its functions and acquired a number of executive tasks. This has tended to obscure its central role as a brain centre for policy-making and for keeping an overall eye on

- things. The blurring of its role creates doubts about the justification for its continuance as an institution, at least in its present form.
- (2) In the face of rapid expansion, the quality of secretariat personnel has gone down, as noted above. One of the requirements for the present system to work well would seem to be that the secretariat should remain small and of high quality, for otherwise it is liable to do more harm than good. But this has not been fulfilled, with consequent deleterious results.
  - (3) The concept of standard staffing patterns and uniform methods of work prevalent in the secretariat has inhibited the growth of specialisations necessary in the modern context. Thus, all questions are ordinarily handled by the same kind of non-specialised personnel using the same noting-based method, even when they relate to matters like planning and strategic policy-making or personnel administration or financial management or the scrutiny of projects or the administration of public enterprises or evaluation or public relations. Each of these functions seems to require the development of specialised arrangements within the various ministries, but in most cases they are absent.
  - (4) The absence of specialisations in the secretariat springs from a defect basic to the system itself. This is its almost total reliance on the principle of generalism. Officer personnel are drawn chiefly from generalist cadres (the IAS and the CSS); even those who come from specialised cadres (*e.g.*, the central services other than the CSS) become generalists when utilised in posts where their specialisations are not relevant. Generalism is regarded as a virtue, to promote which there is a high degree of mobility; personnel are thus not usually allowed to stay very long in particular posts or sectors of administration. As for the few experts inducted into the secretariat in recent years, such as economists and scientists, they often remain unintegrated in the hierarchy and structure of the secretariat, because it is not easy to fit them in under the present concepts.
  - (5) The division of work into types A and B, the former to be handled wholly in the secretariat and the latter through non-secretariat agencies, is not always defensible, and in any case both arrangements have short-comings, as mentioned below.
  - (6) In the type A situation, subject joint secretaries frequently do not have compact and rational charges. The officers and staff under a particular joint secretary are often shared by him with other joint secretaries. Subject joint secretaries have no powers to go with their responsibilities, as do heads

of non-secretariat organisations, although as secretariat officers they can and do invoke the residual powers of the secretariat. This is not entirely satisfactory, because the exercise of such powers goes without the second check to which non-secretariat functioning is subjected. Also, subject joint secretaries remain merged in the anonymity of the secretariat and do not have responsibility fixed on them in the sense that it is on heads of non-secretariat organisations. They do not, in any case, have separate budget allotments for which to be specifically answerable.

- (7) In the type B situation, there are all the familiar defects of parallel hierarchies. The secretariat laboriously examines every matter referred to it by the non-secretariat organisation, even though it may have gone through much the same kind of examination there. While this process does help to promote exactitude in the compliance of rules, it fails in two respects. Overall evaluations of programmes and activities are seldom carried out, the emphasis being on itemised check. And since secretariat personnel are generalists and usually unacquainted with the field conditions encountered by the non-secretariat agency, even this itemised check is often based on an inadequate appreciation of problems. This results too often in wrong decisions, delays and frustration. Since non-secretariat organisations are usually manned by specialists or technical personnel, one of the outcomes of this type B situation is that it tends to range specialists and generalists in opposite camps. Theoretically, responsibility is shared between the subject joint secretary in such a situation and the head of the non-secretariat organisation, but in fact all responsibility is often dumped on the latter, the former being answerable for practically nothing. Responsibility and authority are thus not matched with each other at either level.
- (8) Non-secretariat organisations suffer from two kinds of weaknesses. Firstly, the heads and their chief aides are usually specialist or technical personnel, eminent in their own lines but often lacking top administrative skills and vision. Secondly, the ministerial staff here is generally not of the same calibre as in the secretariat. The two factors expose non-secretariat organisations to criticism at the hands of the secretariat, and in fact provide an additional justification for the latter's existence.
- (9) There are inadequacies at the level of top posts in the secretariat. For one thing, there appears to be a disproportion between the number of posts at decision-making levels and those at ministerial levels, with the result that too few are responsible for too much. Dilution of quality at officers'

levels has, then, led to a further concentration of real responsibility on the small number amongst this few who are at top levels. This has meant top administrators being weighed down with excessive work and not having enough time to think, plan and organise. Correct leads from them have thus not come forth in sufficient measure, and this has further handicapped an already stretched system. Existing policy in regard to the development and selection of personnel for top postings has further added to the difficulty by not always giving sufficient recognition to the need for the highest quality at this level.

- (10) Top policy-making at the administrative level in a ministry is today almost entirely dependent on the chief adviser, *i.e.* the secretary, and his immediate lieutenant for a particular sector of work, *i.e.*, the joint secretary concerned. This often proves inadequate because of the complexities of modern administration, which require broadly co-ordinated views to be taken on the basis of a variety of thinking inputs. There is an absence of suitable machinery for this purpose.

### III

#### Approach to reorganisation

3·14 What could be an approach to reorganisation that would meet the above points in a practical way? Two broad alternatives are available for consideration. The first is to maintain a secretariat centered system, on the ground that it is essentially sound and that continuing with it would cause the least disruption, but to mend the things that have gone wrong in it. The second is to eliminate the secretariat in its present form and instal some new pattern that would preserve the essence of what the secretariat is meant to do and at the same time provide answers for the existing short-comings.

3·15 All previous attempts of reorganisation were based on the first approach.

Some of them dealt with the problem of size by accepting a large secretariat as an inescapable fact and devising measures for better working on that basis. One of the most significant of these was a measure devised by the Ministry of Home Affairs, under which ministerial personnel were grouped into ministry-wise cadres and cadre management functions handed over to the ministries concerned. This recognised the fact that central control from the Home Ministry over the large numbers that had come into being was no longer possible and that decentralisation of personnel management functions would enable the various ministries to operate more efficiently. Another measure on similar lines was put through by the Ministry of Finance in the field of delegation of financial powers. Here again the ministries were

enabled to manage their own affairs more independently than before. While these measures constitute two of the most telling reforms put through in recent years, they leave many vital short-comings of the existing system untouched.

Some other reorganisation attempts were based on shrinking the size of the secretariat. In this class fall the experiments of pilot sections, attaches, officer orientation and so forth. Such measures face implementational difficulties on account of the mental attitudes of the operating staff; in any case these seek to cure only one kind of ill and do not remove most of the other short-comings listed earlier.

Still other attempts were based on bridging the gulf between the secretariat and non-secretariat organisations. Two devices were employed at various times. One was the giving of ex-officio status to the heads of the non-secretariat organisations concerned. The other was to place the non-secretariat organisations functionally in the secretariat without giving them secretariat status. Both types of measures sought to cure a very real problem, but at the same time tended to add to the existing confusion in regard to the precise role of the secretariat. And in any case they also left out other short-comings.

There were then developments in regard to personnel at decision-making levels. At an early stage the doors were opened for officers of the various central services to come into the secretariat on tenure basis. Then, in varying degrees, experts of different kinds were inducted into many of the ministries, although they usually remained on the fringes of the secretariat hierarchy. A recent measure in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture sought to integrate experts with the secretariat hierarchy. Finally, there was the attempt to constitute pools of personnel from the IAS and the central services to provide specialists in central ministries. These measures were in the right direction, but did not go far enough.

3.16 The above is only a rapid survey of past attempts in the field of reorganisation, but it makes it clear that efforts to mend the present system left the whole problem substantially unsolved. This could be because the attempts were isolated and lacking in an overall, integrated strategy. A more comprehensive and determined repair job could conceivably improve things greatly within the present framework. What we have asked ourselves is whether the extent of such improvement would be adequate in the sense of providing satisfactory solutions for the major defects that exist. For an answer to this question it is first necessary to consider the minimum reform measures required to overcome the short-comings listed in para 3.13.

3.17 Analysis of these short-comings shows that the least that needs to be done by way of reorganising the system falls into three categories.

*Firstly*, the present standard, generalist-oriented staffing patterns and uniform, noting-based methods of work must gradually give way to arrangements based on specialisations. This would call for changes in structures and methods as well as changes in personnel policies. The former might mean the creation of cells in the ministries, manned by the appropriate types of specialists, to look after work requiring specialised attention, such as planning and strategic policy-making, personnel administration and financial management. Changes in personnel policies would mean making room in manning arrangements for specialists to come in, and measures to develop the required specialisations.

*Secondly*, structural changes must be introduced which help to cure both type A and type B arrangements of their defects. At present, the seat of responsibility in the former (the subject joint secretary) is too "near" and in the latter (the head of the non-secretariat organisation) too "far". Ideally, both should be placed at par, in the matter of financial and administrative powers as also in regard to access to clearance-giving authorities; such authorities would be the secretary and the minister for policy matters, the finance cell of the ministry and the Ministry of Finance for financial issues and the personnel cell and the proposed Department of Personnel for personnel problems.

*Thirdly*, there must be a new approach at top levels. Manning policies at these levels (secretaries, heads of type A and type B situations and heads of specialist cells) should change. Instead of such posts going to certain cadres almost as a matter of right, a pool of top administrators should gradually be developed through selection from all sources, and through appropriate training and deployment measures, from which then such appointments should be made. Work methods at these levels should also change, so that there is more time for individual and group thinking amongst those who are picked and developed for top administrative leadership.

3.18 Can these minimum reforms be fitted into the existing framework? It seems to us that, in spirit as well in substance, they are somewhat alien to the present system, because they are of the nature of "framework" reforms themselves. An exercise of fitting them in might, therefore, so change the system as to make it unrecognisable; in the stretching process, the system might then lose many of the good points it possesses. Serious consideration therefore needs to be given to the alternative approach of more or less discarding the present framework and building anew. The main feature in such an approach would have to be the disappearance of the secretariat in its present form. While such a drastic sweeping out would clear the way for the new "framework" reforms, the question is whether something of value might not be lost in the process. Existing forms tend to display their defects prominently, their virtues being taken for granted. Are there good points in the present system which would be lost with the removal



of the secretariat? Since what is involved is the elimination of a time-honoured institution, deeply embedded in the minds of administrators and others alike as an inescapable necessity, the question requires to be gone into carefully. As is the case with the virtues of most ancient institutions, there is that which is fact and that which is fantasy about the merits of the secretariat system. The concepts associated with it thus need to be singled out and examined.

3·19 First, there is the concept linking policy-making with the secretariat. This breaks down into three component concepts : that it is desirable for policy-making to be separated from executive functioning; that the distinction between the secretariat and non-secretariat organisations is the structural reflection of this desirable principle; and that top policy-making requires inter-ministry co-ordination which is facilitated by every ministry having the same kind of secretariat structure with personnel drawn from the same sources. Let us consider each of these.

A total divorce between policy-making and executive functioning is neither possible nor desirable, because new policy often flows out of executive experience. The opposite extreme of merging policy-making and executive functioning is also not desirable, because day-to-day problems would then dominate policy formulation thus depriving it of long-range content. The right view is a middle one. Policy-making is of two varieties : strategic, which is usually long-range, and tactical, which is usually short-range. Strategic policy-making must be kept separate from executive functioning, though evolved in consultation with those responsible for the latter; tactical policy-making cannot and ordinarily should not be.

The distinction between the secretariat and non-secretariat organisations can reflect a principle only in the area where such organisations exist. As noted before, there is a considerable area where the secretariat itself handles executive tasks. Even in the former area, the policy-making the secretariat does engage in is very largely of the tactical variety, and where that is the position there is little justification, in the light of the point made earlier, for the separate existence of the secretariat. Separate arrangements are, of course, necessary to handle strategic policy-making; it will be noticed that we visualise a cell for this purpose in our programme of minimum reform set out in para 3·17.

There is no doubt that top policy-making often requires inter-ministry co-ordination. The fact that secretariat structures are similar in all ministries, however, contributes little to inter-ministry co-ordination, though the fact that the personnel come from the same service cadres does to a significant extent. The secretariat concept as such is not, in this view of the matter, an indispensable part of inter-ministry co-ordination. Measures to achieve desirable levels in such co-ordination are necessary even now, and will be in any new system also.

3:20 Next, there is the concept linking administrative supervision of executive functioning with the need for the secretariat as an apex institution. A preliminary point here is that the concept does not obtain where the secretariat itself handles executive tasks. Where that is not so the secretariat can function usefully as a supervisor of non-secretariat organisations. In practice such supervision as takes place is mostly of the nature of itemised check on individual cases. As observed earlier, overall evaluations of programmes and activities are seldom made. On the basis of the normal type of supervision carried out, the existence of the secretariat is scarcely justified. But there is a function to be performed in this field. It is important, for example, to have specialised arrangements in a ministry for overseeing the financial management of all organisations, the present non-secretariat variety as also the type A kind. There must also be specialised arrangements for keeping an eye on the personnel administration of organisations. For programme-handling organisations, there should be specialised arrangements in the ministry for progressing and evaluating activities and programmes. Each organisation should, in fact, undertake systematic reviews of its own activities and thus contribute to total reviews of the ministry's working. In this process, it should collect and interpret facts in accordance with carefully determined evaluatory tests. Administrative supervision includes all these things, none of which receives adequate attention today. The argument that executive functioning needs to be supervised does not, in the light of this discussion, require the present kind of secretariat activity to be continued, but does suggest that the above gaps should be filled. Our proposals attempt to take this into account.

3:21 Third, there is the concept linking the provisions of Article 77 of the Constitution with the need for a secretariat. This Article states that all executive action should be expressed to be taken in the name of the President, and that orders and other instruments made and executed in the name of the President must be duly authenticated. Presidential rules made under the article specify who may sign such orders and instruments in token of authentication. The general principle followed is that all secretariat officers are given this power; in addition, a few non-secretariat officials are also mentioned, ministry by ministry. Some might argue that the secretariat is an essential institution because of the special place given to secretariat officers under these rules; but this would be illogical. Secretariat officers have pride of place in the rules because the secretariat is there. That by itself creates no justification for the continuance of this institution. In another kind of system others would have to be given the power to authenticate Presidential orders, and the fact that there would be no difficulty in doing so is evidenced by the consideration that even today numerous non-secretariat officials enjoy the same power.

3:22 Fourth, some would link the accountability of ministers with the secretariat system. Their argument might be that the existence of a secretariat is essential for the working out of the doctrine of individual

responsibility of ministers to Parliament on the theory that the area of functioning of the secretariat conveniently marks out the area in which the minister should be held directly accountable. We do not share this view, because Parliament's rights cannot be limited to what the secretariat does or does not choose to handle. Connected with this is the concept that the secretariat is necessary in a ministry because it is essentially the minister's office. Underlying this is the thought that, in a parliamentary democracy, the minister requires specialised assistance in the discharge of his parliamentary responsibilities. Not many would agree with the concept of the secretariat as the minister's office, but there must be general acceptance of the proposition that ministers should receive the fullest possible assistance in handling parliamentary business. But neither this nor the principle of accountability, by themselves, seem to constitute valid justifications for the secretariat being treated as an indispensable organisation.

3.23 Fifth, there is the concept linking the prevailing generalism in the secretariat with the lay character of democratically elected ministers. According to this, ministers being non-specialists require technical and other complex matters processed for them by non-specialist civil servants. We see a good deal in the argument that purely specialists or technical personnel may not prove to be the best official advisers for lay ministers, as they might lack the breadth of experience necessary for this. But equally, it seems to us, a minister is ill-served if his closest official advisers are as non-specialist as he. What is required, of course, is that top posts should be manned by either generalists or specialists who have developed the skills and acquired the administrative experience required for top administration. (We have dealt with this more fully in chapter VI). So long as this is ensured the elimination of the secretariat in its present form need not be thought of as a disaster from this angle. The point is covered by our programme of minimum reform.

3.24 Finally, the secretariat of a ministry is sometimes viewed as the nucleus of the total machinery of a ministry. It is argued that the ministry must continue to have a secretariat since every living organism must have a nucleus. Perhaps the secretariat filled such a role in the past. But if the main purpose of an administrative nucleus is to provide leadership to the rest of the organisation in matters of policy and administration, many parts of today's secretariat may not pass the test. In our proposals explained later, the need for a nucleus is recognised and provided for in the shape of the minister and his policy advisory committee, supported by an office of planning and policy on the one hand and offices of personnel and finance on the other.

3.25 This discussion shows that, although in some important respects the secretariat does not function today as it ought to, the system as such has useful features which need to be preserved. But it seems to us that, so long as the essence of these is retained in an alternative arrangement, the elimination of the secretariat in its present form

could be considered as a new basis without serious apprehension about possible repercussions so far as the concepts discussed above go. Points needing to be incorporated in a new system arising out of the above discussion are :

- Arrangements for the formulation of strategic policy should be kept separate from executive functioning.
- Inter-ministry co-ordination should not be jeopardised.
- Administrative supervision over executive functioning should be made a reality.
- The authentication of Presidential orders and instruments should be taken care of.
- Administrative support for the discharge of ministers' duties in Parliament should not be weakened.
- Top posts should have men with broad administrative experience and vision, even when drawn from specialist or technical sources.
- The concept of a nucleus for a ministry should not be totally jettisoned.

A new scheme should thus provide for the minimum reforms mentioned in para 3.17, and at the same time not ignore the above points.

#### IV

#### The proposed system

3.26 We have tried to devise a scheme of reorganisation in the background of this analysis, which we now proceed to explain. Needless to say, consistent with the previous discussion, our proposals are based on a "no-secretariat" hypothesis and cover structure, methods and personnel. The scheme we have evolved is simple in conception, but may not appear so if the details have also to be grappled with in the first presentation. We, therefore, give an outline to begin with and elaborate some aspects later. Personnel implications are given fuller treatment in a later chapter, as already mentioned. What we have to say here mainly concerns non-staff ministries.

3.27 The minimum reforms mentioned in para 3.17 call for three kinds of structural changes ; specialised cells for certain types of work, rationalised arrangements to replace the present type A and type B situations, and a machinery for group-thinking at top levels. An outline of the picture we visualise to fit these in is like this.

- (a) At the apex should continue to be the secretary of the ministry. Under him ranged along the same horizontal level should be "administrative offices" for handling three kinds of work; staff, substantive and special.

- Administrative offices for staff work should be expertly manned. We visualise three such offices in each ministry: an office of planning and policy, under a senior chief of rank equivalent to additional or joint secretary; a chief personnel office, under an officer of joint secretary's rank; and a chief finance office also under an officer of that rank. We also visualise a unit for public relations, the details of which are discussed in chapter VIII.
  - Administrative offices for substantive work should be formed out of two sources. First, type A work should be grouped into compact and rational charges. Each such group should be large enough to need being looked after by at least a full-time officer of rank equivalent to joint secretary and should constitute an administrative office. Small groups may be combined to form viable charges. Second, for type B work the headquarters offices of the present nonsecretariat organisations should be converted into administrative offices.
  - Administrative offices, expertly manned, may be found necessary in some ministries for looking after special items of work such as that relating to public enterprises, projects, research and evaluation.
  - Linking the whole arrangement at the top should be a policy advisory committee headed by the secretary. Its members should be the chiefs of the three staff offices and selected chiefs of the other administrative offices.
- (b) The office of planning and policy should be responsible for overall planning tasks of the ministry as a whole, and should also function as the unit for formulating policy in the ministry in the strategic field. In addition, it should have a cell for servicing the policy advisory committee.
- (c) The chief personnel officer and his staff should provide leadership within the ministry in the field of personnel administration, and to be able to do so they should be experts in their subject. They should, on the one hand, keep in touch with the nodal agency for personnel administration (the proposed Department of Personnel) and should be able to get advice and help from there. On the other, they should co-ordinate the work of intra-administrative office personnel units. The chief personnel office should be the repository of the powers of the ministry in regard to personnel administration other than those delegated to the administrative offices.
- (d) Much the same should be the case for the chief finance officer and his staff in the field of financial management. Additional tasks for this office that we visualise are overall office management for the ministry, intra-ministry O & M services and

miscellaneous items of administrative co-ordination, including co-ordination of parliamentary work.

- (e) The chiefs of the non-staff administrative offices should be responsible for policy, subject to what is stated in clause (f) below, as well as administration in their respective sectors and should be given powers to match their responsibilities. This should mean three things. First, the method of budgeting should be so adapted that there is a separate budget head for each non-staff administrative office; the chief of each such office should then be held responsible for his budget area, in the formulation of budget proposals as well as in the efficient management of the budget allocation made to him. Second, adequate administrative and financial powers should be delegated to the chiefs of such offices. They should have expert advice available to them in both fields, through internal personnel and finance units where such units are justified from the work-load angle and, where that is not so, through the chief personnel and finance offices of the ministry. Third, the chiefs of these offices should be able to deal directly with the secretary and the minister, on the one hand, and the three staff offices of the ministry on the other. Disagreements with the chiefs of personnel or of finance on issues where the powers of the ministry are not delegated to the chiefs of non-staff administrative offices should be settled by the secretary.
- (f) The policy advisory committee should function as an amplification of the office of the secretary to make sure that the policy advice tendered to the minister takes all aspects into account. It should meet regularly, say once a week, and consider all policy issues which require to go above the level of chiefs of administrative offices. The minister should receive advice on policy matters only after it has been formulated in this committee. However, matters which cannot wait for the next meeting of the committee or are trivial should be cleared by the secretary in his capacity as chairman, the matter being brought to the notice of the committee at the next available opportunity.
- (g) The functions of the secretary of the ministry would, in this arrangement, undergo some change. Instead of being the chief adviser to the minister for both policy and administration, he would be chairman of the policy advisory committee and the administrative head of the ministry. In the sphere of administration, thus, no change is contemplated in the present powers and responsibilities of secretaries.

3.28 That is the outline of our scheme. It will be seen that it replaces the present secretariat-centred system by one in which the accent is on what we have called "administrative offices". Since administrative offices are intended to be distinct organisational units,

it is not necessary for them to have the standard staffing patterns and methods of the secretariat and they can instead be variously structured and staffed according to their respective needs. This should facilitate the induction of expertise where that is required, particularly in the offices handling staff work. Then, the concept of administrative offices for different aspects of substantive work opens the door for a decentralised method of working with responsibilities and powers clearly allotted to the chiefs of such offices; this is something difficult to do in a secretariat-based arrangement, especially in respect of type A work. Since administrative offices are proposed to be at par with each other in the total structure of a ministry, today's disparateness between type A and type B situations will go. Instead, all non-staff administrative offices will have equal access to centres of authority above and beyond them; they will also be subject to the same degree of discipline in the three staff functions of planning and strategic policy-making, personnel administration and financial management. The new framework of administrative offices thus makes a number of reforms possible. At top levels the scheme continues the concept of a secretary as the administrative head of the ministry, thus retaining an important point out of today's arrangements, but at the same time introduces the possibility of group-thinking through the proposed policy advisory committee.

3.29 Coming to details, a preliminary point needs to be cleared. We do not consider it necessary to our task that all possible details required for actual reorganisation on the above basis should be worked out. It should be sufficient if we present only such elaboration as is required to understand the scheme and its implications in a broad way. Some aspects of the scheme are spelt out in this chapter; others are dealt with in the succeeding chapters. We were keen to see how our ideas would work out in practical situations and consequently carried out skeleton reorganisation exercises in four non-staff ministries, two of them handling mainly central subjects and the other two mainly concurrent and state subjects. The study reports of these exercises form †special annexure A to this report and provide concrete elucidation of the proposed scheme. It seems to us from these ministry-wise studies that the scheme is not impractical.

3.30. At the heart of the new arrangement are the three staff offices for planning and policy, personnel administration and financial management. It is the concept of offices for these staff functions mainly that makes a departure from the secretariat-centred system possible. The correct functioning of these offices is, therefore, vitally important if the proposed scheme is to yield benefits rather than confusion. Some thoughts about each staff office are put forward below.

3.31 *Office of planning and policy.*—Existing arrangements in the ministries for formulating plans and for organising and progressing their implementation are inadequate. Successive five-year plans suggested the creation of planning cells to make good this deficiency.

Some action was taken from time to time to implement the suggestion, but the outcome is not such as to be considered satisfactory. Existing arrangements for formulating strategic policy are also inadequate. The ministries remain preoccupied with problems of immediate importance and seldom find the time for long-range thinking. Also, they do not have the machinery for engaging in this task in an expert way. We consider it important that these two gaps in present arrangements should be filled, because efficient handling of these functions could greatly improve the quality of the work done in ministries. On the planning side, it would help and complement the process of the Planning Commission shedding some of its functions, which as an objective was suggested in our earlier report and has been accepted by the Government on a recommendation of the Administrative Reforms Commission. The two functions are closely inter-linked and require a measure of detachment from day to day problems. A distinct office of planning and policy is, in our view, the answer.

3.32 As mentioned in the outline this office should have three main functions : overall planning, strategic policy formulation and servicing of the policy advisory committee. Its responsibilities in planning should be additional to and not in replacement of intra-administrative office planning efforts, and should cover the formulation of plans, the organising of their implementation and the progressing of plan performance. Organising implementation would involve working out, in consultation with the administrative offices concerned, the administrative implications of the plan (personnel, agencies for execution, finance, etc.) and evolving an operational plan, as it were, through which efficient implementation may take place. In regard to policy formulation, this office should identify problems of major importance, particularly those cutting across the charges of individual administrative offices, and study them in an expert fashion from the long-range point of view. This would mean collecting and analysing the relevant data and making scientific projections into the future. The reports of such studies should be intensively considered by the policy advisory committee, so that the strategic policy of the ministry is kept continuously under review. A cell in this office should be formed specifically to look after the servicing of the policy advisory committee. The servicing function should involve not only conferencing tasks, but also seeing to it that the matters referred to the committee by the chiefs of administrative offices are fully and adequately presented. The cell should thus help to set standards of efficient paper-writing in the ministry, which we consider a point of some importance as will be seen from the next chapter.

3.33 While this should be the broad pattern in regard to the functions of this office, there would have to be considerable flexibility to allow for the varying circumstances in different ministries. Our ministry-wise studies suggest, for instance, that planning and policy offices in ministries dealing with concurrent and state subjects would



need to extend themselves beyond strategic policy and look after additional tasks such as co-ordinating the work done in the states and dealing with problems of tactical policy in that connection. Because of these additional functions, the planning and policy office here may have to be fairly large. But care should be taken to see that, notwithstanding the inclusion of these additional functions there are arrangements in such a situation to give specialised attention to questions of strategic policy. Where there is more than one department in a ministry, a single planning and policy office may serve the purpose, provided there is sufficient affinity between the subjects allotted to the various departments. For small ministries suitable adaptations may become necessary from the point of view of economy; the planning and policy office here could be placed under the charge of one of the chiefs of administrative offices, or the secretary of the ministry could himself look after the work directly.

3.34 As suggested later, administrative offices handling substantive work should, where necessary, have internal units to give specialised attention to overall problems of policy, planning and programming concerning these offices. The central office of planning and policy of the ministry should maintain liaison with such intra-administrative office units and provide leadership and guidance to the extent necessary. An important outcome from the setting up of planning and policy offices and units should be a series of well-articulated policy statements on the major aspects of the work of the ministry or administrative offices concerned. There should be a programme of reviewing these statements at regular intervals and bringing about such changes as analytical study of fresh facts and circumstances suggest. Wherever possible, such policy statements should be placed before Parliament and made public. The articulation of policy in this way, we have no doubt, would make for clarity and qualitative improvement in the work of the ministry. It would also be a practical reflection of the principle enunciated in the previous chapter that, amongst other things, ministers should be held accountable for the formulation and articulation of policy in respect of major problems in their portfolios.

3.35 The structuring and manning of planning and policy offices would have to be linked to the kind of inputs the situation in individual ministries calls for, and should in any case not be a conventional one. The office of planning and policy is meant to act as the brains trust of the ministry; it should therefore have personnel of the highest calibre at whatever level of seniority they may be found; the structure of the office should have vertical flexibility to allow for this. The functions to be performed will require subject-matter expertise as well as expertise in areas like techniques of planning and forecasting, economic analysis and statistics; the structure should have room enough to allow the relevant types of experts to be fitted in. We do not rule out the possibility of generalist administrators being deployed in these offices, if persons of aptitude and ability can be found for the purpose, but the chief of a planning and policy office should be the best qualified

and available person from among experts and generalists. In view of his key role in the ministry, he should, as mentioned in the outline, enjoy a rank equivalent to additional or joint secretary.

3.36 *Chief personnel office.*—Present arrangements in the ministries for handling the work of personnel administration have two kinds of defects. For one thing, the ambit of this work is confined to what is covered by the word “establishment”, which is very little more than postings, leave, promotion and so on. Progressive aspects like training, career development, special steps for hard-to-fill jobs, etc., are usually missing. Secondly, the handling of personnel work is dispersed; matters concerning secretariat staff being looked after at one place in the secretariat and those concerning non-secretariat agencies in the wings of the subject joint secretaries concerned. This makes it virtually impossible to introduce new approaches. “Good personnel administration is of crucial importance for good government”, as we observed in our earlier report, and if that is so these defects must be removed. We consider that the right way to do so would be to create a chief personnel office in each ministry, which would reflect the functions and manning policies of the proposed Department of Personnel and help lift personnel administration out of its present rut on to progressive channels. The head of each such office should be known as the chief personnel officer. He should be a well-chosen officer of joint secretary’s rank, and personnel work should be his whole-time charge, because there is much to be done; in small ministries the job could be combined with that of the chief finance officer. A pool of specialists in personnel administration should gradually be developed to man these offices, as it needs to be recognised that there is a measure of special knowledge or expertise necessary for good personnel management. The chief personnel office of a ministry should be responsible for all aspects of personnel administration other than the functions delegated to the administrative offices. In the delegated field too, it should service such administrative offices as are not big enough to have their own personnel units. For further elaboration the special study of the Department of Personnel referred to in chapter V may be seen.

3.37 *Chief finance office.*—One of the important reasons for too much in the field of financial management having to be referred to the Ministry of Finance is the absence of adequate intra-ministry arrangements for financial advice and control. Existing financial delegations with the ministries would operate more efficiently, and further delegations to them might become possible, if this gap were to be made good. With good financial management, the ministries should be able to get more value than now in the shape of results from every rupee of expenditure, and real economies in governmental spending might become increasingly possible. This would more than off-set the cost of setting up well-manned finance offices within the ministries, especially as another outcome could well be the shedding of some staff by the Ministry of Finance. These, briefly stated, are the reasons which have led us to suggest that there should be a chief finance office in every ministry

3.38 The main functions of internal finance offices are listed in para 2.3.5 of our earlier report. Broadly, a chief finance office should be responsible for all aspects of financial management in the ministry and should be the repository of the ministry's financial powers. This does not rule out substantial delegations being made to the administrative offices. In the delegated field, the chief finance office should provide leadership and guidance to intra-administrative office finance units and, where administrative offices are not big enough to have their own units, should service them. In addition to its main responsibilities, which would lie in the field of financial management, this office should carry responsibility for four important functions: overall office management for the ministry, organisation and methods, parliamentary work concerning the ministry, and co-ordination in administrative matters. All of these have, to a greater or a lesser degree, something to do with keeping the standard of efficiency of the ministry at a high level, and it is our view that responsibility for this and for financial management should, in the ministries, lodge at one place, efficiency and economy being after all two sides of the same coin. A point for special notice is that the third of these functions, *viz.* parliamentary work, will include responsibility for preparing the annual report of the ministry; as emphasised in the previous chapter, annual reports require to be more evaluatory than in the past, as this would make them useful tools for promoting efficient administration in the ministries.

3.39 The head of a finance office of a ministry should be known as the chief finance officer. If his advice is to be mature and independent and if it is to be given respect, he should have adequate status; we consider that his rank should be equivalent to that of a joint secretary. He should look after the functions outlined above on a whole-time basis; in small ministries the possibility could be considered of the chief finance officer functioning as the chief personnel officer as well. As in the case of personnel administration a pool of specialists in financial management should be developed from which posts in these offices could then be filled.

3.40 So much for staff offices. Administrative offices for substantive work will have diverse functions, and consequently diverse requirements for structuring and staffing. But some points of general importance need to be mentioned.

First, there will clearly have to be two kinds of administrative offices: those with field offices and those without. The former will require to be more elaborately organised than the latter, with line and staff functions distinctly provided for. It is for the former type that intra-administrative office personnel and finance units may often be found necessary. Such units should, while operating within the authority delegated to the administrative offices, reflect the functions and staffing arrangements of the chief personnel and finance offices.

Second, there could be wide diversity in structures depending on the nature of functions performed. At one end, there could be an administrative office with a chief of rank equivalent to additional secretary with several deputies of joint secretary's rank. At the other, there could be small administrative offices not meriting chiefs even as high in rank as a joint secretary. (An office of international trade in the Ministry of Commerce would be an example of the former, and an office of archives in the Ministry of Education of the latter). Such diversity is not incompatible with the proposed scheme and should be freely allowed when constituting administrative offices.

Third, wherever feasible and necessary, an administrative office handling substantive work should have a cell to give specialised attention to overall problems of policy, planning and programming concerning the office. The manning of this cell should be patterned on what is proposed for the office of planning and policy of the ministry, in that it should have selected staff of high calibre and of diverse qualifications, representative of the kind of inputs the work here calls for. The structure of the cell should be flexible enough to accommodate one or more senior officers, who may have no specific duties but may be utilised for undertaking special studies and research of major problems entrusted to them from time to time.

Fourth, posts of chiefs of administrative offices should be regarded as key posts to be filled with great care. It should be borne in mind that a chief may be called upon to serve as a member of the policy advisory committee where he should be able to make a contribution in a wider sense than only as the head of his own office. The selection should thus be governed by three main criteria: outstanding merit, familiarity with the specialisations of the sector concerned, and administrative talent required for top levels. A pool of officers should gradually be developed for such top appointments, and entry should not be reserved for any particular cadre or cadres (*see* chapter VI).

Fifth, we would commend the adoption of either or both of two devices. One is the nomination, wherever feasible, of a "number two" in an administrative office; this need not mean creating a fresh post, as an existing deputy could fill the role. The other is the provision of an aide to the chief of the administrative office in the person of a picked young officer of outstanding promise. These devices would provide training opportunities of a valuable kind, develop promising young men for key roles in the future and, last but not least, provide relief to the chief thus enabling him to think, plan and organise.

Sixth, such administrative offices as have hitherto functioned as non-secretariat organisations will need to develop qualitative standards consistent with their new position in the organisational structure of the ministry. Measures to assist them in doing so should be devised. This would include the drafting of high quality staff into important posts and divisions within such offices.

3.41 The outline scheme speaks of administrative offices to look after work relating to public enterprises, projects, research and evaluation. This may create mis-givings, because it might be said that such work requires specialised approaches and not "offices". We hasten to say that we fully recognise that specialisation is called for here even more than elsewhere. The expression "administrative office" used to describe the organisational entities for these items is not intended to strait-jacket the latter into a conventional office type of working, but rather to make diverse arrangements possible. It also gives each such entity a position in the new organisational structure of a ministry level with other administrative offices, thus giving it the operational advantages visualised for the others and making its chief eligible for membership of the policy advisory committee:

- (1) *Office of public enterprises.*—We suggested in our earlier report that greater autonomy should be given to public enterprises. If that is done, the present work-load in the ministries which have public enterprises to look after will come down. But whatever the degree of autonomy extended to enterprises there will always be certain tasks left over to be done by the government as listed in ¶annexure I. This is because the government cannot divest itself of all responsibility; in fact the minister concerned remains accountable to Parliament for this sector of work, howsoever modified the form of this accountability may be. Some important tasks out of those to be performed at the level of government have not received adequate attention so far. We would particularly stress the task of evaluating the working of public enterprises through scientific efficiency analysis; this is something largely absent today. A contributory cause for this is that the present arrangements for handling this work in the different ministries are, by and large, not good enough; both the organisation and the personnel of such units as do exist do not match the tasks to be performed. We, therefore, suggest that every ministry having public sector enterprises under its charge should have an office of public enterprises specialising in the handling of government level tasks relating to enterprises in operation. Organisationally, these offices should be akin to the Bureau of Public Enterprises and should, in fact, seek inspiration from the Bureau and feed it with information. Since the number of public sector enterprises in different ministries varies, the size of intra-ministry offices of public enterprises would have to vary a good deal. But while the size may vary, the complexion should not. In other words, these offices should, as far as possible, be manned by persons who have experience in senior management positions in industry or commerce and by experts in subjects like management accounting and industrial engineering.

(2) *Office of projects.*—The above arrangement would leave out project work which has three components: project formulation, project scrutiny and the progressing of projects under construction. It would be impossible to have adequate organisations within the ministries to handle all the aspects of these tasks. Much of the work of project formulation and project scrutiny may always have to be farmed out to project units in public enterprises under the ministry or to private consultants, within the country or abroad. After a particular scheme reaches the stage when a project officer can be appointed, much of the responsibility should be left to the latter. But all this would still leave work to be done in the ministry. Of particular importance is the work of progressing the construction of a project after a project officer has been appointed. A specialist manned unit in ministries where this kind of work has to be handled seems to us a necessity. If project work is considerable in volume, the unit could even have the position of an administrative office; otherwise it could form part of one of the administrative offices of the ministry with the work of which it has the closest affinity.

(3) *Office of research.*—Research as a function is present in the work of nearly all ministries. It is destined to play an increasingly important role. This is true not only of scientific and technological research, but also of research in other fields—economic, sociological, administrative, etc. The place of research in the machinery of government is broadly at three levels: research considered to be of general importance is looked after from a central point, which may in the case of scientific research be the Ministry of Science and Technology if a suggestion in our earlier report is accepted; research of sectoral importance is the concern of the ministries, such as agricultural research being the responsibility of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture; and research of sectional importance is linked to the relevant components of individual ministries such as economic survey and applied research in several type A and type B situations. We have not examined whether this pattern should undergo a change. But we consider that sectoral research should find an appropriate place in the new structure proposed for ministries. This should aim to cure two kinds of defects: research does not usually receive the priority it deserves in the allocation of funds and in the consideration of its organisational and personnel problems; second, there is not enough inter-change of ideas between the man of research and the policy maker. Both defects stem, at least in part, from research occupying an unimportant place organisationally. We suggest that, where sectoral research is of significant importance, it should enjoy the position of an administrative office. This would give the chief of the research set-up direct contact with those responsible for finance and personnel, on the one hand and with the policy-

making machinery, on the other. We would expect that ordinarily the research chief should be a member of the policy advisory committee. Where another function goes naturally with research, e.g., medical education in the Department of Health or educational training in the Ministry of Education, there should be no objection to this administrative office extending its ambit to cover that also. We would hope that with sectoral research being upgraded in this fashion, sectional research in component parts of ministries will also get its due place; this would help to enrich the administrative process at all levels.

- (4) *Office of evaluation.*—A sister study team has suggested that a good deal of the present work of an itemised character in ministries handling concurrent and state subjects should be decentralised to the state governments, and that in the resultant situation the central ministries concerned should give greater attention to providing leadership and guidance, effecting coordination and making evaluations of programmes in the states. We would suggest that effective evaluation agencies should be set up in ministries like Health and Family Planning, Education and Agriculture. By the nature of the function, the evaluation machinery should be organisationally as independent as possible and should have a status that would command respect for its studies and conclusions. We consider that, where evaluation is to be given high importance, there should be an administrative office of evaluation, with the chief brought into counsels of the policy advisory committee whenever necessary.

3.42 Our earlier report mentioned that each ministry should be so organised that there is an orientation towards science and we undertook to go into the matter further in the present report. To the extent that scientific research will, under our proposals to upgrade the organisational position of research generally within ministries, have a voice in the policy-making of the ministries, the objective of injecting scientific thought into the administrative process will be served. In addition, we have considered a suggestion that there should be a top-flight scientific adviser for every ministry where the need for inducting a scientific approach is pronounced. Such an adviser would obviously have to function with a general mandate under which his advice could be sought on any major problem and he himself would be free to tender advice on any point that occurs to him. He would further have to be included in top level consultations, particularly in the policy advisory committee of the ministry. If the right men can be found we would favour making an experiment in this direction. We would, however, make a few suggestions about this. To attract men of the right calibre, it should be made clear that the scientific adviser will not be part of the hierarchy of the ministry and will have direct access to both the minister and the secretary. He will have to be someone who is not only a scientist of eminence but has the capacity to yoke his knowledge to the

solving of the kind of problems that he is likely to face. His office should be a small one, since such impact as requires to be made must come from the man himself rather than from his staff. If a ministry of science and technology comes into being, the scientific adviser should maintain liaison with that on the one hand and with Research and Development cells within his ministry on the other. Finally, it might be better to leave such posts unfilled than to fill them with inadequate personalities.

3.43 Public administration is getting increasingly complex and it is not always possible for a single secretary to carry in his own mind all the strands of thinking and expertise that must be there for efficient policy-making. This is the consideration which has mainly weighed with us while suggesting the formation of policy advisory committees, because this would ensure that policy-making gets several minds from different angles playing on it. Another important consideration is that a device like this would open the door for personnel from different sources (administrators, economists, technologists, scientists, etc.) to participate in policy formulation; this would be of advantage to all of them and would be a powerful means to develop men for top assignments. Still another consideration is that such a committee would give a chance to younger men to make a contribution; this might help to inject freshness and vigour in top level thinking. For the success of these committees, the most important prerequisite is that the secretaries who serve as their chairmen should know how to get the best out of the members. Without this, relatively junior personnel serving as members may prefer not to make a contribution rather than risk displeasure through taking a non-conformist line. Another important prerequisite is that these committees should have good secretarial assistance and, as suggested already, this should come from competent cells in the offices of planning and policy. The committees should consider not only issues referred to them by chiefs of administrative offices and papers on strategic policy put up by the office of planning and policy, but also standing items which need to be continuously reviewed.

3.44 The secretary of a ministry in the proposed system would, as explained in the outline, continue to be the administrative head of the ministry. In matters other than administrative, he would have a new role as chairman of the policy advisory committee. But this would make little difference to his position as the chief functionary of his ministry, because as stated earlier, the policy advisory committee will function as an amplification of his office and not independently of him; he would still remain the link between the minister and the administrative machinery of the ministry. In the previous chapter we dwelt on the role of secretaries in their relationship with the ministers. Here we would stress the pivotal importance of secretaries in relation to the administrative machinery of their ministries, and would emphasise that this will in no way be diminished in the new system that we have proposed. Indeed, we visualise that, by being relieved of some of their present work-load through responsibility being devolved on chiefs of administrative offices, secretaries will be able in a larger measure than now to



address themselves to the important tasks of thinking, planning and organising the work of their ministries. We would suggest that, if the circumstances in a particular ministry justify, the secretary there should be provided with an aide who should be a selected officer of outstanding promise, the appointment being regarded as a unique training opportunity. The development of personnel who can appropriately fill posts of secretaries and the adoption of an appointments policy which ensures that none but the best men are posted to these vital positions should be regarded as two of the most important responsibilities of the Government of India on the administrative side. This particular point is dealt with again in chapter VI.

3.45 The structures and methods of a system are so closely linked that a description of the one almost completes that of the other. Our focus in describing the proposed system has been largely on structures, but the new structural pattern suggested itself tells how, broadly, work should be handled in the new system. There are, however, some points in the field of methods which require special mention:

- (1) *Budget.*—The new system visualises the division of the ministry's work into rational charges, each entrusted to an administrative office. It would be appropriate and logical if the classification of budget heads within the ministry's budget were to follow the same criterion of rationality. This would mean having a separate budget head for each non-staff administrative office, as already mentioned in the outline, with operating powers entrusted to the chief of the office. The inter-linking of executive and financial responsibility in this way would, in our view, be conducive to efficiency and economy. We would expect that, to the extent possible, the same principle would apply at lower levels also, effecting a link between budget sub-heads and echelons next below administrative offices. It might be argued that adapting budget heads to the areas of operation of administrative offices might make for inconvenience, because it would introduce inflexibility in the charges allotted to such offices. But we consider that a measure of stability here is desirable, because there is too much flexibility today, at least in type A situations. If charges are carefully determined in the first instance, there should be no need to make changes; and if a change must be made, it is not impossible to make a corresponding alteration in budget classifications also.
- (2) *Powers.*—The whole question of the delegation of administrative and financial powers, including authentication powers, to various levels is dealt with in chapter VII. But the point to note here is that we visualise a "free" area for the chief of each administrative office, where he may operate on his own with facilities for specialised advice made available to him either through personnel and finance units under him or through the chief personnel and finance offices.

- (3) *Inter-administrative office communication.*—We would make three specific suggestions here:
- (i) Consultations between administrative offices should as far as possible be oral. Officers should ring up each other or walk across to each other's rooms to discuss matters rather than write.
  - (ii) Inter-administrative office contact for purposes of consultation need not be confined to the top levels only. Lower level contact should not only be permitted but encouraged.
  - (iii) Where non-staff administrative offices have to seek the advice of staff offices in writing, a single-file system should obtain. In other words, the latter should not have separate sets of files, though this need not prevent their keeping brief notes.
- (4) *Relationship pattern at top levels.*—The pattern of relationship of a chief with the secretary and the ministers should be broadly the same as that of to day's joint secretaries. In other words, the chiefs should be able to deal directly with both the secretary and the minister. In what matters they should go to the minister through the secretary will always remain dependent on the nature of work and the personalities involved. All communications requiring decisions going from a chief to the policy advisory committee or the secretary or the minister should be in the form of self-contained papers, which should be brief but modelled on notes for the Cabinet. This would mean that, where an issue concerns any of the three staff offices, the views of the latter should be fully incorporated in such papers.
- (5) *Inter-ministry communication.*—Chiefs of administrative offices should have full authority to communicate with other ministries and so should the officers under them in their headquarters offices. But references to the Department of Personnel or the Ministry of Finance should normally go only from the chief personnel office or the chief finance office, as the case may be; if they go from other chiefs, they should be based on views formulated in consultation with these two staff offices. In inter-ministry meetings, the ministry should ordinarily be represented by the chief concerned or someone nominated by him.

## V

**Some questions answered**

3.46 We have subjected our scheme to a check in the light of some questions that could be asked. These are discussed below.

3-47 *How should such a scheme be judged?* There is a basic difficulty here. The scheme has been evolved in a generalised form; and although there are study reports of four specific ministries they represent nothing more than skeleton reorganisation exercises undertaken to test the practicability of the scheme rather than to produce detailed reorganisation plans for the ministries concerned. This was, in our view, the only way to approach our task, because a generally prevalent system first requires generalised treatment. It is only after the broad features of an alternative system have been accepted that the drawing up of detailed ministry-wise reorganisation plans can become worthwhile. But this means that there is no "concrete" proposal at present, with cost and personnel implications precisely worked out. By normal standards of administrative scrutiny, therefore, the proposed scheme is not eligible for consideration. We would suggest however that the approach to major administrative reform measures, when "framework" changes are involved, should be governed by principles other than those applied to lesser reform proposals. What is required in such situations is a conceptual consideration, in which a broad judgment must be made whether a scheme like the one here proposed is on the right lines or not. Considerations like the practicability of making a change from the old to the new system and the cost and personnel implications of such a change should be gone into, but only in broad terms. The primary consideration should be whether the new system would be so much better than the present one as to justify making change, the implications being looked after as a necessary accompaniment of the change. If the view is taken that the scheme is on the right lines, a process of reorganisation on its basis should commence, keeping in view such broad cost and other considerations as may be necessary to be laid down.

3-48 *What is the broad balance-sheet of merits and demerits of the proposed system?* On the plus side the new system will, if worked correctly, avoid most of the short-comings of the present system listed in para 3-13, while not ignoring the need to preserve the points mentioned in para 3-25. Once the transitional difficulties have been overcome, there should be an improvement in the quality of work as well as greater operational efficiency. At the risk of some repetition, we would list the major gains that may be expected as below :

- (1) Introduction of specialisation will be facilitated by the concept of standard staffing patterns being replaced by that of variegated patterns in the administrative offices.
- (2) Operating organisations will shed their secretariat overburden, where that exists today, and all of them (whether type A or type B) will enjoy operational freedom subject only to specialised control in the three staff functions of planning and policy, personnel administration and financial management.
- (3) Relatively neglected areas will be able to receive greater attention through such units as the three staff offices and the offices of public enterprises, projects, research and evaluation.

- (4) The chiefs of administrative offices will have clearly demarcated responsibilities allotted to them with powers to match.
- (5) There will be arrangements to provide relief to the secretary and the chiefs of administrative offices, so as to enable them to think, plan and organise. The device of a policy advisory committee will give them an opportunity for systematised group thinking.
- (6) Areas of talent amongst non-generalists, insufficiently exploited so far, will be tapped and yoked integrally to the decision-making structure.
- (7) Younger men, generalists or non-generalists, will have a chance to participate at important points in the decision-making process.

3.49 On the minus side three points particularly require to be mentioned:

- (a) Top appointments require a blend of competence and balance. The new system will bring in specialists at the level of chiefs, and does not rule out the possibility of their becoming secretaries. The nature of a specialist's experience and training is such that, while he may be highly competent and enthusiastic, he may fail to acquire the balance which is required for top posts. This is a danger, against which if no safeguard is provided, some of the advantages of the new system might be lost. As already recommended, posts of chiefs of administrative offices will have to be filled with great care, so that as far as possible, men of competence as well as balance alone are appointed. The secretaries will need to play a special role in bringing specialist chiefs to administrative maturity. The three staff offices should, through their advice in their respective areas of functioning, also be in a position to help greatly in this process. Here it is necessary to emphasise the importance of developing an adequate reporting system through which the minister, the secretary and the three staff offices are kept posted with major developments and decisions. But the most significant maturing influence for specialist chiefs may prove to be their participation in the work of the policy advisory committee. Thus, while the danger is there, we do not view it as an obstacle.
- (b) The transition from the present to the proposed system may cause such dislocations and personnel disruptions as to negative the advantages sought to be secured. This may well happen if there is no planning in the implementation of the scheme. We deal with this later.

- (c) The proposed system depends a great deal on men of the right calibre, and may not work well if enough good men cannot be found. This, of course, is true of all systems. In fact a cynical view could be that there is no point in changing any system because in the last analysis it is the men on whom good administration depends. While not belittling the importance of personnel of quality, we would suggest that structures and methods also matter, particularly when their existing pattern bars the entry and development of certain categories of personnel. All administrative reform activity is hopeful; a major reform measure like the suggested scheme is particularly so. We would hope and expect that there will be no serious difficulty in the matter of locating good personnel. We would go further and suggest that, in ministries where the scheme is introduced in the first phase, special measures should be taken to locate and deploy men of the right stamp in key posts.

3.50 *What are the broad cost implications?* There are two major cost factors in the scheme working in opposite directions. The creation of administrative offices for staff and other specialised functions would call for additional expenditure as compared to now, although the increase would vary from ministry to ministry depending on the number and strength of such offices required in individual ministries and the strength of the present staff handling these functions. The replacement of type B situation by the new pattern will result in economies through the elimination of the subject joint secretaries and their secretariat wings; here again the saving would vary from ministry to ministry depending on how much of the present system is of the type B variety. We have had fairly detailed cost studies carried out in the four ministries examined by us and, while recognising their inadequacy in view of the many assumptions that had to be made and the absence of any consultation with the ministries concerned, we venture to mention the broad conclusion arising out of them. This is that there is a saving in each case. Savings are likely to be substantial in two ministries and small in the other two; total savings in these four ministries will be about Rs. 8.33 lakhs.

3.51 *What are the broad implications for the existing personnel?* There will undoubtedly be implications at the officer level; that, in fact, is one of the objectives of the scheme. Posts of generalists will come under reduction in type B secretariat wings; if generalists are handling the work of public enterprises, projects and so forth, they will have to give way to specialists; ministries handling specialised subjects may feel the need to replace some generalists by specialists even in type A situations. As against this, it is the generalist cadres mainly which will man the new personnel and finance offices within the ministries; specialisations in these fields will have to be developed amongst them. Even the planning and policy offices may have use for generalists of special aptitude and ability. Our four ministry-wise studies indicate that there might be a net reduction of generalist posts at the level of joint and deputy secretaries

of 22 per cent of the present number; we do not think this would be a disaster, especially as the main feeder cadres seem to be stretched today beyond their capacities. A little shrinkage might, in other words, help to improve quality at these levels. The reduction at the level of posts of under secretaries and section officers is likely to be only of the order of 9 per cent. The extent of impact need not, in our view, cause alarm, at least at the initial introduction of the scheme. However, the long-range effect on the management of feeder cadres would have to be studied in due course and suitable correctives devised.

3.52 At the ministerial level, there might be a reduction of posts of the order of 9 per cent. The implications at this level will need to be looked after suitably.

3.53 *Is a major change like this feasible?* It is not possible to bring current work to a stop while undertaking major repairs of an administrative machine. Equally it cannot be maintained that no major repairs should take place, however pressing the need, because of the likely impact on current work. If the proposed scheme is considered desirable, some degree of impact will have to be accepted as part of the balance-sheet of plus and minus points. The extent of impact can, however, be kept to the minimum by implementing the scheme according to a carefully devised plan.

## VI

### Plan of implementation

3.54 We would suggest that the scheme should be implemented in a phased manner. In the first instance, it should be introduced in a few selected ministries only. If the four ministries where we have undertaken skeleton reorganisation exercises are chosen for this purpose, the background papers of our studies could be made use of. We would accordingly propose the selection of these ministries for first introduction of the scheme.

3.55 In the selected ministries, again, it would be advisable to phase out implementation over a period of, say, three years. A plan of implementation should be drawn up separately for each ministry, which shows the precise steps to be completed each year, with their personnel and finance implications worked out. An illustrative phased plan has been worked out for one of the ministries studied by us and will be found in †special annexure A as part of one of the study reports.

3.56 The main advantage in a phased approach is that the problems and difficulties of implementation can be identified in the early stages, and answers found for them before extending the scheme. Phasing can also help to keep the impact of reorganisation on current work within "tolerance" limits. And, finally, phasing is necessary because otherwise there might be more persons affected by reduced posts than can be looked after. Here we would like to suggest that the implementation of this

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†In Volume II

scheme, and the one proposed in the succeeding chapter, should be so phased as not to result in any personnel having to be retrenched or reduced in rank. This requires two things to be built into an overall plan of implementation : an effective machinery to redeploy personnel who are rendered surplus in organisations where reforms are introduced in other organisations where men are wanted, and a strict curb on fresh recruitment at the appropriate levels. Given purposeful action on these points, the suggested reforms could be brought about at a reasonable pace. In particular, the phasing proposed in the last two paras could be adopted without appreciable difficulty.

3.57 Implementation of the full scheme in ministries other than the four suggested should be taken up only after first phase implementation has gone far enough to justify commencing the next phase. But two points need to be mentioned in this connection:

(a) While full implementation in these other ministries should wait, there may be some measures which could be adopted even earlier. For instance, rudimentary personnel and finance offices could be set up in all non-staff ministries as an essential part of a new approach to personnel and financial administration. Also, the setting up of planning and policy offices could be considered for ministries where the need is pronounced; so could the setting up of suitably constituted policy advisory committees. The charges of subject joint secretaries could, in any case, be made rational and compact with unity of command at all levels. There could be a good deal of decentralisation of functions and powers in regard to type B work. We would suggest that those responsible for drawing up the overall plan of implementation should identify the measures which could be adopted in these other ministries, the objective being to make a gradual move towards the proposed system even here.

(b) If pressing need is felt in these ministries to do something more in the way of reform before the stage comes for commencing the second phase, such piece-meal measures as have to be taken up should be consistent with, and constitute moves towards the blue-print here presented.

3.58 A machinery for reorganisation should be an important part of the government's implementation plan. We would suggest the following for consideration :

(1) There should be a central reorganisation committee, consisting of the Cabinet Secretary as chairman, the two staff secretaries of personnel and finance (expenditure), and the secretaries of the ministries selected for the first phase of implementation. This should be responsible for evolving an overall plan of implementation and seeing to it that it is carried out; in that

process it should provide the answers to problems and difficulties of an overall character that might arise during the course of implementation. The committee should be serviced by the Department of Administrative Reforms.

- (2) In each of the ministries selected for the first phase, those who will later function as chief finance officers should be chosen at an early stage and made available on a whole-time basis as re-organisation officers for their respective ministries. They should carry this responsibility in addition to their finance and other functions until implementation is completed. One of their first tasks should be to draw up plans of implementation for their respective ministries.
- (3) At an appropriate stage, it might be found useful to have re-organisation committees in each of the first phase ministries, presided over by the secretaries concerned and consisting of the three staff chiefs of planning and policy, personnel and finance and one or two other chiefs.

3.59 Finally, it is necessary to mention three major prerequisites to successful implementation:

- There must be full acceptance of and backing for the scheme on the part of government and civil service leadership. It would be better to leave the existing system untouched than to embark upon a measure of major reform without this minimum prerequisite.
- There must be a recognition of the crucial importance of good men in the key posts of the ministries selected for the first phase. All posts of secretaries and chiefs of administrative offices should be regarded as key posts. In particular, it must be ensured that the officers who fill the posts of secretaries and chiefs of administrative offices in each of the first phase ministries are of outstanding abilities, that they individually accept the scheme in all its implications and that they have qualities of vigour and ingenuity sufficient for the complex reorganisation task they will have to implement. There must also be a willingness to draft good staff into the first phase ministries at some of the posts at lower levels, the deliberate objective being to make a success of the scheme in the first stage of implementation.
- There must be energetic and continuing follow up to remove the difficulties that are bound to arise in the course of implementation, to devise and organise the training of personnel for work in the new system and to syphon off those who do not or will not fit into new methods.



## CHAPTER IV

### STRUCTURES AND METHODS: A CLOSE UP

#### I

#### The area covered

4.1 In this chapter the viewing lens is brought closer to the administrative machinery. The area examined is within the major units of a ministry; that is the wings comprising the secretariat, on the one hand, and the headquarters offices of non-secretariat organisations, on the other. For convenience of treatment, the discussion centres on a typical secretariat wing handling type A work (see para 3.8), but the conclusions and recommendations could be made applicable, with suitable modifications, to other secretariat wings and to the headquarters offices of non-secretariat organisations also. This is because the structures and methods of the various major units of a ministry are similar in many respects; in fact, the similarity extends in varying degree to all government offices. If the proposals of the previous chapter are accepted, what is said here for secretariat wings could also be applied to the administrative offices visualised there.

4.2 A wing in the secretariat is thought of as a joint secretary's charge. It is an important unit because, as mentioned in para 3.10 joint secretaries constitute the effective decision-making level below the minister and the secretary. Their charges are frequently not compact and homogeneous, and many wings suffer from lack of unity of command at the different levels. We drew attention to this defect in the last chapter and suggested that it should be remedied in all ministries as one of the measures to pave the way for introducing the scheme of overall reorganisation. We would put the proposition somewhat differently now and recommend that this defect of lack of homogeneity and unity of command in secretariat wings should be done away with everywhere, whether or not the scheme of reorganisation put forward in the previous chapter, or the one presented here, is accepted. In any case, the typical wing visualised for examination here does not suffer from this defect, from which it would be seen that we regard homogeneity of charge and unity of command as things which ought to be ensured before any other kind of reform is looked for.

4.3 The system obtaining in the area examined requires its own treatment, but must be viewed in the context of the overall facts and analysis of the last chapter. Because what is examined here is a part of the whole, some of the points briefly mentioned earlier are re-emphasised or elaborated in this chapter. This means there is some duplication between the two chapters, but it is unavoidable; we have tried to keep

it to the minimum. The remedies suggested there and here are consistent with each other, but do not hang together; in other words, they are capable of being considered and implemented separately.

## II

### The present system

4.4 At the head of the wing is a joint secretary. Its structure has two broad components: officers and office. The officers are ranged in the form of a cascade, which often takes different shapes, with varying number of officers at each tier or, sometimes, with a tier missing; but the usual pattern is two deputy secretaries under the joint secretary and two under secretaries for each deputy secretary. The deputy secretary's charge is known as a division, the under secretary's as a branch. The office is conterminous with the section, of which there are two with each under secretary. Each section is headed by a section officer who supervises the work of "dealing" hands. The number of dealing hands in a section varies from three to seven but is quite often five; four out of these five are assistants and the fifth an upper division clerk. There is ancillary staff at both levels: personal assistants, stenographers and peons for officers, and personnel for record duties and office services in the sections. The following table shows the number of personnel in a typical wing:

<i>Officers</i>		<i>Ancillary staff</i>	
Joint secretary . . .	1	Stenographers . . .	6
Deputy secretaries . . .	2	Peons . . . . .	6
Under secretaries . . .	4		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	7		12
	<hr/>		<hr/>
<i>Dealing officials</i>		<i>Ancillary staff</i>	
Section officers . . .	8	Lower division clerks	20
Assistants . . . . .	32	Daftries . . . . .	4
Upper division clerks	8	Peons . . . . .	4
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	48		28
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Total number : 95			

It will be seen that a typical wing has 7 officers and 48 dealing officials. It has 40 ancillary staff, of whom 12 are attached to officers and the rest to the dealing officials. The cost of officers and the staff attached to them is roughly Rs. 16,100 per month; that of the office Rs. 30,800.

4.5 The starting point of almost all the work done in a wing is a receipt, which could be a letter from a government office (a non-secretariat organisation, a sister wing in a ministry, a sister ministry or a state government) or from a private source; or it could be a note from the minister or the secretary. A major part of the Manual of Office Procedure is devoted to describing how receipts should be dealt with. The section officer is supposed to see all fresh receipts; he is required to separate those that should be seen by the officers straightaway and to mark the rest to the dealing hands. The branch and divisional heads who see the former lot are expected to dispose of on their own the receipts in which the assistance of the office is not required. The rest come down again to the dealing hands. From 10 to 20 per cent of the daily receipts are shown to the officers at the initial stage, out of which only an infinitesimal number are dealt with by them on their own. For most of the work, therefore, the dealing hand is the basic handling functionary. But he cannot proceed until the connected papers are located in current and old record. This takes its own time. After getting such papers, the dealing hand writes a note in which he is expected to summarise the case, bring out the issues for decision, quote precedents and even suggest a course of action. This is checked for facts and thoroughness by the section officer; it is then ready for its journey into the officer regions above. Each officer through whom the case travels is entitled to add something to the basic note prepared by the dealing hand, and although there are instructions that noting should be kept to the minimum, quite lengthy notes are sometimes written at officer levels. Depending upon the nature of the case, a decision is taken at the appropriate officer level and the file then immediately begins its descent back to the dealing hand. The latter prepares a draft based on the decision taken which again travels up the previous route, but usually not as high as the level where the decision itself was taken. In other words, the draft is often approved by the next level below. After approval the papers enter the receipt and issue unit for fair typing and issue; this is often situated outside the wing. If a case calls for consultation with another ministry, the file of noting is ordinarily marked by the appropriate officer to a corresponding officer of the other ministry, where it becomes a receipt and is "examined" in the same way, with the dealing hand playing the same type of role. It is fair to add that there are many variants to what is described in this and the preceding paragraphs; short-cuts are frequently taken for the handling of urgent items of work.

4.6 The officers of a wing are drawn from the IAS, the various non-secretariat central services and the CSS. The pattern of contribution from each source is mentioned in para 3.11. The joint secretary is usually an IAS officer although there is a 45 per cent chance of his being from one of the other sources. There is only a 25 per cent probability of a deputy secretary being an IAS man; a 30 per cent probability exists of his being from the CSS and a 45 per cent chance of his belonging to one of the other central services. An IAS under secretary is a rarity; 65 per cent of the officers at this level are from the CSS and 35 per cent from the other services. Altogether the CSS, which consists entirely of men

promoted from the office, contributes almost half the officer strength of a wing. Within the office, section officers and assistants are a class apart from the others; they are mostly graduates and recruited directly from the open market through competitive selection, either as assistants or as section officers. Some assistants are men promoted from amongst clerks, but their number is small. During the second world war and then immediately after independence, there were spells of rapid expansion of the secretariat during which a large number of assistants of relatively poor quality were recruited, through methods other than competitive selection. Many of them are now section officers; some even under secretaries. The number of such assistants and section officers in a typical wing would, on the average, be 13 out of 32 and 1 out of 8 respectively; ordinarily these persons could be expected to be of lower capacity than the others.

4.7 A distinctive feature of the whole arrangement is that, while a secretariat wing has been referred to as a major unit of the ministry, it lacks some of the characteristics of an independent administrative unit. The role of the joint secretary as head of the wing is not defined in terms of responsibility and powers as is that of, say, the head of a non-secretariat organisation. The wing has no budget of its own to operate upon. Its servicing tasks, including office management, are performed as common facilities from elsewhere in the secretariat of the ministry, with the joint secretary in charge of the wing having no direct responsibility in this sphere, though he is consulted on major matters and his views given due weight. In some ministries, typing and issue work have not been centralised and in such ministries this particular aspect of office management services lodges within the wing. Physically, many of the components of a wing are often housed next to each other, but this is not always the case. The officers, in any case, sit some distance away from the sections, usually on a different floor; this is so in all government offices and not particularly in the secretariat. A secretariat wing is thus not a full administrative unit, which is understandable because it is after all an integral part of the secretariat.

4.8 The most prominent feature of the system, whether viewed from the angle of structures or methods or personnel policies, is the distinction that it makes between officers and office. A handful of officers operate as decision-makers, while large number of personnel at the office level perform only supporting functions. This pattern is a legacy from the days of British rule. At that time, the ruling class was small and it was probably necessary to fashion arrangements which would enable it to have a controlling hand over everything without wasting time on chores which could be entrusted to others. As an organisational arrangement, therefore, this pattern of dividing the administrative structure between officers and office matched the spirit and actuality of foreign rule. The gradual Indianisation of officer cadres did not alter the situation very much, because the basic concept of a ruling class continued unchanged. Independent India simply carried on with the

inherited pattern, partly because it seemed in the early years to work well enough, but also because any change in the pattern would have involved radical reform for which there was no time. There was the added consideration that the educational base did not seem wide enough, despite considerable expansion, to yield an adequate number of high quality personnel with which to transform structures into something other than the old pattern of officers and office.

4.9 Another prominent feature of the system is its heavy dependence on noting, and particularly on office notes. It is through the process of noting that the bulk of decision-making takes place, and it is the notes of a particular case that relate the decision taken on that case to past practice and precedents. The central place occupied by noting as a phenomenon is complementary to the position of the structure pattern of officers and office. The office note became necessary to the process of administration because the time of the officers, who were few and hard pressed with responsibilities, had to be saved. The office was thus trained to produce notes which would be so self-contained in the matter of facts and precedents as to enable the officers to take decisions easily and quickly. The "office" and "noting" between them also provided the answer to another problem. This was that, apart from being short in numbers the officer cadres lacked continuity due to tenure arrangements with the provinces and due also to the system of frequent transfers inherent in a generalistic cadre arrangement. In this situation the office in a secretariat wing and its store of notes on old files provided continuity and memory. The office as an institution and the practice of noting were, in this view of the matter, essential corollaries to the organisation of the higher civil service. Since independent India chose to organise its own higher civil services on concepts similar to those of pre-independence days, the office and its methods of noting continued as useful and necessary adjuncts. With the adoption of parliamentary democracy as a method of governance, noting acquired new importance because that is where the reasons for decisions were to be found, and reasons had frequently to be given to Parliament and its committees.

4.10 Still another prominent feature is the almost monopolistic position of "generalists". The two main feeder cadres at the officer level, the IAS and the CSS, are both generalist. Even when officers are drawn from the specialist cadres like those for accounts and revenue they are usually deployed outside their fields of specialisation and are thus non-specialists when serving in the secretariat. Needless to say, the dealing officials are in any case all generalists. Both officers and dealing officials do become specialists of a kind through the process of acquiring familiarity with the work of particular sectors. But it is a rule of generalism that no one should stay too long in any post or sector of administration; this helps to prevent personnel from straying too far from generalism. Transfers are not as frequent amongst dealing officials and CSS officers as amongst others; there is therefore more specialisation based on familiarity with the work developed in this group than elsewhere. The strong generalistic bias in a typical secretariat wing is again

a legacy from the past. Its continuing to occupy a powerful position is due, among other things, to two main reasons : the pattern of civil service organisation, and the fact that it is the generalist cadres that effectively control personnel management policy.

4.11 The fifth prominent feature is the prevailing rigidity of the system. While theoretically all ministries have the freedom to develop their own organisational patterns, freely moving away from standard concepts, in practice they do not undertake much experimentation. That which they do go in for is usually within the framework of the four basic features discussed above: the status of a wing not being that of a full administrative unit, its structure being dominated by the officers-office notion, its methods by noting and its personnel policies by generalism. The rigidity of the existing system provides comforting stability to those who are part of it, but does not allow for the new requirements of a highly developing situation to be fitted in easily.

4.12 In listing the merits of the system, the first to be mentioned must be that it is a working arrangement, well understood and respected by those who operate it. Then, it is consistent with the scheme of organisation of the higher civil services, as explained above. Dividing the administrative process within a wing into "decision-making" and "dealing" makes for an economical arrangement because the decision-makers, who cost more, need only be a few in number. Having only a small number of decision-makers fits in with the educational system, which does not produce a large number of quality graduates. A small group of officers controlling decision-making makes it possible, at least in theory, to have a well-knit and well-coordinated administrative machinery, as personal contact between the officers of different wings and ministries becomes easier. The elaborate arrangements prescribed under the present system for handling correspondence ensure the orderly building up of record, which in turn assists decision-making and also helps to keep Parliament informed of the reasons for decisions. The practice of noting could be said to be conducive to logical, precise and thorough thinking, and as a tool of decision-making preferable to lengthy, and often woolly discussions. The dependence on generalists ensures that issues receive broad administrative consideration. The rigidity of the whole arrangement makes for stability and order.

4.13 On the debit side, the system obtaining within a wing (or other comparable units) is more criticised than most other aspects of public administration. The following are its major demerits:

- (1) A wing being thought of as only a part of the secretariat is not organised as an efficient administrative unit. The responsibilities of the joint secretary in charge are not defined clearly enough and he has virtually no powers in his capacity as the head of the wing. The wing has no identity in the budget and often none in its physical location. It thus has a hazy individuality, which makes it difficult for the government in the matter of getting responsible and purposeful work out of it.

- (2) The division of the administrative process into "decision-making" and "dealing" splits responsibility for all items of work between the officers and the dealing staff. It is doubtful whether this is the best method of allocating responsibility between the available personnel in any given organisation. Officers often allow priorities to be set for them by their subordinates, the order of arrival of files on their tables being the determining factor; also, incompletely examined cases are marked back to the dealing levels, sometimes with trivial queries, rather than being quickly disposed of at officer levels. Dealing officials are often content with the minimum of effort and not time-conscious enough. The outcome of these attitudes too frequently is delays and qualitatively poor decision-making. The whole concept of the officers-office pattern seems, in any case, to be out of gear with the democratic base of the country.
- (3) The number of officers is so small that too heavy a burden rests on their shoulders. They tend to get absorbed in daytoday responsibilities and find little time to think, plan and organise. The consequent absence of direction from them on basic matters creates uncertainty about the line of action to be adopted in individual cases, and eventually adds to their work. There is thus a vicious circle which steadily increases the burdens of the officer class and correspondingly reduces the contribution of the office.
- (4) The system requires the officers to be men of high calibre to whom decision-making comes easily. Rapid growth of the machinery has however led to a drop in quality. As noted earlier, almost half of the officers are now taken from the "dealing" ranks and have therefore little direct experience of executive decision-making. Many of those who come from the various central services are similarly handicapped, particularly those from the accounts services. There is consequently a large block of officers who prefer to be note-writers than to be decision-makers. This intrusion of "office" attitudes in the officer ranks, particularly heavy at the lower levels, has further added to the burdens of the few officers who have the capacity to function as decision-makers, and reduced their ability to think, plan and organise.
- (5) The mix between decision-making and dealing cannot be the same for all types of work; yet concepts of standard staffing prevent the proportion between officers and dealing officials from varying very much.
- (6) Many of the dealing officials are potentially good material, but remain tied to the limited task of "dealing" for the formative years of their careers. During this period they are not made full use of by the very nature of the system; and by the time they

are eligible for entry into the decision-making world of officers their initial promise is usually snuffed out. This amounts to a wasteful utilisation of promising material.

- (7) All matters, big or small, are subjected to the same method of processing. Whether the issue is how a simple letter should be replied to or what the answer is to a pressing tactical problem or what long-range policy should obtain in a particular area, there is the usual series of notes up the hierarchical ladder until a decision is taken. Problem-solving and long-range policy-making thus tend to receive more or less the same attention as the daily round of correspondence, and this is not good enough.
- (8) There are too many levels of handling in a wing : two at dealing stage and three at the decision-making. This spreads responsibility over too many people vertically and, since the method of work is a consecutive consideration of files, a good deal of time is lost in the movement of papers between levels and also in consideration at each level.
- (9) Inter-ministry consultations are frequently a major cause of delays. For one thing, there are too many things on which ministries have to consult other ministries, either because of irrational grouping of subjects or because of insufficient powers in personnel administration and financial management. Even where consultations would be necessary in any case the procedures are lengthy, with formal references travelling vertically down and up the hierarchical ladders of the ministries consulted and the usual phenomenon of noting at all levels. Since cases involving inter-ministry consultation are often amongst the most important, delays here are a particularly distressing feature.
- (10) The generalist manning of a wing makes for qualitative inadequacies in the handling of problems. It also introduces delays, since the specialists to be consulted are usually located in parallel structures outside the secretariat or in advisory hierarchies within.
- (11) The prevailing rigidity prevents new forms and methods being easily developed to meet fresh needs. With all its good points, the system thus shows up as particularly inadequate in the face of the modern phenomenon of rapidly developing needs.

### III

#### **Approach to reorganisation**

4.14 It is in this background that an approach to reorganisation has to be developed. But before doing so, it would be useful to make a quick review of past reform efforts in this area:

- The arrangement in parts of the Department of Iron and Steel is representative of one type of experiment. The section there consists of a section officer and a single assistant instead of the standard pattern of one section officer and four assistants and an



upper division clerk. This type of experiment certainly corrects the numerical imbalance between decision-makers and dealers, but leaves the officers-office concept intact. It also leaves other demerits untouched and is therefore of limited value.

- The experiment of pilot sections and the arrangement of attaches in the Ministry of External Affairs represent another approach. A pilot section had three section officers and three upper division clerks in place of one section officer and four assistants and an upper division clerk. The numerical imbalance between the sections and the officers remained unrectified in this experiment. But since the section officers were permitted to function as decision-makers in a small way, this step did try to bridge the gulf between officers and office. However, it provided no answers for other shortcomings. The position of attaches is similar in some respects, they are supposed to be decision-makers in a limited way, but the arrangement provides a cure for only one or two ills of the system.
- Then there is the measure known as level-jumping. This aims to reduce the number of handling levels by arranging work-flow in such a way that either the section officer or the under secretary or the deputy secretary is "jumped" on the way up, the "jumped" official seeing all files on their way down. The measure is generally regarded as conflicting with the principle of unity of command and is not very popular with the ministries.
- Level elimination is, on the other hand, popular and widely in vogue. It amounts simply to there being either a deputy or an under secretary between the office and the joint secretary, but not both. A handling level is reduced in such an arrangement more effectively than in level-jumping, but that is the only gain. All other defects of the system remain unsolved. And two other defects are created: the joint secretary has work coming to him from more officers and thus gets more burdened than before; and the deputy secretaries could be said to be wasted, since they are utilised virtually as under secretaries.
- The officer oriented system in parts of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply is a more far reaching experiment than all the above. There are no sections there, nor dealing officials. Under a deputy secretary, a group of two under secretaries and four section officers are ranged horizontally, each functioning as a decision-making officer with stenographic facilities and powers of disposal within specified limits. Here a wing has only three levels and the distinction between decision-making and dealing is done away with. But nothing continues as the main tool of decision-making; and all the officers are generalists, often handling technical work. The experiment has several desirable features but does not go far enough.
- In a part of the Foreign Trade division of the Ministry of Commerce there is a modified form of the desk officer system in

operation. Below the joint secretary there are officers of different ranks, ranging from deputy secretary to assistant director, and with secretariat as well as non-secretariat designations. Each such officer is allocated specific items of work and, except in one case, deals directly with the joint secretary. There is one section to service all the officers; its section officer and three assistants collect data and other relevant material, maintain files and draft replies to receipts of simple or routine nature as instructed by the desk officers. The system marks considerable advance over other experiments inasmuch as it allocates specific responsibility to the desk officers who are expected to keep themselves fully conversant with all aspects of their work. However, the method of work continues to be noting-based.

- In order to expose CSS officers to executive decision-making, there are arrangements to send them for sixteen months' training to the states. But the scheme is worked in a half-hearted fashion; only 136 out of 3370 CSS officers in position today have had the benefit of this training.
- The practice in parts of the Ministry of Commerce and the Department of Economic Affairs to write papers on problems, particularly where research is required, is a laudable effort to break away from the monopoly of noting as a tool of decision-making.

4.15 This review mentions only the more significant measures undertaken in the past, but is indicative of the concern of the Government of India for reform in this area. The range of ideas tried out is wide; the process of experimentation has lasted over many years and a fair amount of local initiative is evident in that several ministries have struck out in directions of their own. However, all these measures do not seem to have made big enough impact and the system of working appears to have remained much the same as ever. One reason for this, perhaps, is that this is an area where conservatism is particularly noticeable, as a result of which it is difficult for reform measures here to make much headway. Another and more important reason, probably, is that the various efforts were limited in ambit and did not fit into an overall strategy of reform. Whatever the reasons, the results are disappointing as the observed defects largely remain.

4.16 A new approach must clearly aim to remove the observed defects. And in doing so, it must not have too limited a compass or lack an overall strategy. Analysis of the defects listed in para 4.13 shows that there are four points at which changes might have to be made if these defects are to be eliminated :

- (i) the status of a wing as an administrative unit;
- (ii) the officers-office structure pattern;
- (iii) the position of noting as the only method of work; and
- (iv) the monopoly of generalism in the secretariat.

These key points are discussed below *seriatim*.

4.17 *The status of a wing.*—In the previous chapter, we recommended in effect that type A secretariat wings should be converted into administrative offices having a functional and administrative identity of their own. Consistent with that approach, it is our view that, if and where it is not possible to introduce that overall reform, a type A secretariat wing should at least be accepted as an administrative unit which should be the focus of all future reform effort in the secretariat. This would recognise the important position subject joint secretaries have come to occupy in the decision-making set-up. It is they who should now be held chiefly responsible for the efficiency of administration within their respective wings, and their powers and functions should reflect this role. What this means is that, while remaining part of the secretariat, a wing should stand out in relief as a distinct unit with clear-cut responsibilities, powers and functions allocated to the head of the wing. The first step in this direction should be to ensure that, as stressed in para 4.2, there is homogeneity of functions and unity of command in a wing. But there would have to be other steps to see this line of thought to its logical conclusion; powers for the joint secretary as the wing head, a budgetary identity for the wing, compaction of the physical space occupied by the wing and so on.

4.18 *Its structure.*—The officers-office pattern will need to be recognised as obsolete. For one thing, officers with executive experience are not available in large enough numbers to maintain the pattern in its pure form; the considerable intrusion of ex-office hands and accounts men into the officer ranks has changed the complexion of the arrangement so much that it is but a pale shadow of what it was meant to be. Secondly, the volume and complexity of government business has grown to such an extent that it is not really possible for a handful of officers to do justice to it; and it is particularly wasteful in this context that there should be a relatively under-utilised army of dealing officials, many of them good material, who cannot be harnessed more purposefully. Thirdly, the educational base is no longer so narrow as to permit the possibility of the present pattern alone. And lastly, if what is required is more responsible functioning of larger numbers of government employees, the present arrangement must give way to one in which more employees than only the officers have a sense of participation. The existing pattern divides the functionaries into three classes: officers, dealing officials and ancillary staff. What is obsolete in this is the distinction between the first two. A new pattern should have only two categories: administrators and ancillary staff. This should make it easier to break away from the rigidity of section-based standard patterns and to introduce variegated structures related to the different types of work a wing has to handle.

4.19 *Its methods of work.*—The position of noting as virtually the only method of work will also need to be treated as obsolete. The main reason for this is that a single method of work fails to take account of the variations in the tasks to be performed in a wing. But there are two subsidiary reasons also for considering a change in the position of noting. Firstly, the method of noting carries with it the

notion of consecutive consideration; the file containing a note moves from functionary to functionary, each one applying his mind only after those who have gone before and becoming more or less *functus officio* on passing the file on to the next person. This holds true whether the file moves vertically or horizontally. Consecutive consideration involves delay. It also places a limitation on the process of communication in that there is ordinarily no reverse traffic; a fresh point made by an intermediary in the noting chain is normally taken into account only by those who come later in the chain. There are thus handicaps in speed as well as quality of handling work. Secondly, it is noting more than anything else which creates the impression that governmental methods are based on mistrust. Nothing can happen without a record of it somewhere in the form of a note. And if there is no note, what has happened is treated either as a non-event or as a suspicious occurrence. While the written word must always be given its due place, the practice of noting often takes things too far.

4.20 The first thing to do in the field of methods is to recognise that the business handled in a wing falls into four categories:

- correspondence handling
- tactical problem-solving
- strategic policy formulation
- special tasks.

These are inter-linked. The daily correspondence frequently throws up problems to be solved; the solution of problems often leads to modifications in strategic policy; and both problem-solving and strategic policy formulation sometimes produce special tasks to be undertaken whether in the field of research or implementation. There is an influence chain in the reverse direction also. But the fact of the four categories being inter-linked does not mean that they merge into one. What is necessary to ensure in a new approach is that there are methods of handling each category of work which are suited to the four purposes, instead of all work being treated with the standard medicine of noting. In fact flexibility in the methods of work in a wing should be matched by flexibility in its structures also.

4.21 *Generalism.*—The prevailing concept that a secretariat wing should ordinarily be manned only by generalists will need to be modified to permit, and in fact encourage, the entry of specialists. This will mean two things. Deployment and training policies relating to generalist staff will have to be changed in such a way as to develop specialisations amongst them. Secondly, specialist and technical personnel may have to be inducted into secretariat wings. In the result, the non-ancillary personnel of a wing will comprise generalists, generalists with some degree of specialisation, and specialists/technologists. We would favour experimenting in the direction of an integrated hierarchy for all these within a wing, rather than a system of parallel hierarchies for generalists and specialists.

4.22 This discussion yields the following as a minimum programme of reform in this area:

Firstly, so long as the present notion of a secretariat stands, a wing should emerge as a distinct administrative unit within the secretariat with functions, powers and responsibilities appropriately allocated to it.

Secondly, the present rigid officers-office structure should be replaced by a structure which does away with the distinction between officers and dealing officials and which is flexible enough to provide for the different types of work handled in a wing. The new arrangement should meet the structural defects listed in para 4.13.

Thirdly, the present noting-based method of work should give way to methods suited to the four categories of work mentioned in para 4.20.

Fourthly, the monopoly of generalism should be broken. Specialisations should be gradually developed amongst generalists, and specialists and technical personnel freely inducted into secretariat wings. They should, as far as possible, be fitted into integrated hierarchies within wings.

This should constitute the basic strategy that should govern intra-wing reorganisation.

#### IV

##### The proposed system

4.23 In the light of this strategy, we would like to suggest a new system which we think might meet the needs of the situation. What we have to propose could, if accepted, be treated as a blue print of what a typical wing should look like eventually. How we should move towards that is a question of phasing implementation and is dealt with later in this chapter. The scheme is first described in outline, and subsequently elaborated in some of its aspects.

4.24 The outline of the proposed scheme is as follows:

- (1) The wing should have a homogeneous charge and unity of command. Its separate identity within the secretariat should be secured through the following measures: fixing responsibility on the wing chief for administrative efficiency; making a distinct budget allocation; providing compact office accommodation; and specifying powers for the chief in personnel, finance and office management.
- (2) Structurally, there should be the following units horizontally arranged below the chief of the wing:
  - Two to four divisions handling the substantive work of the wing
  - A cell to give specialised attention to overall problems of policy planning and programming

- Cells for special tasks, if any
  - A unit each for office management and registry work.
- (3) A substantive division should be headed by a director and should have five to twelve executives ranged horizontally below him and allotted responsibilities like desk officers. A heavy division may have a deputy director as well. All executives should have stenographic support. Substantive divisions should be responsible for correspondence handling and tactical problem-solving.
  - (4) The cell for policy, planning and programming should be headed by a director and may have two to three executives with stenographic support. If necessary, one or more officers of the directing level may be carried additionally in the cell for short periods for studies of and research into major problems. The cell should not duplicate the work of the substantive divisions, and should confine its attention to the overall problems of the wing, particularly those with a long-range content.
  - (5) The structure of special cells should depend on the nature of the special tasks to be performed by them. At one extreme could be a cell with a single functionary of the directing or executive level; at the other end, a cell not much smaller than a substantive division. The distinctive feature of special cells should be their continuance only for so long as the special work leading to their creation lasts.
  - (6) The units for office management and registry should be placed under an *aide* of the rank of a senior executive, working directly under the chief of the wing. The registry should be headed by a competent officer well-versed in records management and may conveniently have sections on its records side reflecting the divisions and cells. Staffing here may follow conventional patterns.
  - (7) There should be no noting in the divisions and the cells. Correspondence should be looked after by the executive concerned under the guidance of the head or the deputy head of a division. Problem-solving, strategic policy-making, planning and programming should be attended to by the technique of paper-writing described later.
  - (8) Each of the three levels in the structure of the wing - the chief, the directing staff and the executives - should have more than one scale of pay associated with it, and sanctions for posts at a particular level should be deemed to cover any of the scales fixed for that level. We visualise two scales linked to the chief's post, three to the directing level and five to the level of executives. The scale or scales invoked at any particular time should be judged as an issue of personnel administration rather than of financial management. Where the scale of pay of an incoming

official does not precisely match any of the sanctioned scales in the wing, he should be fitted into the nearest one to his parent scale.

- (9) Personnel for the three levels should be drawn from the existing generalist sources as well as appropriate specialist sources after careful selection. Until reorganisation reaches a stabilisation point all appointments to reorganised wings should be on tenure deputation, the period of deputation being ordinarily not less than six years.

4.25 Each point of this outline is elaborated in the succeeding paragraphs. The degree of elaboration is adjusted to what is, in our opinion, required for understanding the scheme. In the event of its acceptance, more detailing would be necessary at the stage of implementation. As in the case of the scheme of overall reorganisation suggested in the previous chapter, we have carried out skeleton reorganisation exercises in a few selected wings in different ministries to test our ideas. The study reports of these exercises are at † special annexure B and should be read for further elaboration of what we have in mind.

4.26 *First.*—The first point seeks to meet what is brought out in para 4.17. The basic thought there is that the chief of a wing should be held responsible for its administrative efficiency. It may be asked whether that is not already the case. Theoretically, the answer is in the affirmative; “the joint secretary should function as a miniature secretary and should be held accountable”, according to a recent clarification from the Secretaries’ Committee on Administration. In practice things are different, chiefly because of the organisational deficiencies which handicap the functioning of joint secretaries as wing chiefs. We would suggest the following measures to give a role to the wings and their chiefs which might be more conducive to their efficient functioning:

- (a) It should be reaffirmed that the primary responsibility for good administration within a wing is that of its chief. The common services provided from the “administration” side of the ministry should be regarded as aids to the wing chief and should be operated in that spirit. The tendency sometimes noticed of subject joint secretaries withdrawing from the full performance of their roles and expecting the joint secretary in charge of administration to take the initiative in nearly all matters pertaining to the administration of their wings should be firmly checked.
- (b) The wing chief should be held primarily responsible for the supervision and control of his staff generally and in particular for enforcing punctuality, order and decorum within the wing.
- (c) He should have greater say in personnel administration than at present, the overall responsibility for control in this field continuing to vest in the chief personnel officer of the ministry.

He should be consulted in the selection of personnel for appointment to posts in the wing. No member of his staff, particularly on the non-ancillary side, should be transferred out of the wing without his consent. He should also have elementary powers in the field of personnel management such as the following:

- power to sponsor suitable subordinates for training or fellowships
  - power to grant honorarium or to permit any employee to undertake work for which fee may be offered
  - power to impose minor penalties on defaulting employees
  - power to fill short-term leave vacancies on an officiating basis
  - power to exempt an employee from the rules limiting his halt on tour to ten days and allowing him daily allowance at full rates.
- (d) The budget of the wing should appear as a distinct unit in the budget of the secretariat of the ministry. The chief should have a hand in its formulation, and should in any case be mainly responsible for ensuring that expenditure does not exceed the budget as also for showing economies. To enable this function to be discharged the administration side of the ministry should keep the chief informed of the progress of expenditure and other relevant facts from time to time.
- (e) The chief of the wing should have the freedom, within broad limits, to vary the pattern of organisation under him as changing circumstances may demand. Preferably this should be accompanied by powers to create posts within the wing subject to budget provision and any general orders in the matter. The object should be to make flexibility of the structural pattern in a wing a reality, particularly when it is necessary to carve out cells for the handling of special studies and tasks.
- (f) In the field of contingent expenditure, the budget of the wing should show the allocation for the wing, although actual spending may continue to take place on the administration side of the ministry. However, the final say in regard to a contingent expenditure relating to the wing should be that of the wing chief.
- (g) The wing should be housed compactly. The chief and the directing staff should be where the rest of the wing is located; this will enable them to see to its efficient functioning continuously. The wing chief should be responsible for arranging a rational office lay-out, as also for ensuring that the premises are clean and provide a healthy environment for work.
- (h) While the central registry of the ministry may continue to receive incoming mail and despatch outgoing communications, the registration of incoming mail and the fair typing of drafts should be decentralised and located within the wing. Government offices and the public should be encouraged to address



correspondence to the particular wing (or even division) of a ministry instead of to the secretary of the ministry or to the ministry generally. Official forms, letter heads, etc. should bear the name and address of the wing so that correspondents are obliged to send their replies to this address. The implication of all this would be the partial decentralisation of the central registry and the creation of registries in the wings.

**4.27 Second.**—A peculiar feature of the present system is the contrast between the span of control of a secretary and that of a joint secretary. For the former there is almost no limit, and it is not uncommon to find secretaries with more than ten wings per head. But in the case of a joint secretary the common pattern is not more than two divisions or their equivalent. It appears that when work began to expand, the number of joint secretaries per secretary was increased considerably but not the number of deputy secretaries per joint secretary, as is borne out by the figures in para 3.11(a). When spans of control are expanded, there has to be greater delegation, and it was evidently found safer to contemplate wider delegations for joint secretaries than for the deputy secretaries. Whatever the cause, we find no particular reason now, either from the angle of efficiency or of economy, to continue pegging the joint secretaries' span to two divisions. A small span undoubtedly makes for closer supervision of work; but it also tends to inhibit initiative amongst those supervised. Just as larger spans involve more delegation and a greater measure of decentralised functioning, smaller spans usually lead to insufficient delegation and excessive centralisation of work at the apex. We would, therefore, suggest a policy of larger spans for wing chiefs than has hitherto been the case. Paradoxical though this may seem, we consider this would lessen their burden by creating circumstances for more responsible functioning at lower levels. Our concrete proposal is a modest one taking the size of the span from the present two conventional divisions to an average of three new divisions plus cells and units for extras. Ordinarily a wing need have only the one cell for policy, planning and programming, and if a cell might be reckoned as half a division the new span would be about three and a half divisions, the units for registry and office services not being such as to throw up much work at the level of the wing chief. This larger span would of course be more economical than the present one. We are convinced that it would, at the same time, not be unmanageable, particularly if the other features of this scheme are also adopted.

**4.28 Third.**—It is at the divisional level that the observed defects call for the biggest changes and it is here therefore that our scheme visualises a substantial transformation. To begin with, it will be seen that we propose doing away with the section-centered pattern of today. It seems to us that nothing short of this can eliminate the prevailing class system of officers and dealing officials, with its concomitant defects of too few officers and too many dealing officials. Next, we suggest only two effective levels in a division, namely, the divisional head and the executive; this will look after the defect of there being too many levels

of handling. With this reform, there will be only three effective levels in the wing (the chief of the wing, the heads of divisions and executives) which we consider appropriate. Thirdly, the scheme employs new terminology for posts : directors, deputy directors and executives instead of deputy secretaries, under secretaries, section officers and assistants. The object is to make a clean break with the past, so that it becomes possible to induct some personnel from hitherto untapped sources without claims arising from those who feel they have rights over any of these posts. Lastly, and most significantly, the division in the new arrangement is only one of the organisational forms in a wing and not the only one; also, the head of a division has a stretchable staff strength under him ranging between five and twelve executives. These two provisions bring in the flexibility which today's rigid pattern lacks. The proposed set-up thus eliminates the more prominent of the observed defects in the present structure.

4.29 The desk officer system, which the scheme essentially is in its manifestation at the divisional level, is well-known abroad. Some of the important features of this system, as we would like to see it operate, are mentioned below:

- (a) Each executive is allotted a defined area of functioning and is expected to acquire specialised experience there. He handles all the correspondence and problems relating to that area, and is consulted by others when their work impinges on his.
- (b) When a communication is received, the executive concerned drafts a reply and issues it in simple situations. In other situations he submits the draft to the head of the division for signature without any memorandum or note. Where the executive has doubts, he has personal discussions with the divisional or deputy divisional head; based on such discussions he either sends out a reply on his own or submits a draft reply for approval, but does not in any case put up a note in support of the draft. Occasionally, a communication gives rise to a problem requiring to be solved. On being identified as such by the divisional head, it is subjected to the problem-solving procedure discussed later. It is not that daily correspondence does not throw up problems which require answers. Issues taken up under the problem-solving procedure are those where decisions are called for at high level, certainly higher than the divisional head.
- (c) Work falling under the problem-solving category is of two kinds. There are, first, problems which arise in an *ad hoc* fashion, either out of the daily correspondence or in the shape of suggestions received from the minister or from any other source. It is for the divisional head to identify and articulate the issues which deserve to be handled under the problem-solving procedure. The other category of problems is of a standing variety. Each division should be able to list its standing "headaches" and review them regularly at appropriate inter-

vals, checking in the process whether any change of approach is required. In either kind of problem, the method of handling is the entrustment of a particular problem to an individual executive or a study team nominated by the divisional head, with the direction that all aspects should be studied and a paper prepared. The paper lists all substantive and operational issues arising out of the problem, describes the background and precedents, takes account of all relevant facts and figures, contains an analysis of the data, and suggests alternative solutions with their advantages and disadvantages carefully worked out. It is so drafted that it can go straight to the decision-making level, which may for certain problems be even the Cabinet. Assuming that the individual or team entrusted with a problem puts in the effort that the system requires, a paper so produced could be superior, as a basis for decision-making, to a series of notes on a file, each succeeding one trying its best to improve on the previous one.

- (d) The study team approach in problem-solving becomes the primary technique for achieving co-ordination, whether intra-division, intra-wing, intra-ministry or even inter-ministry. The selection of teams is thus carefully attended to by the divisional head, in consultation with his counterparts elsewhere from whose divisions members are required. A member of the directing staff or an executive of the "home" division becomes the team leader. It is expected that most differences of opinion should be ironed out in the team; to make this possible, discretion to partake in "give and take" kind of discussions is vested in the members of the team by their parent authorities. Where difference persists on a particular issue, it is clearly brought out in the paper and settled at the decision-making level to which the paper eventually goes. Vigilance at that level helps to see that problem-solving teams do their job and do not take the easier way of referring up all differences.
- (e) Care is taken to ensure that all executives have adequate stenographic support. This does not necessarily mean stenographers at the rate of one per executive. The nature of work of some executives could be such as to justify whole-time stenographers being attached to them. In other cases suitable pooling arrangements are made.
- (f) The executive working at a particular desk is given support in the matter of getting hold of the record relevant to a communication or a problem from the registry of the wing. The division itself has no spare hands for this purpose. This does not rule out the possibility of executives keeping, with the assistance of their stenographers, a few "hot" files where action is continuously required to be taken. Further elaboration about the records aspect is given later when dealing with registry.

4.30 Switching over from the conventional to the proposed system will require the strength of executives in each division to be determined. Since the new system will be entirely different to the present one, in structure as well as in methods, a perfect formula of equivalence between the staffing pattern under that system and the present one is difficult to conceive. However, to begin with, we would suggest that executives should be provided in a new-type wing at the rate of one executive for every two dealing hands under the old system. This would mean that a typical division, having twenty dealing hands, would need to be staffed with about ten executives under the new arrangement. Since there would be three divisions in a reorganised wing, there would have to be about thirty executives in the entire wing. A typical pattern could be for two of the divisions to be medium sized with only eight executives each, and the third a big one with twelve executives. The third could then have a deputy director in addition to the director at the directing level. This is only an illustrative pattern mentioned more to enable a clear idea being formed of what a new wing might look like than to prescribe a rigid formula. In fact, it is necessary to say by way of caution that rigid approaches must as far as possible be avoided when applying the scheme to live situations. Who should be the directors, deputy directors and executives is discussed in a later paragraph.

4.31 *Fourth.*—Attention is invited to the third sub-para of para 3.40, where cells to give specialised attention to overall problems of policy, planning and programming are advocated for the administrative offices visualised there. The justification for an organisation having a separate cell for these purposes is that overall thinking frequently gets squeezed out by the pressure of current correspondence and problems. In the previous chapter, we considered such cells necessary in addition to the administrative office of planning and policy recommended there as an essential part of our scheme of overall reorganisation of a ministry. Here it is necessary to stress that such cells are even more necessary if and where offices of planning and policy do not come up in ministries. These cells would meet one of the most keenly felt needs in wings where the nature of functions calls for overall and long-range thinking. It is this kind of organisational break-through that is required to ensure that the new structure of a wing matches the nature of the tasks to be performed. It might be argued that these cells would cross wires with the substantive divisions and would thus cause confusion. It must straightaway be conceded that this could well happen. However, risks of this type are inherent in any reorganisation which recognises a part of the whole area of work as needing specialised attention. The measures usually adopted to overcome such risks are three. Functions are clearly demarcated as between the special and substantive units: here we visualise that the cell should confine its attention to overall problems of the wing, particularly those with a long range aspect; substantive divisions should thus be left free in the area of correspondence handling and tactical problem-solving. Second, the special unit is staffed by selected personnel who can handle their responsible functions with tact and delicacy: here we would recommend that, while the cell should be small in numbers, it should

be strong in quality; the director and the two or three executives recommended in the outline scheme should consequently be men of outstanding capability specially selected for the purpose. Third, the controlling authority keeps a watch to see that the special and substantive units do not fritter away their time and energy in duplicating each other's work or in fruitless debate: here we would suggest that the chief of the wing should carry a special responsibility to ensure that the concept of a cell to handle overall policy, planning and programming operates in a healthy and helpful fashion.

4.32 The French have a functionary called the *chef de mission* in a number of their organisations. His post is of limited duration and he himself usually a senior man with a wealth of administrative experience. He is not allotted any specific duties, but is given some major problem which requires deep study. In our scheme, the cell for policy, planning and programming will be there for this very purpose. But occasionally a particularly complex and major problem may arise which the cell may find difficult to tackle in its normal stride. Here it seems to us that an adaptation of the French system could be useful. We would suggest, in other words, that when such a problem comes up, there should be no hesitation in appointing additional staff in the policy cell, if necessary of the rank of director, to undertake a careful study of it. Such *ad hoc* staff could be carried for a year, or even more, at a time.

4.33 The method of work of this cell should be entirely based on study and research. The problems to be studied should be selected carefully by the head of the cell in consultation with the divisional heads and the wing chief. The outcome of studies should be papers drawn up by the same kind of technique as described earlier for problem-solving.

4.34 *Fifth.*—It is rarely that tasks arise which cannot be handled in the normal course by the substantive divisions, but when they do special cells to handle them become necessary, even under the present system. In the Ministry of Home Affairs, for instance, work relating to the formation of the new states of Punjab and Haryana was entrusted to a cell consisting of a part-time deputy secretary, a whole-time section officer and two whole-time assistants; the cell functioned for four months and was then disbanded. Small cells were also set up when the President took over the administration of Kerala and Rajasthan. The practice of setting up cells for special tasks is fairly common in the Ministry of Commerce also, where cells were set up to make arrangements for the ECAFE conference of March-April 1966, to organise India's participation in the world fair at Montreal, to work out the impact of devaluation of the rupee specially in relation to trade with the rupee payment countries and to keep stock of Indian cargo detained by Pakistan and *vice versa* during the conflict with that country. But the device of creating special cells is not resorted to in most ministries frequently or early enough. This is chiefly because all concerned find it difficult to free themselves from concepts of standard patterns. We feel that greater manoeuvrability should be introduced in intra-wing structures. Cells of varying kinds

should be quickly formed when new situations and tasks arise, and should be equally quickly disbanded when the need ceases. Often it should be possible to man such cells on a part-time basis by readjusting work as between the executives in the substantive divisions. But where necessary the chief of a wing should be enabled to have posts created quickly beyond the sanctioned strength of the wing in connection with the setting up of special cells. These special cells should, in other words, carry forward the idea of achieving an organisational break-through to ensure that structures match the tasks to be performed and not rigidly prescribed patterns.

4.35 *Sixth.*— In the previous chapter we referred to the defect of top administrators being weighed down with excessive work and not having time to think, plan and organise. We pointed out that this prevented them from providing guidance to those under them in sufficient measure. In the scheme of overall reorganisation presented there, we suggested that chiefs of administrative offices should be given aides to relieve some of the pressure on them; we suggested the same device for secretaries also, if circumstances in a particular ministry justified this. Here, it is necessary to say that, even if and where the scheme of reorganisation is not put into operation, the device of providing aides to wing chiefs should be considered as part of wing reorganisation under the present scheme. Apart from much needed relief to the chief, this would provide a valuable training opportunity to a young officer. We suggest that, unless there are special circumstances to the contrary, every wing chief under the reorganised system should have such an aide, who should be a picked officer from amongst senior executives.

4.36 The measures suggested under the first point of the outline scheme cast a burden of responsibility on the wing chief in regard to the administration of the wing. We consider that for the efficient discharge of his functions in this field he would require some assistance, and we suggest that his aide should give him this assistance with the help of one or two clerical subordinates. This in other words would be the office management unit of the wing.

4.37 The other unit to be placed under the charge of the *aide* would, as suggested in the outline scheme, be the registry of the wing. The proposals in para 4.26 (h) already suggest a partial decentralisation of the central registry to the wings. The description of the desk officer system in para 4.29(f) brings out the dependence of the executive on the wing registry for the supply of records. It is, therefore, necessary to be clear what exactly is meant by the suggestion that there should be a registry in a reorganised wing. The word "registry" is today used in the sense of a receipt-and-issue office, as also the place where the typing pool of an organisation is located. The sense in which this word is used in the proposed system is somewhat different. The wing registry there will be partly a records office and partly a decentralised unit of today's central registry. Its main function will be on the records side, where it

will be the repository of all records which are at present kept on a section-wise basis. As is well known, records fall into three categories: live or current record, which is usually kept by dealing officials; closed files of not more than five years' age since the date of closure, which are kept in the section under the charge of a daftry; and closed files which are older than five years, which are kept in the record room of the ministry. No change is visualised for the third category. The second category will, as explained earlier, find a home in the wing registry with the abolition of sections. The first category will remain with the executives who will be assisted for this purpose by their stenographic staff. We visualise that the wing registry will have sub-units in it corresponding to the divisions and cells of the wing for convenient storage and retrieval of records. We intend that the registry should be headed by a registrar who is an expert in records management. We recommend that, in order to make for efficient functioning of the wing registry, a functional file index system should be introduced for opening and storing records; a description of this will be found at ¶annexure II. This would greatly facilitate the business of tracing relevant records, and would be a considerable improvement on the present indexing system. We understand that a functional file index system has been tried out in certain parts of the central secretariat. It should not therefore be difficult to extend its application to the reorganised wings. The wing registry would thus be primarily a records office. But it would also handle the registration of incoming mail and the fair typing of drafts for issue. In view of the crucial importance of the registry in a reorganised wing we would recommend that it should be generously staffed, at least in the first two years or so, in order that the new system is not handicapped by difficulties in the matter of locating previous record. A generous initial scale of staffing would also help in switching over to the functional file index.

4.38 There are two main reasons why we favour the idea of a wing registry. Firstly, the present practice in some ministries of keeping receipt, issue and typing work centralised leads to delays and irresponsible functioning, as previously pointed out. The opposite extreme of decentralising typing to sections does not allow play for looking after "rush" work in certain sections, and is inclined to be somewhat wasteful in man-power. The happy mean between these extremes would be the wing, particularly as this would be consistent with the new role visualised for wings and their chiefs. Secondly, the present practice of using the sections as record rooms for recently retired files, although salutary for the efficient working of a section-based system, has no place in the reorganised arrangement in which sections as such will disappear. But there is a point of greater significance in the transfer of sectional records to a wing registry. This is that administrative structures tend to freeze round the units where records are stored. It is the fact of sections being miniature record rooms that most contributes to the inflexibility of the present section-based system. In the new arrangement we would not like to associate this kind of inflexibility with the divisions and cells. But such stability of structure as the presence of record bestows on an organisation

would certainly be welcome at the wing level, because our entire thinking is centered on making the wing the basic administrative unit of the future.

4.39 *Seventh.*—To those brought up on the present methods, having to work without noting is almost as inconceivable as having to breathe without air. Many a civil servant recognises that noting as a system is inadequate and burdensome, but sees no alternative to it. When told that the private sector operates without noting, he rightly points out that public accountability does not have to be reckoned with there. Whether a no-noting system is possible consistent with public accountability remains unanswered in his mind. Our approach has been to start from the premise that noting as a system is obsolete and that the point is not whether it should go out but how it should be replaced. We recognise that private sector office methods do not necessarily provide a reliable precedent for government work in view of the factor of public accountability in the latter. However, we observe that the governments of several countries with advanced systems of administration also function on a no-noting basis. Many of them are not parliamentary democracies of the Indian type, but that only means that public accountability operates there in a slightly different fashion. Leaning on the experience of these countries, we would advocate the bold measure of eliminating noting altogether in the reorganised system. We are hopeful that a workable no-noting method can be evolved, without damage to the principle of public accountability, provided that the will is there to find answers to the questions that are bound to arise.

4.40 While many of these questions will arise and need to be answered after a no-noting system has been put into operation, some major questions need to be dealt with at this stage in order to present a reasonably workable alternative to noting :

- In the absence of noting, what will be the vehicle of decision-making ?

The answer lies in the categorisation of work into correspondence handling, tactical problem-solving and strategic policy-making. All the work of a substantive division should normally fall in one or the other of these categories. As explained earlier, correspondence-handling should be governed by the "draft" system and problem-solving and strategic policy-making by the paper-writing technique.

- Will notes not be necessary at least for submitting drafts and papers to the appropriate higher authorities ?

Such submissions should be made through router slips of which printed forms should be made available to every executive. Samples of router slips for the submission of drafts and papers will be found at Annexures III and IV.



- In regard to accountability, how will the reasons for decisions be known without noting ?

The new system will have two kinds of decisions. There will first be decisions taken on the basis of papers produced for policy formulation and problem-solving. Whether the decision-making level for a paper is an individual (*e.g.* the Minister) or a committee (*e.g.* the Cabinet), there will have to be a brief minute indicating the precise nature of the decision and perhaps mentioning the most prominent reasons for it. This minute and the paper considered should between them provide adequate material for parliamentary work. Secondly, there will be decisions taken in the course of correspondence-handling. Here the replies to communications should be as briefly self-contained as possible, so that reasons can be located within the correspondence itself. Where this is not possible, brief minutes of reasons could be recorded at the back of the office copies of out-going communications. The proposed system does not in any case contemplate a separate noting file.

- What will be the system for keeping a record of inter-ministry consultations ?

Here again the question could be considered in two parts. Where the paper-writing technique is to be employed, the views of the various ministries consulted should be incorporated in the paper itself.

The practice should be for a draft paper to be prepared by the study team leader, after suitable discussions in the team, and for that to be shown to every member. Suggested amendments from members should be recorded on the draft paper itself. Where the correspondence-handling technique is used, the need for inter-ministry consultation should ordinarily be rare. When it does arise, consultations should be verbal, preferably on the telephone. The fact of such consultation having taken place should be recorded briefly at the back of the office copy of the draft. Unless the ministry consulted desires to see the draft before issue, it should be sufficient to send a copy of the outgoing communication to that ministry.

- Will the absence of noting not add to the burden of senior officers ?
- The answer to this depends on the quality of the staff at the executive level. Given responsible functioning at this level, the burden of higher authorities should diminish considerably rather than increase.
- Considering that the body of previous notes serves as a memory store which is particularly useful in a tenure system of officer-manning, will a no-noting arrangement not produce a vacuum here ?

If paper-writing and correspondence-handling are attended to in the manner described above, they should between them provide all the memory background necessary for future incumbents of the wing. But this by itself may not be sufficient to provide continuity. Personnel policies will need to be modified to ensure that staff in the wings stays for long enough periods. This is discussed further in a subsequent paragraph.

4.41 *Eighth.*—Considerations of efficiency in structures and methods suggest that there should be as few functional levels as possible; we visualise three. As against this, a sound personnel policy in the field of remuneration is one based on a number of scales of pay. One of the problems that has to be faced in basic organisational reform is how best to reconcile the apparent conflict between the numbers of levels and pay scales. One alternative in the present reform proposals would be to think of reducing the number of pay scales down to a single pay scale for each functional level. But this would create a major problem in regard to fitting existing personnel into the new system; several categories would either have to be treated as surplus to requirements or brought upwards into the new unified pay scales. Apart from the practical difficulties this would present, there would be the important point that having only three pay scales in a wing may not be conducive to good personnel management; the existence of several rungs in the pay scale ladder is after all useful by way of providing an incentive for good work. Another alternative would be to keep the pay scales of the three functional levels as close to existing secretariat pay scales as possible; this would mean giving the scale of a joint secretary to the wing chief and that of a deputy secretary to the divisional head. There would be some difficulty in selecting the pay scale to be given to executives, candidate scales being those of under secretaries, section officers and assistants. This approach might be considered as slanted towards retaining the present generalist pattern of a secretariat wing. If specialists are to be inducted, the wage pattern of a wing must be such as to allow easy entry to them. This suggests that adhering to existing secretariat pay scales may not be the right thing to do. The particular alternative we have chosen is one in which there would be more than one scale of pay associated with each functional level, the sanctions for posts at a particular level covering any of the scales fixed for that level. We would suggest that the pay scales so associated with the three levels should, as far as possible, include existing secretariat scales, and should further embrace as many specialist pay scales as possible. As mentioned in the outline, we visualise two scales at the level of the wing chief, three at the directing level and five at the level of executives.

4.42 It may be argued that having more than one pay scale at a single functional level is objectionable in view of the principle laid down by the Second Pay Commission that "services and posts whose duties and responsibilities are comparable should, other relevant circumstances being the same, carry substantially the same or comparable rates of remuneration". It seems to us that the Second Pay Commission

could not have intended that wage scales and functional levels should correspond to each other exactly, because if that were so they would have gone much further in the direction of reducing the number of pay scales than they actually did. In any case, what may appear to be a sound principle from the angle of devising a wage policy must surely be tempered with what is essential from the point of view of securing efficiency in structures and methods. Even in the present system, there are several precedents of more than one pay scale at a particular functional level. Officers of the Indian Civil Service, for instance, draw higher wages than officers of other services in posts of joint secretary and above. The wage given to a deputy secretary differs according to whether the incumbent belongs to the Indian Administrative Service, the Central Secretariat Service, any of the other generalist central services or the engineering services. In a reorganisation recently carried out in the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, under secretaries and section officers are placed functionally at the same level as basic handling officers, and in doing so no difficulty appears to have been encountered. We thus see no objection in principle to linking several pay scales with a single functional level.

4.43 Far from being objectionable, we see our proposal as having a number of advantages. For one thing, it would permit personnel to be drawn from conventional sources as well as sources so far untapped for the secretariat. Secondly, it would provide what may be called "vertical flexibility" within functional levels; individuals will not need to be transferred away after short spells only because they are due for promotion elsewhere; also at the time of selecting a wing chief, a divisional head or an executive, it will not be necessary to be tied to a single wage level only. Thirdly, the presence of a number of scales within a functional level would provide incentives and open up the possibility of a more enlightened policy of personnel management based on performance. Fourthly, the concept of standard scales at the three functional levels would ensure that personnel coming from different sources with different parent pay scales are treated at par once they are inside the wing, doing the same kind of work.

4.44 Our specific proposals about what precisely the wing scales could be at the level of chief, directing staff and executives are set out in ¶annexure V. Along with the proposed scales at each level are shown, in two columns, the existing secretariat scales for generalist staff and the existing scales for specialised cadres; it is from these two broad sources that the wing posts will be filled. It will be seen that we visualise two scales for the wing chief; they are those applicable in the existing system to additional and joint secretaries. At the directing level we visualise three scales, namely those applicable to deputy secretaries, directors and a step higher. At the executive level we recommend not less than five pay scales; this is because it is necessary to accommodate staff at this level from many sources, stretching from assistants at one end to persons of the rank of assistant economic advisers at the other.

As mentioned in the outline scheme, it should be open to the appointing authority to invoke any one of these scales at the time of selecting personnel; it is considerations of personnel administration that should weigh at the time and not those of financial management. The scales suggested are not a collection of all the existing scales applicable to possible generalist and specialist sources of recruitment. But they are wide enough in their range to facilitate the entry of generalists as well as specialists. It may be that in some cases incoming officials do not find scales exactly matching their own, in which case they should be fitted into the nearest available pay scale.

4.45 *Ninth.*—With the flexibility provided by the above system of variable wage scales, it should be possible to select personnel for the reorganised wings from varied sources, generalist as well as specialist. It is important that all appointments to reorganised wings should be made with great care, selections being confined to those who can be expected to function adequately in the new system. We would suggest that from the beginning there should be an effort to induct a significant number of personnel from specialist sources. However, it may be inadvisable to overdo this in the early stages of reorganisation. A practical approach might be to increase specialist representation in reorganised wings gradually. We would suggest that, where the nature of the work requires a good deal of specialisation, the aim should be to go up to about 50 per cent specialist representation in three to four years from the date of reorganisation of a particular wing; elsewhere the target could be a more modest one depending on the nature of the work in the reorganised wing. The personnel initially drawn from the traditional generalist sources may, in this process, have to be reduced as and when more specialist staff becomes available from non-traditional sources. This should be anticipated and regarded as a favourable factor, in that the generalist personnel so replaced by specialists could be utilised as the nucleus of reorganisation in new wings to which reorganisation may be extended as part of a phased programme.

4.46 We would suggest that all the posts in a reorganised wing should be treated as temporary until a point of stabilisation is reached in regard to this type of reorganisation. What should be regarded as an appropriate stabilisation point is a matter of judgment, we would say that this should be when a large enough number of wings, say 50 per cent of the existing type A wings, have been reorganised. Until then, personnel should be appointed to posts in reorganised wings only on tenure deputation. This would have two advantages : it would give much needed operational flexibility for making a success of the proposed system; and it would give breathing time to the central personnel authorities of the Government of India to work out the overall personnel and cadre implications of a wide application of this scheme.

4.47 At present, notions about what constitutes an appropriate period for deputation vary according to considerations of management of the cadre to which a particular individual belongs. Thus, IAS

officers come to the Centre for three years tenure in posts of under secretary, four years in posts of deputy secretary and five years in higher posts; the periods have some relationship with the cadre management of the Indian Administrative Service. Again, personnel of the Central Secretariat Service ordinarily go out to ex-cadre posts for not more than two years deputation at a time; this is largely because longer periods are said to create difficulties in cadre management. We would recommend that tenure periods for deputation to the reorganised wings should be fixed solely from the point of view of what is desirable to make the new system work efficiently. It seems to us that the success of the proposed system will, to a large degree, depend on the extent of knowledgeability of the staff deployed in the reorganised wings, whether they come from generalist or specialist sources. To promote this factor of knowledgeability, it is essential to have fairly long tenures, and we would suggest that the ordinary tenure period should be six years, which should be extendable for a second six years' period in suitable cases. This six year-rule should apply to all staff, whether drawn from central secretariat sources or from non-secretariat generalist sources or from specialist sources.

4.48 We would urge that the development of personnel appointed to the three functional levels in a reorganised wing should be given careful attention by the wing chief in consultation with the personnel side of the ministry. In other words, while initial selection of personnel should in any case be made with great care, this should not be an end of the matter. Suitable orientation and training programmes should be devised which extend the capacities and knowledge content of both directing staff and executives. The training programmes should include short-term fellowships for study in selected areas of relevance to the work of the wing, whether within the country or abroad. One of the aims of such programmes should be to make good the lack of experience in decision-making of personnel drawn from central secretariat sources and possibly also from some of the accounts services. We have no doubt that the opportunity of working in a reorganised wing will itself provide such experience; but it may be useful to send selected personnel out for a year or two at a time to executive agencies of the central government or to the state governments with the agreement of the latter. In such cases, we would strongly advocate an incentive being provided to those who are sent out for such training in the form of a special pay of, say Rs. 200 per mensem. It is necessary to stress the importance of programmes of personnel development, because without them reform in structures and methods will bring only limited benefit. Wing chiefs may find it impossible to undertake meaningful programmes if it involves their sending out three or four executives at a time from within the sanctioned strength of executives. We would consequently suggest that there should be what might be called a "development reserve" in the sanctioned strength of a wing, the exact strength of which could be worked out in relation to the development needs of particular

wings. The needs of wings in sectors of administration dealing with industrial development would, for instance, be greater than those dealing with relatively static subjects.

4.49 A special burden of responsibility should rest on the wing chief and the directing staff to ensure that the proposed scheme works in a healthy fashion in its personnel aspect. This will involve measures in two directions. Firstly, an integration will need to be achieved between personnel drawn from generalist sources and those drawn from specialist sources. The two must learn to respect each other and work together as a team. The day to day guidance which inevitably flows from higher levels should aim to fill the gap of generalist personnel in specialised knowledge and that of specialist personnel in administrative grasp. Secondly, it will have to be ensured that all personnel operating at a particular level are treated functionally at par regardless of their sources of recruitment or pay scales. This does not mean, of course, that regard should not be had to the experience of the variegated personnel at the executive level while allocating subjects to individuals at that level. What it does mean is that persons drawn from the ranks of assistants or section officers should not, once they become executives, suffer from the handicap of not being able to operate exactly as other executives, particularly in the matter of communication with other ministries and membership of study teams.

4.50 That then is an elaboration of our scheme. It leaves many questions unanswered; but we hope it is adequate for a broad understanding of the new system. Comments on two points may remove some [doubts :

- (1) We have tried to check what the work-load of a reorganised wing would be and whether it would be manageable for the executives of the substantive divisions. A study of twenty-four sections in seven different ministries carried out in 1963 by the O & M Division revealed that the average number of receipts in a section was 9,000 per annum. If this were to be considered representative enough, the three substantive divisions of a reorganised wing would have to handle about 9,000 receipts per month, since they would replace twelve sections. Each of the 28 executives proposed in the above scheme for these divisions would thus have to look after 13 receipts per day. At first sight this might seem too heavy a load. But studies have shown that 30 per cent of all receipts are of a routine kind requiring minor attention only. For the rest, since the new methods of work will simplify matters a good deal by excluding noting and some stages of handling, the work-load should not prove unmanageable. We have in mind the fact that dealing officers in the reorganised Works Division in the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply are able to handle 12.7 receipts per day despite having to work through the present relatively cumbersome method of

noting. The executives in a reorganised wing would, of course, have to produce papers and serve as members of study team in addition to handling correspondence. No estimate of work-load on this account can be made at the present stage; but our expectation is that, while the problem-solving technique may take up time in the study of problems and the preparation of thorough papers, it will in the long run help to reduce work by setting clear leads on the basis of which correspondence can be easily and quickly handled. On the whole, therefore, the substantive divisions should be able to manage their work, given the will to do so on the part of the executives and careful supervision on the part of the directing level. But it may be useful to give each substantive division an extra executive on a provisional basis for an initial period of three years.

- (2) We have also attempted a comparison between a typical wing of the present system and one of the proposed. The organisation charts at †annexures VI and VII provide a pictorial comparison. The statement at †annexure VIII compares the existing and the proposed situations from the angle of personnel and cost. Since the new wing will have three substantive divisions against the two of the present, the statement contains figures for a wing and a half under the "existing" columns. It will be seen that the number of personnel will come down by slightly over 20 per cent. Costs will also come down, though by a smaller percentage of a little less than 7 per cent. The reason for a smaller reduction in costs is that the proposed system is based essentially on fewer but better paid staff. The significant fact that this comparison highlights is that it is possible to switch over to a modern system of working by keeping well within existing costs.

## V

### Implementation

4.51 As in the case of the scheme of overall reorganisation presented in the previous chapter, this scheme should be treated as one of "framework" importance. Its consideration should, in other words, be in broad terms, detailed implications being looked after as a part of implementation once it is held to be on the right lines. The first point in such a consideration would be to make an assessment of the broad advantages and defects. On the plus side, the proposed scheme constitutes a comprehensive and integrated alternative to the present system. It offers promise of doing away with most of the defects in the existing arrangement. It is economical both in personnel and in costs. On the whole, it seems to be workable. On the other side, two possible difficulties could be mentioned. For one thing, the scheme would result in surpluses being created in certain categories of posts, particularly assistants and upper division clerks; its introduction would

thus need to be linked to a scheme for redeploying such personnel elsewhere and a curb on fresh recruitment at the appropriate levels (see para 3.57). Secondly, the scheme depends on an adequate number of personnel of the right type being found for posts of executives and directing staff; this suggests that it should be gradually introduced, taking care not to go so fast as to outrun the availability of good personnel. It is with these broad considerations in mind that a judgment must be made as to whether the scheme is, on the whole, worth taking up or not.

4.52 If it is held to be a good scheme, we would suggest that there should be a phased programme for its implementation. The phasing should be adjusted to the two difficulties mentioned above, namely, the redeployment of personnel rendered surplus in reorganised wings and the location of good enough staff to man these wings. In the first phase, three or four wings may be selected for implementation. In some ways it might be useful if these were to be in the ministries where the overall reform of the previous chapter is to be brought in, because there would be a reorganisation machinery then to keep an eye on this scheme as well. But in case it is felt that that would double the reorganisation problems of those ministries, the wings to be selected for this scheme could be in some other ministries. In that event suitable reorganisation machinery would have to be set up in these other ministries. The guiding consideration must be that the wings to be reorganised must be under the charge of a secretary and a wing chief who are sold on the idea. Nothing short of the fullest support at these levels should be regarded as an adequate prerequisite for the successful implementation of this scheme.

4.53 We would suggest that the central reorganisation committee to be headed by the Cabinet Secretary, suggested in the previous chapter, should have the overall responsibility in regard to the implementation of this scheme as well. In case the wings for first phase implementation are in ministries other than the four where overall reform is to be introduced, the secretaries of those ministries could also be included in the central reorganisation committee as members. Within these other ministries, the reorganisation machinery should consist of the secretary of the ministry assisted by the chief of the wing to be reorganised and a specially strengthened O & M unit. The following is suggested as a possible sequence of events :

- (a) The selection of the wings to be reorganised and the inclusion of the secretaries of the concerned ministries in the central reorganisation committee.
- (b) The selection of the chiefs of the wings to be reorganised and the strengthening of the O & M units in the concerned ministries.
- (c) The working out of detailed reorganisation schemes for each of the selected wings, with a phased plan of implementation in each case.



- (d) The introduction of a functional file index for records followed by the setting up of a wing registry.
- (e) The setting up of a cell for policy, planning and programming and the positioning of directing staff in the new divisions to be created. At this stage the third division to be included in the wing could be brought in.
- (f) The switching-over of divisions to the new system one by one, including the selection of executives, the working out of drills for correspondence - handling and problem-solving, and so on. The division-wise implementation could, if necessary, be spread over a couple of years, so that lessons learnt from implementation in the first division could be applied to the rest.

4.54 Much more than the scheme of overall reorganisation put forward in the previous chapter, this scheme requires the backing of the government and of civil service leadership. There will be many occasions when the scheme will seem to yield more problems than it solves. It is at such moments that the strong and steady support of those at the top will be required.

## CHAPTER V

### STRUCTURES AND METHODS : STAFF MINISTRIES

#### I

#### General

5.1 The previous two chapters dealt with structures and methods with particular reference to non-staff ministries. Here we proceed to consider the problems of staff ministries. These require separate treatment because, while all ministries have distinctive features, staff ministries are in a class by themselves. The difference between staff and non-staff ministries is brought out in para 3.6. The generalised schemes of reorganisation suggested in the last two chapters could conceivably be applied to non-staff ministries after making modifications to suit the local circumstances of individual ministries. They would, however, be inappropriate as bases of reorganisation in staff ministries because the problems of such ministries are very particular, springing as they do from the specialised functions that they perform.

5.2 That is not to say that a common approach to reorganisation is not possible for such ministries as a class. In the first place, this approach would have to recognise that each staff ministry has its own problems; reorganisation must consequently be taken up separately for each such ministry, taking note of its particular needs and without any preconceived model. Secondly, it would also have to recognise that staff ministries require specialised functioning even more than non-staff; their manning and structures must fully reflect this. A third point to be borne in mind would be that, to the extent relevant, the ideas developed in the previous two chapters should be applied to the reorganisation of staff ministries; but this must not be overdone, otherwise the whole point of separately devised reorganisation schemes would be lost. These three are very broad guidelines, but it would be inadvisable to try to set down anything more detailed.

5.3 With these in mind, we decided to have a look at a few staff agencies selectively. We chose for this purpose the proposed Department of Personnel, the Department of Administrative Reforms and the proposed Department of Regional Planning. In each case, we were fortunate to be able to base our considerations on detailed study reports. There was a report from a working group specially constituted by us for the Department of Personnel; a report from a UN expert invited by the Government of India for the Department of Administrative Reforms; and a report from another specially constituted working group for the Department of Regional Planning. The three study reports will be found at †special annexure C. In the subsequent sections we briefly explain the salient features of these reports followed by

† In Volume II.

our own views in each case. We hope that the recommendations made will prove useful in the setting up of the two proposed departments and the reorganisation of the Department of Administrative Reforms.

5.4 We would suggest that the Government of India should institute similar special studies of other staff agencies, such as the Department of Expenditure and the Ministry of Law. We regret that we have not had the time to undertake this task ourselves.

## II

### Department of Personnel

5.5 A working group consisting of Shri M. Ramakrishanayya, Joint Secretary, Department of Social Welfare and Shri G. R. Nair, Deputy Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms was requested to develop specific proposals for the organisation, functions and staffing of the proposed Department of Personnel in the light of the suggestions made by us in our earlier report. In this task the group was assisted by Dr. Ross Pollock and Dr. Harry R. Seymour of the Indian Institute of Public Administration.

5.6 The broad features of the recommendations made by the working group are as under :

(1) The major functions of the Department of Personnel would be :

- formulating overall personnel policies, in aspects like recruitment, promotion, morale, vigilance and discipline, career development, training, and maintaining liaison with the UPSC and other concerned organisations;
- providing guidance and leadership to the departmental personnel agencies in personnel management, both generally and through advice on individual cases;
- hunting for talent and regulating appointments to key posts, keeping touch in the process with the Bureau of Public Enterprises;
- managing the affairs of the Indian Administrative Service and the centralised cadres of the Central Secretariat Service;
- undertaking and promoting research in personnel administration, serving as a clearing house of information on modern aspects of personnel management, and man-power planning for government requirements;
- overseeing generally the implementation of the policies and regulations formulated by the department through a system of inspections and reporting.

- (2) For discharging these functions, the department should be organised in four wings, each under a joint secretary :
- A policy wing consisting of
    - \* a policy formulation division, and
    - \* a policy implementation division.
  - A career systems wing consisting of
    - \* an appointments division dealing with key appointments, talent hunting and foreign assistance programmes in the field of personnel administration, and
    - \* a cadre management division dealing with management problems of Indian Administrative Service and centralised aspects of Central Secretariat Service.
  - A development wing consisting of
    - \* a planning and research division attending *inter alia* to manpower planning in regard to Government requirements, and
    - \* a development division operating as the focal point for formulation of development and training programmes and conducting and promoting such programmes both centrally and departmentally.
  - An inspection and housekeeping wing consisting of
    - \* an inspection division to oversee implementation of the policies and regulations formulated by the department through various media such as inspections, reports and so on, and
    - \* a housekeeping division serving as the internal personnel office of the department.
- (3) In its work the department should be guided by the deliberations of the Council on Personnel Administration meeting periodically under the chairmanship of the secretary. The Home Minister should be enabled to get a real 'feel' of expert thinking on important issues of personnel administration through the medium of an Advisory Board on Personnel Administration headed by him. The department should work in close collaboration with universities, private corporations, state governments and the Bureau of Public Enterprises in its task of evolving new policies. In its methods of work, it should be research-oriented, not only in the development wing but also at the policy formulation stage. It should adopt both reporting techniques as well as a system of inspections to oversee faithful implementation of its policies.
- (4) A large number of functions which this department would be called upon to perform are such as would require a generous measure of expertise in those who are charged with their per-

formance. It is, therefore, necessary that it should be expert-oriented to the maximum extent possible. For instance, the policy formulation division should have staff of the category of analysts, well trained in various analytical and research techniques. Similarly, the divisions in the development wing and the inspection division should have staff possessing training and experience of a specialised character. It is envisaged that the existing staff in the Ministries of Home Affairs and Finance with experience of handling personnel management problems should be able to function effectively in a number of positions in the department. It is, however, important that for other positions, persons with the types of specialised skill and expertise needed for evolving and implementing sophisticated personnel management policies should be inducted into the department, post-entry training being also arranged wherever necessary.

5.7 We are in agreement with the approach adopted by the group and suggest that if any worthwhile improvement in personnel administration is to be effected, action on these lines is essential. In its detail, this study report should be treated more as furnishing a blue print to be implemented in stages, having regard to the availability of the requisite expertise, than as a basis for immediate reorganisation. The blueprint itself will need to be interpreted, and if necessary amplified, in the light of the recommendations in the next chapter dealing with personnel in the machinery.

### III

#### **Department of Administrative Reforms**

5.8 A study of the Department of Administrative Reforms was made, at the invitation of the Government of India, by Mr. C. James Gardner, UN Inter-regional Adviser in public administration, in March 1967. He was assisted by a panel consisting of Shri A. D. Moddie and Shri S. S. Puri although the final report is his own. The study was organised to review the structure, manning and methods of work of the department. The Government felt that such a review was timely, not only because three years of the department's existence had highlighted requirements and weak points, but also in order to gear up the department to undertake the important work of follow up of the reports of the Administrative Reforms Commission. The study was able to take account of our earlier report, which indicated the functions expected to be performed by the department and its place in the machinery of the Government of India. Broadly, we visualised there that the department should keep an overall eye on the administrative health of the governmental machinery and should initiate measures to promote efficiency in all its branches. We recommended that it should be lodged in the Prime Minister's charge and should operate under the overall control of the Cabinet Secretary. We stressed the need to organise it on lines that would make for effective functioning

and, in this connection, to induct specialisation into its working, even if this meant departing from conventional ideas about personnel management.

5.9 The salient features of the study report are as follows :

(1) The main function of the Department of Administrative Reforms should be to provide an advisory management service to promote improved conduct of public affairs, largely by the application of more advanced management practices. This should *inter alia* involve :

- a programme of planned reviews as a means of identifying areas where detailed studies are likely to prove significant and effective in bringing about improvements
- undertaking studies for the Government as a whole or for individual ministries
- promotion and development of O & M activity in the various ministries as well as in the states
- organising O & M training and research
- serving as a clearing house of information on modern management techniques.

The department should also attend to the work of follow-up action on the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission.

(2) For discharging these functions effectively, the department should be organised in three wings :

- a training and administration wing with two distinct divisions to look after internal administration and O & M training, to undertake research and generally co-ordinate O & M activities
- an administrative reforms wing to be primarily responsible for implementing the reports of the Administrative Reforms Commission
- a central organisation and methods wing, consisting of a number of divisions specialising in various aspects of O & M like organisational analysis, mechanisation systems, work measurement, operations research, and so on.

Each wing should be headed by an officer of the rank of joint secretary and a division by an officer of the rank of deputy secretary or director. Each divisional head should be assisted by officers of the rank of under secretary, with good academic background and specialised training and experience in one or more fields of O & M activity, for leading project teams or conducting specialised assignments. Below the level of these branch specialists, there should be a number of first and second level O & M officers, corresponding to junior/senior analysts and research assistants.

- (3) As organisation, procedures and methods studies are connected with personnel and financial procedures and practices, the department will need to work in close collaboration with the proposed Department of Personnel and the Ministry of Finance. It will likewise need to have close links with the Bureau of Public Enterprises. Further, it should maintain contact with institutes and universities conducting management research. Where necessary, it should also draw upon private management consultants to do some of the highly specialised work that might come its way, using such opportunities to secure 'on-the-job' training for its own officers. It should exercise the utmost discretion in accepting specific advisory work and in assigning priorities. It should operate in such a way that it helps maintain the confidence of its client departments and organisations.
- (4) Specialisation should be regarded as indispensable if quality service is to be provided in the field of management advice, and the staffing policies of the department should be re-fashioned to gain this objective. A professional class of O & M officers should be built up by selecting a corps of promising officers from the widest possible base cutting across all cadres. The Department of Administrative Reforms should be the overriding cadre authority to control and manage this corps. Procedures and regulations, to enable it to perform this function, should be worked out in consultation with the central personnel agency and the various cadre authorities. The corps management authority should have control over the selection of officers for the corps and the programming of their further development. All O & M training in India or abroad (including scholarships) should be handled by the department and should normally be confined to officers in this corps. Postings to O & M jobs, whether in the department or in the ministries, should normally be made only from the corps. Normal tenure rules should not apply so that these officers may continue for at least six years in O & M posts. Where an officer becomes due for promotion in his parent cadre, arrangements should be made to give him a comparable promotion in his O & M posting. Where an officer is considered fit for promotion to a vacant position but is junior for such promotion in his parent cadre, he should be given local promotion without the benefit of seniority. There should be flexibility in the terms of sanction of O & M posts to allow for the induction of suitable officers and for the promotion of an incumbent. (We have called this "vertical flexibility" elsewhere in this report).
- (5) It should be possible to find suitable officers to man posts of heads of wings and divisions from the public service, though some of them may need to be developed through appropriate

and varied programmes of training in India and abroad. In areas where it is not possible immediately to develop suitable officers, e.g. operational research, the secondment of well-qualified officers from the private sector or abroad on contract for limited periods is suggested.

5.10 We consider this study report to be a valuable contribution to organisational thinking in this area. We broadly support the scheme of reorganisation it visualises but would make the following comments :

- (a) The report contemplates work measurement as a function to be allocated to the charge of the Department of Administrative Reforms. This is contrary to what is recommended in our own earlier report. We do not see enough justification to change our previous view that work measurement should continue to be handled by the Ministry of Finance.
- (b) The report implies that the wing heads of this department should be equivalent in rank to joint secretaries, from which it presumably follows that the departmental head should be higher in rank. It could be argued that this would be too top heavy an arrangement for this work. We are impressed by the underlying argument of the study report that the immediate lieutenants of the departmental head should be able to deal on equal terms with those in the various ministries who are at effective decision-making levels, namely joint secretaries. We would suggest, however, that the proposal should be treated as a blueprint towards which things can gradually move rather than as something which must be brought about immediately.
- (c) The report visualises that the department should serve as a clearing house of information on modern management techniques. We should like to say that the Department of Administrative Reforms should provide leadership in the matter of inducting into the government modern aids to management, including measures like statistical quality control, systems analysis, computerisation and so on wherever their introduction is called for.

5.11 A neglected area is the study of overall questions in the field of public administration. We recommend that it should be one of the responsibilities of the Department of Administrative Reforms to go beyond management advice in the limited sense and, on a continuing basis, to examine such questions or to get them examined through specially constituted committees. It needs to be recognised here that the report of the Administrative Reforms Commission may initiate a process in which many successive studies might have to be organised to take matters further along the line of change. An illustration of what should be the concern of the department, but has not so far been, is development administration and all that goes with it. The



department should work in close conjunction with the Planning Commission and should perhaps have a unit specialising in the problems of development administration. (This would be in line with the recommendation in our earlier report suggesting that the development administration division of the Planning Commission should be transferred to this department). Another major concern of this department should be to keep under review the role of self-governing institutions of all kinds, so that development and other tasks allotted to such institutions are matched by measures to improve their administrative competence. It is this type of problem constituting a kind of overview of the totality of public administration in the country that appears to have been neglected in the past and that requires the systematic attention of an agency like this department. We would suggest that an additional division should be fitted into the administrative reforms wing proposed in the study report, for what might be called "perspective reforms".

5.12 The Department of Administrative Reforms<sup>1</sup> will need to keep in close touch with the proposed Lokpal, on the one hand, and the nodal agency for "administration" and inspection recommended in chapter IX, on the other. Useful ideas of reform are likely to arise from the functioning of these two institutions.

#### IV

#### Department of Regional Planning

5.13 In our earlier report, we gave a broad outline of the functions of the new Department of Regional Planning proposed by us. Since regional planning as a concept is comparatively new to India, we thought it would be useful to have the organisation of this department worked out by a working group which would include town and country planning experts. A small group consisting of Shri B. B. Vohra, Joint Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Shri Gian Prakash, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Planning, Shri C. S. Chandrasekhara, Ex-Chief (Urban and Regional Development), Planning Commission, Shri J. K. Chowdhury, Architect and Planner, and Shri G. R. Nair, Deputy Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms was asked to develop detailed proposals for the organisation, functions and staffing of the proposed department.

5.14 An outline of the recommendations made by the group is as below.

(1) The tasks before the department would fall into three major functional heads namely :

- functions relating to regional and urban planning like rendering technical advisory and consultancy or specialised services to the Central, state and local bodies, preparing regional plans for inter-state resources regions and evolving broad patterns of urbanisation and regional development,

- functions relating to development of regions and urban areas (implementation of plans) like promoting development programmes involving investment in housing, water supply and drainage, urban reconstruction, traffic and transportation, slum clearance, establishment of new towns, and
  - functions relating to management and administrative aspects of regional and urban development like strengthening the managerial and technical ability of local bodies, improving their training programmes and organising methods of evaluation and research,
- (2) These tasks should be distributed among five distinct wings with a sixth looking after internal establishment and house-keeping. Heavy work and varied expertise will be involved in handling the tasks falling under the second functional head; these should consequently be distributed among three wings. Briefly, the department should have :
- a regional and urban planning wing to look after the work falling under the first functional head. This should have a unit of three zonal officers to render technical advisory and consultancy or specialised services on a zonal basis, an inter-state resources regional planning unit and an urban and regional planning perspective unit,
  - a housing wing with units for policy formulation and programming, promotion of financing institutions, dissemination of specialised knowledge and techniques in regard to materials and design, and development of a central organisation to work in close collaboration with State Housing Boards,
  - a water supply, drainage and municipal services wing having separate units to look after supply and drainage, other municipal services like gas and water, atmospheric pollution and environmental satisfaction, from the point of view of health and aesthetics,
  - an urban reconstruction, renewal and new towns wing having four units, one for urban development, reconstruction etc., another for metropolitan traffic and transport problems, a third one for new towns and lastly a land policy unit for securing effective utilisation of land and minimising speculative practices,
  - a local government wing having a unit for urban local bodies, another for rural local bodies, a third one for training, evaluation and research, with a fourth devoted to building up managerial competence of the local bodies,
  - an administrative services wing with a unit for publicity and public relations to propagate the concept of regional planning, a general administration unit to operate as internal personnel office of the department and a documentation and library unit.

Considering the importance that needs to be attached to housing programmes and to local government affairs, the department should be known as the "Department of Regional Planning, Housing and Local Government".

- (3) There should be a policy advisory committee to assist the minister in the formulation and implementation of the policies of the department. There should be close inter-wing co-operation to secure a cross fertilisation of ideas and experience. It should be possible for experts in one wing to change places with experts in other wings and to work on different assignments. Urban and regional planning being multi-disciplined in character, composite units should be assigned to tackle the different problems. A panel of consultants should be available to the department from which experts can be assigned to the study of specific problems. There should be a 'feed-back' from the zonal advisers under the Regional and Urban Planning wing to the perspective unit as well as the inter-state resources regional unit of the wing.

While publicity and public relations units should be located in the administrative services wing, its staff should be functionally assigned to the different wings to work intimately with the staff there to build up the necessary programmes.

- (4) In its various non-administrative wings, the department should be staffed with people who either possess the technical qualifications or have developed the necessary expertise otherwise. There should be considerable flexibility so that the multi-disciplined units to be established can be realigned with appropriate changes in their composition to suit changing needs. The department should adopt it as a cardinal principle to recruit staff through job specifications and to insist on men of high calibre for the manning of its higher level posts. It should leave posts unfilled if persons of the requisite calibre are not available. The secretary need not necessarily be an expert though an expert with requisite administrative capacity need not be precluded from being appointed as such. The chiefs in charge of the operational wings should be of the rank of joint secretary with technical or specialised experience in the particular fields. A deputy secretary could be in charge of the administrative services wing working direct under the secretary.

5.15 We endorse the line of approach of the working group. We would recommend that these suggestions should be implemented in a liberal spirit taking what has been said as a set of broad indications and gradually working towards achieving the set-up envisaged as and when the trained personnel become available.

## CHAPTER VI

### PERSONNEL IN THE MACHINERY

#### I

##### Prefatory

6.1 The three major components of an administrative system – structures, methods and personnel – are so intertwined that, even though the preceding chapters dealt primarily with structures and methods, a good deal was said there about personnel matters also; there would be little point in repeating that here. Different aspects of the subject of personnel administration were entrusted to three other study teams; it would be presumptuous for us to attempt a comprehensive review of personnel problems of the kind those teams will undoubtedly have carried out. Having made these points, it is necessary to say that we do see the need for going, in this chapter, into a few aspects of personnel administration which we consider vitally important for the healthy functioning of structures and methods, present or proposed.

6.2 First, we have gone into some problems concerning what is sometimes called “senior management”. At various places in our earlier report, as well as in the previous chapters of the present one, we have referred to the important roles of the Cabinet Secretary and the secretaries of ministries. We have also spoken of the roles of chiefs of secretariat wings and non-secretariat organisations while discussing the present system, and of chiefs of administrative offices while outlining the new system proposed by us. All these functionaries jointly constitute the senior management which runs the business of public administration, under the Cabinet. At present, their total number is 290: the Cabinet Secretary, 36 secretaries, 4 special secretaries, \*25 additional secretaries, \*143 joint secretaries, 38 advisers and others in the secretariat with the rank of joint secretary and above, and 43 heads of non-secretariat organisations equivalent in rank to additional or joint secretaries. This body of senior managers has a commanding position in the administrative system. A reorganisation on the lines of what is suggested earlier, or on any other lines, might result in some changes in its size and composition, but even in the new situation it would have to be fairly small in numbers with a commanding role. Whether the present system continues or a new one is installed, therefore, improving the quality of senior management and maximising its effectiveness should be regarded as questions deserving very high priority in reform efforts. Even marginal gains here would bring rich dividends in the overall improvement of public administration.

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\*Includes advisers with corresponding *ex-officio* ranks.

6.3 Secondly, we have examined some problems of manning the headquarters posts (see para 6.29) in support of senior management. In earlier chapters we have repeatedly stressed the need for moving away from the prevailing generalism in the service cadres towards greater specialisation, particularly at the levels of middle and lower management. We are convinced that such a move is inescapably necessary, whether the structural reforms recommended in earlier chapters are put through or not. It is important that this should not remain a pious wish only and that a way should be found for giving the idea practical shape. Here then is another area of personnel administration requiring priority attention.

6.4 These aspects are discussed in the succeeding sections. The proposals made are consistent with and supportive of the reform of structures and methods recommended earlier. But that is not to say that all of them stand or fall with those reforms. In fact, much of what is said in the next two sections could be considered independent of any other reform measure.

6.5 It is necessary to clarify that the discussion that follows may not be applicable in its entirety to organisations with special features of their own like the armed forces, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Railways, although some of the principles in the recommendations made might well be found acceptable there. The management of public enterprises is, in any case, totally excluded from consideration.

## II

### Senior management

6.6 Senior management in the Government of India presents a strange paradox. Most of its members are men of high ability and dedication, with a rich fund of experience and administrative judgment. They work hard in circumstances which are not always encouraging; many of them regularly devote ten or twelve hours a day to their duties, foregoing most Sundays and holidays in the process. Although senior administrators have contributed materially to whatever has been achieved by modern India, there is the depressing fact that, despite all its good points, senior management does not seem to have been able to "deliver the goods", as it were. It has not been effective enough in the implementation of plans and policies; it has been unable to check deterioration in the standards of public administration; and it appears to have been too engrossed in every day matters to have provided leadership in adjusting the whole system to new requirements through major reform measures. This paradox of good men working diligently but producing inadequate results makes it necessary to examine what exactly is wrong.

6.7 Two preliminary points need to be made. First, senior management operates within the framework of the present structures and methods of work. This places a number of limitations on its effectiveness.

In our earlier report, as also in the previous chapters of the present one, we have made a number of recommendations for the reform of the present system. Some of these are relevant to maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of senior management. The more important are :

- that the position of the Cabinet Secretary and of the Cabinet Secretariat should be strengthened,
- that there should be a strong department of personnel, with a senior secretary at its head and the Cabinet Secretary functioning as a kind of secretary-general without being styled so,
- that there should be a series of secretaries' committees in support of the various Cabinet committees,
- that the position of secretaries of ministries should be recognised as one of pivotal importance, and that the relationship between secretaries and ministers should be placed on a sound footing,
- that ministries should be internally reorganised to give a new place of importance to chiefs of administrative offices,
- that functions like policy-planning, personnel administration and financial management should, within ministries, be entrusted to specialist senior managers, and
- that there should be policy advisory committees in the ministries which give an opportunity to senior managers to do group thinking under the leadership of the secretary.

These and other recommendations should, if implemented, facilitate the functioning of senior management and make it possible for it to make a bigger impact than now.

6.8 Second, the effectiveness of senior management depends a great deal on how political leadership regards it. In the past, senior administrators have sometimes been looked upon with distrust, partly due to their historical link with British rule. The performance and behaviour of some individuals amongst them may have been such as to have given grounds for lack of confidence. The development of a healthy relationship between political leadership and senior management is basic to the effective functioning of the latter, and consequently to the efficiency of administration generally. Political leadership, whether in government or outside, must recognise the vital importance of senior management as an institution and accept the implications of that. Amongst these would have to be the discarding of such attitudes against senior administrators as a class as may be based on prejudice rather than reason; the adoption of positive attitudes, including a concern for policies and practices being developed to promote efficient senior management; and the giving of a degree of respect and regard to senior management consistent with its importance in national life. Senior management must, on its part, recognise the true nature of its responsibilities. Since the contact of the administration with the political leadership is through senior management, the latter has a role which transcends

the purely administrative. The senior administrator must have the capacity to communicate with political executive, so that he understands the essence of what they want, and can, on the other hand, put across to them the view-point of the administration. He must also have qualities of tact, so that he is able to get along with the politicians he has to deal with. As the upper-most layer of the management hierarchy, senior management must concentrate on developing managerial skills and providing the correct lead to the rest of the administration. It is important to stress these principles, obvious though they may appear, because ensuring that the role of senior management is correctly understood by both political leaders and senior administrators themselves is in our view a fundamental prerequisite to making it more effective than in the past.

6.9 The management of senior management can now be examined to see where the weak points are. The catalogue of defects that follows should not be taken to mean that we are unaware of the good aspects of the present system.

6.10 The cardinal defect is that the management of senior management does not appear to exist as such. We would like to draw attention to three aspects of this observation.

The defect in question is a reflection of the fact that the importance of senior management is not fully recognised, either at the political level or at the bureaucratic. As mentioned in para 6.8, senior management has a distinct role to play, and nothing less than a full acceptance of this proposition can be an adequate starting point for further thinking on this subject.

Then, it is not clear what precisely the government regards as "senior management", in whatever form it accepts the concept. There is of course no official definition. On the premise that ordinarily the Cabinet and its agencies should concern themselves with only the senior levels of management, it might be thought that a definition would be deducible from what is actually considered here. The Cabinet itself looks at only two kinds of management points; the creation of posts carrying a scale higher than Rs. 3,000/- per month and the re-employment of retired personnel at emoluments higher than this. Its Appointments committee deals broadly with all appointments in the secretariat at the level of deputy secretary and above, and outside the secretariat against posts carrying scales of and above Rs. 2,000/- per month (see †annexure IX). The Cabinet Secretary formulates proposals for the appointment of secretaries, special secretaries and additional secretaries. Proposals for the rest are evolved by the Central Establishment Board headed by the Cabinet Secretary, which also handles appointments of under secretaries and certain types of appointments outside the secretariat (see †annexure X for the functions of the Board). These facts yield no clear picture about what constitutes senior management in the eyes of the government. Our own view, as indicated in para 6.2, is that senior management should be taken to include all joint secretaries and above,

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† In Volume II.

and their equivalents outside the secretariat. In reorganised ministries, senior management should comprise all chiefs and above. If this is a reasonable definition, the Appointments committee is looking at more than it requires to, assuming that it should concern itself with senior management alone. Also, in that case, the existing division of functions between the Cabinet Secretary and the Central Establishment Board incorrectly splits responsibility for senior management appointments between them.

And lastly, there is little recognition of the need for specialised arrangements for the management of senior management. As observed above, appointments at this level are handled partly by the Cabinet Secretary acting on his own and partly by the Central Establishment Board assisted by the Establishment Officer. The least that is necessary is that the whole task relating to senior management should be looked after at one place and by a single machinery. There is the further point that the management of senior management should involve much more than mere postings, or even promotions. Questions like developing persons to be fit senior managers, organising special training programmes, carrying out studies to see how senior management can be made more effective, and keeping an eye on overall personnel and wage policies to see what adjustments they require from the angle of producing first-rate senior managers do not at present seem to receive the continuous and specialised attention they need.

6.11 Such management of senior management as exists operates within the frame-work of current personnel policies. The weaknesses and limitations of the latter thus become those of the former. Of special relevance are the following:

(1) There are to begin with limitations flowing out of the dominant position of "generalism". First, selection into senior management is heavily from the generalist cadres, particularly in secretariat posts. The following table shows the extent of representation of the generalist cadres at the various levels within senior management.

	<i>Generalists</i>	<i>Others</i>
Secretaries . . . . .	33	4
Special secretaries . . . . .	3	1
Additional secretaries . . . . .	18	7
Joint secretaries . . . . .	115	28
Advisers and others . . . . .	9	29
Heads of non-secretariat organisations	13	30
TOTAL .	191	99



It will be seen that promising sources other than the generalist cadres have remained largely untapped in the first four categories. The heavy reliance on the generalist source deprives senior management of the depth which might come from a larger admixture of persons possessing basic specialisations. It can surely not be the case that specialists are all incapable of displaying the skills and broad administrative vision necessary for senior management. Whether as a result of reform on the basis of this report or otherwise, the future holds an increasingly important place for specialists and the existing restrictions imposed by concepts of generalism on entry into senior management will consequently need to be relaxed.

Next, because of generalism the mistaken idea persists that every senior administrator is good enough to handle almost any senior management assignment. While happily this idea does not prevail in the case of the more important appointments, cases do occur of able officers being given jobs they are not particularly suited for and do not much like. Such officers cannot give of their best. The waste involved in "misfit" appointments of this kind is something the country can ill-afford, considering the shortage of good senior managers.

The same idea is probably at the root of the phenomenon of excessive mobility. Senior personnel are often not kept at their posts for long enough. Often senior personnel themselves want changes to more prestigious assignments and this adds to the problem. Even when senior personnel remain in the same ministry for a number of years, the subjects allotted to them keep changing. We understand, for instance, that in a particular large ministry the practice has obtained for about two years of joint secretaries proceeding on leave one after another in order to accommodate a spare officer at that level; during all this period, needless to say, there have been frequent changes in the charges of joint secretaries as a consequence. Excessive mobility with its accompaniment of short tenures prevents senior managers from getting a full grasp of their work and hence from making the impact they might otherwise be capable of. It also tends to produce attitudes of superficiality in work; officers are reluctant to put in their best when they are not sure of long enough tenures.

(2) There are then weaknesses in the cadre system which feeds senior management. The prevailing system has its origin in the arrangement under British rule when the ICS cadre was there specifically for senior management, whether in the district or in the province or at the Centre. All other cadres had ancillary or subordinate roles. The pattern of experience of ICS officers was such that they were able to fit into the then senior management posts at the Centre adequately. The position of IAS officers today is much the same as that of their ICS forerunners in regard to their experience pattern, and they consequently form as good a source for senior management manning. But this is no longer the only source, since over the years several central services have come to contribute personnel for senior management in significant numbers

[see table in para 3.11(b)]. Also, the diversification of governmental functions that has taken place in independent India calls for more rather than less intake from other sources, particularly from the specialist cadres. These other sources possess promising material, but do not, unlike the IAS, have the advantage of experience patterns that help to develop skills and qualities required for senior management. Personnel from the accounts services and the Central Secretariat Service almost totally lack, in particular, the executive experience necessary for developing truly adequate senior managers. This introduces a weakness, and there is not much in the management of senior management to neutralise it, either through pre-entry training or through post-entry programmes for the development of individuals. The change from uni-cadre to multi-cadre manning of senior management posts thus has implications which seem to have been insufficiently attended to so far. Instead there has been an almost unseemly struggle for bigger shares in senior management posts for the various cadres, creating an impression that the guiding consideration in the minds of all concerned is the good of this or that cadre rather than that of senior management itself.

(3) Another weakness of current personnel policies which affect senior management is the absence of emphasis on training and personnel development. Since there are practically no in-service training arrangements in the feeder cadres, other than "on the job" training, individuals enter senior management with nothing behind them but the experience patterns referred to above. Even where these experience patterns are well-suited to the development of skills and attitudes necessary for senior management, as in the case of the IAS, they are not enough by themselves. (We have made recommendations about this in sub-para (5) of para 6.36). There is need for specially designed courses of training to enable promising personnel in middle management to develop themselves for senior management responsibilities. There is also need for programmes for the development of individual senior managers after their entry into senior management.

(4) Still another, and in some ways the most important, weakness arises out of the various "safeguard" principles which are at the heart of the government's personnel administration. The most prominent of these are the principles of "seniority" and "reservation", both closely linked to the cadre system. Seniority determines the order in which personnel are ordinarily given higher appointments, and reservation the posts to which they may reasonably aspire. These are described as "safeguard" principles because they restrict the discretion of the personnel management authority and prevent it from perpetrating injustice, justice here being viewed in the context of the right of persons at the top of a seniority list to be promoted to certain posts. These concepts of "safeguards" and "rights", which underlie seniority and the reservation of posts, are useful in promoting contentment among services, but prove damaging when strictly applied to senior management. This is because here, more than in any other area of administration, there is need for

flexibility so that the best men can be selected from whichever source they are available and at whatever levels of seniority, without considerations of seniority and reservation standing too rigidly in the way.

6.12 Wage policies also make an impact on such management of senior management as is there. Rising prices have steadily lowered the real wages of all salaried persons. But whereas offsetting measures in the shape of higher salaries have been generously adopted in the private sector, and not so generously in the case of public servants at lower levels, senior and middle management salaries have remained largely unchanged. (There has recently been a stepping up of the salaries of non-ICS secretaries, additional secretaries and joint secretaries).

We suspect that this is an important factor which has contributed to the creation of a larger number of senior management posts than is strictly necessary from the angle of work efficiency. If the salaries of senior managers corresponded more nearly to their counterparts in the private sector than they do now (always remembering that the Government cannot and should not be expected to match the latter exactly), there might have been closer control on the growth of senior posts. If the same were true of salaries at the middle level, there might have been less pressure from below for expansion of promotion opportunities at senior level. As it is, the larger-than-necessary number of posts that seem to be there in senior management have made for dilution; of quality, in that relatively poor material has arrived at the top; of responsibility, in that there are too many to share it; and of efficiency, because both factors contribute to this.

The steady drop in real wages at senior and middle levels has also produced other adverse effects. For one thing, disparity has grown between wages in the public and the private sectors. This has reduced the attraction of government service; the counter-attractions of the private sector and employment abroad draw away a significant number of personnel who might otherwise opt for service under the government. This disparity is also responsible for some kind of inferiority complex developing amongst senior administrators; this exhibits itself to a degree in a lack of self-confidence, on the one hand, and occasional aggressiveness or petty arrogance, on the other. Secondly, individual officers are not now as free of financial worries as they ought to be in a well-ordered system of senior management. More often than is healthy, there is too much anxiety for getting on to the next higher rung of the salary scale, and not enough of the purposeful concern for major problems of administration that should distinguish a responsible senior manager. None of all this is good from the point of view of giving the government effective and dynamic senior management.

The existence of larger-than-necessary posts coupled with the devaluation of wages has produced a situation in which officers of the various feeder cadres expect promotion, at least to the lower rungs of senior management, as a matter of ordinary service right. In the old days dozens of ICS men retired as district officers and no one thought

it a disgrace. Today, circumstances have raised the level at which officers think they can retire with respect to that of joint secretary or its equivalent. This major change in the climate of expectations is responsible, to a considerable extent, for a drop in the standard of selection for entry into senior management.

6.13 Perhaps the most important function to be performed in the management of senior management is the selection of persons for entry in to senior management and for further advancement to top appointments after entry. As mentioned above, the selective process has to take place within the framework set by the principle of seniority, but there is room for a good deal of flexibility in this. Fortunately, as observed earlier, a large proportion of the selections made have been good, as is evidenced by the many capable administrators in today's senior management. But, at the same time, it is our impression that standards of selection within the available area of play have not been uniformly high, with the result that a fair proportion of the posts at all levels in senior management have come to be held by persons who are not good enough and tend to be passengers. This impression is borne out by governmental assessments. "The first thing to ensure is that the selection of officers for posting as joint secretary or above should be done with much greater care", observed the secretaries' committee on administration in March 1965. The tighter screening for senior appointments initiated by the present Prime Minister in 1966 had the same thought as its basis. Our impression is also borne out by some studies we made about the selection of secretaries. The following facts revealed by these studies help in understanding the extent and effect of the change in selection standards at this level over the years:

- (1) 35 selections for promotion as secretary, made during the fifteen years 1932-46, were studied; facts about others were not available. It was found that the persons selected were taken from a number of levels. Only 10 of them were in the immediately next rank of additional secretary; 11 others were joint secretaries or their equivalent in the provinces; 5 were deputy secretaries or their equivalent in the provinces; and one was a collector of a district. The exact rank of the remainder could not be ascertained. As against this, 42 selections, all of ICS officers, made during the eight years from 1960 onwards were studied. No less than 35 of the officers selected were from the immediately next ranks of special and additional secretaries; the rest too were all senior men who had somehow not become additional secretaries, though of the same vintage as some of those who had. It would seem from these facts that selections now are cautious as compared with the past, and there is reluctance to pick men from below.
- (2) The same thing can be viewed in another way. Because of bolder selections, secretaries were younger men in the past than now. There were 9 secretaries in 1934 and their average

age was 49, the oldest and youngest being 54½ and 42½ respectively. Against this there were 40 secretaries in 1966 with an average age of 55, the oldest and youngest being 60 and 49½ respectively. In the five years 1934-38, 8 persons were promoted as secretaries; their average age at the time of promotion was 48½. Against this, in the five years 1962-66, 44 persons were appointed secretaries; their average age at appointment was 53. Thus not only are secretaries now older men than in the past, they are coming into this rank at a higher age.

- (3) A broad comparative judgment about the extent of selectivity can be made by setting the number of secretaries in different years against the number of those who were eligible for selection. Eligibility has been assumed at 22 years' service, although it was only 20 years' some time back; and the figures of eligibles below relate only to the ICS/IAS cadre :

	*Secretaries	Eligibles	Selectivity ratio
	(A)	(B)	(B : A)
1934 . . .	9	223	25 : 1
1948 . . .	19	87	5 : 1
1966 . . .	33	254	8 : 1

Whereas in 1934 every twenty-fifth eligible was a secretary, every eighth is one now. But many of the eligibles in the past became members of Governors' Councils, which is not the case now. A projection into the future shows that, because of the heavy intake of direct recruits into the IAS in recent years (see †annexure XI), the selectivity ratio will go up to a high figure, assuming the number of secretaries at a steady figure of 30 based on the recommendations in our earlier report (see footnote 4 in †annexure XII for explanation):

	Secretaries	Eligibles	Selectivity ratio
1969 . . .	30	378	13 : 1
1979 . . .	30	498	17 : 1
1989 . . .	30	1038	35 : 1

The selectivity ratio curve is thus a saddle, with a peak in 1934, a low trough from 1948 to now and another peak in 1989. Since independence there has been a low selectivity ratio which has made it possible to get along without much selection in the appointment of secretaries. In plain language, not many had to be rejected because the eligibles were few. But from now on, more persons will have to be rejected, which means that there will have to be greater selectivity.

\* Excludes those not belonging to ICS, IAS and other generalist services.

† In Volume II.

- (4) The selectivity ratio adopted above does not give a wholly true idea of the extent of selectivity, since in practice selections are confined to the senior levels amongst those who are eligible. For a more accurate idea, the number of secretaries in a particular year must be put against the number of persons above the junior-most secretary who could not become secretaries, leaving out those who got higher appointments such as membership of Governors' Councils. This exercise yields the following picture about actual selectivity :

	<i>*Secretaries</i>	<i>*Those un- selected</i>	<i>Actual selectivity ratio</i>
1934 . . . . .	9	261	435 : 15
1948 . . . . .	15	67	67 : 15
1966 . . . . .	31	42	20 : 15

The element of selection has thus fallen, and has reached a distressingly low level.

We are aware of the limitations of the facts presented above, but such as they are, it will be seen from them that the selection of secretaries has come to be governed too much by considerations of seniority. We suspect that there is too much "kindness" in accommodating senior men, who have good records but are not really of secretaries' mettle. There is, in any case, too little boldness in going down to bring outstanding men up to the top. Two major deficiencies flow out of all this: not all the secretaries are the best men who could have been appointed; and the age at which persons become secretaries is too high. We have not made similar studies about other levels of senior management, but the underlying defects noticed in the selection of secretaries are probably in existence there also.

6.14 The correct deployment of senior administrators is the next most important function in the management of senior management. The principle of "generalism" casts a long shadow here and tends to act as a force towards unplanned deployment, because to the devotee of generalism it does not much matter whether a person has an aptitude or background for a certain post or not. He is also not seriously enough concerned if individuals stay too short a time in a post or too long. It is our impression, in other words, that the deployment of senior administrators has not had the element of planning that is required to maximise the effectiveness of senior management. We tried to check this impression by studying the facts about the tenure of secretaries in a selected group of ministries since independence. The results of the study are set out in the table at †annexure XIII. Leaving out the present incumbents, the seventeen ministries studied had 84 secretaries between 1947 and now.

\* These figures relate only to the ICS/IAS cadre.

†In Volume II.

No less than 55 of them stayed for periods of less than four years; 25 lasted for less than even two years. 8 secretaries stayed for periods of more than six years, the longest tenure being over nine years. In our view, a secretary ought to stay in his post for a minimum period in order to make an impact, and should not stay beyond a maximum period lest the ministry concerned suffers from his being played out. Four to six years would be the ideal range, and in this view of the matter only twenty-five per cent of the appointments since independence were of the right duration. This conclusion seems to bear out our impression that there has not been adequate deployment planning.

6.15 There are other defects too, some of which are mentioned below.

- (a) Whereas ICS officers can retire voluntarily on full pension any time after completing 21 years' service and on proportionate pension before that, others are permitted to retire voluntarily only after 30 years' service (on full pension). An IAS officer becomes eligible for promotion to senior management at 17 years' service, but if he is not considered fit he must mark time at the lower level for another thirteen years before being able to leave government service with retirement benefits. This produces pressures for the officer being promoted on humanitarian grounds, which in turn lowers selection standards. The same thing could, and sometimes does, happen in regard to promotions from the lower to the higher rungs of senior management. The retirement rules are thus not geared to the need for ruthless selection at senior management levels.
- (b) Nor are they geared to ensuring that officers at senior level go out after suitable periods to permit an updraught of fresh blood from below. The army compulsorily retires colonels, brigadiers, major-generals, lieutenant-generals and generals at the age of 50, 52, 54, 56 and 58 respectively, if they cannot go higher. An IAS officer who is similarly held up in middle or senior management cannot even retire voluntarily, unless of course he has completed thirty years' service. The results in the shape of promotion blocks may become formidable in years to come because of heavy intakes into the service in recent years. (What is said of IAS officers in this and the previous sub-para applies equally to other non-ICS officers).
- (c) There does not seem to be a coherent policy in regard to the two levels of senior management posts intermediate between the indispensable ones of secretaries and joint secretaries. In the beginning of 1954 there were no special or additional secretaries. In recent years, however, these functionaries have come

up in surprisingly large numbers, and their numbers change from year to year. The position for five recent years is set out below.

	<i>Special secretaries</i>	<i>Additional secretaries</i>
1952 . . . . .	3	6
1963 . . . . .	5	10
1964 . . . . .	4	17
1965 . . . . .	6	14
1966 . . . . .	2	16

Some degree of elasticity at these levels is understandable, but too much of it reflects poor selections at the top, for then "consolation" posts have to be found for the good men edged out by the poor, or for other poor men who do not see why they should be left out and form behind-the-scenes pressure groups. In course of time, these relatively dispensable layers in senior management come to be incorrectly treated as indispensable stepping stones for top appointments. An artificial ladder of posts comes into existence to support seniority-bound lines of thinking. An uncertain policy in a matter like this is not, therefore, conducive to objectively planned management of senior management.

6.16 Lastly, there are shortcomings at the apex point, *viz.*, the Cabinet Secretary. We have no doubt that very able civil servants have invariably been appointed to this post. But it seems to us that the forceful and steady direction that good management of senior management requires has not always been forthcoming from this apex point in sufficient measure, with the result that there has often been a feeling of "headlessness" about the senior management of the Government of India. A major reason for this is that the Cabinet Secretary has not been allotted a clear enough role, and a strong enough position, in relation to personnel administration generally and the management of senior management in particular. But we venture to suggest three other possible reasons :

- (a) The first person to be appointed to the post in the rank<sup>2</sup> of a secretary was Shri N. R. Pillai; this was in 1950. Including him, but excluding the present incumbent, there have been six Cabinet Secretaries so far. Their average tenure has been about two years and eight months. One of the incumbents held the post for only ten months. Such short tenures make it impossible for an adequate impact to be made by even the ablest officer.
- (b) Of these six, three were the senior-most at the time of their appointment amongst the officers serving at the Centre. Without calling in question the merit of these officers, we wonder whether seniority is necessarily the right principle to be applied at this apex point.



- (c) One of these three was the one referred to above as having served for only ten months; he was appointed when he had only five months to go out of a year's extension in service given earlier to him; on completing these five months he was given another year's extension, while he was Cabinet Secretary, but served for only another five months and then retired. Another had only seven months to go, but actually served for two years and seven months because he was given two extensions in service for a year at a time. The third was also given extension of over a year. This brings up the further point whether extensions given to Cabinet Secretaries in this fashion should also not be reckoned as a defect.

6.17 There have been several reform attempts in the past having a bearing on the improvement of the government's senior management. A note summarising these is at †annexure XIV. It will be seen from this that there has been a good deal of anxiety on the part of the government to improve matters. Many of the attempts were in the right direction, but could not produce enough in the way of results, either because they were isolated attacks on a multi-faceted problem or because they could not be pressed through steadily.

6.18 It is not without some hesitation that we address ourselves to the question of what could now be done in the way of reform here. For one thing, any reform measures that might be suggested cannot by themselves guarantee improvements, because so much in personnel administration depends on attitudes, and those cannot be prescribed. Then, any measures of significance are bound to have features that many senior managers today, and those hoping to be senior managers tomorrow, may not relish. Again, senior management being what it is, whatever we say may receive a good deal of publicity, and for that reason may come under more fire than it deserves from those who like to see such matters considered quietly. It is our hope that, considering how much depends on the reform of senior management, all concerned will bring to bear on the proposals that we have to make the sober and constructive approach that the subject deserves.

6.19 Considering the wide-ranging nature of the shortcomings in the present system it seems to us that isolated reform measures are not likely to make any significant improvement. We would therefore recommend that there should be a comprehensive plan of reform, which should be as wide-ranging as the defects noticed, and should seek to eliminate as many of these as possible. We have not had the time, nor is it strictly within our ambit, to prepare such a plan in detail. But we have an outline of ideas to offer, which could, if the ideas find acceptance, become the basis of a plan to be formulated by the government in due course. The rationale of our outline is to be found in the earlier paragraphs dealing with the defects of the system, as also, we hope, in its own logic. In addition, some aspects of the outline are developed in later paras.

6.20 The following is our outline of ideas for a plan of reform in this field:

*A. Basic concepts :*

- (i) The concept of senior management as an institution of key importance for the efficiency of public administration should be accepted by the Government as a point of basic policy. Along with it should also be accepted the importance of efficient management of senior management, and the need for special arrangements for this task.
- (ii) "Senior management" should be taken to mean the body of personnel who man posts of joint secretary and above in the secretariat and their equivalent outside. Where the reorganisation proposed in chapter III is put into effect, chiefs of administrative offices and above should be treated as senior managers.
- (iii) "Management of senior management" should be taken to comprise everything required for building up efficient senior managers. It should cover responsibility for policy-making relevant to this purpose, including the review from time to time of overall personnel and wage policies to see what adjustments they require in order to produce first-rate senior managers. It should in any case look after basic matters like training and other measures for the development of personnel for senior management, selection for entry into senior management and for further advancement within that and the planned deployment of senior managers. There should also be occasional studies to see how senior management can be made more effective.

*B. Objective :*

The objective of reform here should be to ensure that the senior management of the Government of India at all times has the best possible talent operating in circumstances that enable it to produce the maximum possible results.

*C. Underlying principles :*

- (i) Only the eminently able should find a place in senior management.
- (ii) Senior management positions should be open to all sources and should not be the preserve of any cadre or set of cadres.
- (iii) Those who become senior managers should constitute a corps, for which there should be specially devised rules embodying conditions of service and procedures of management.
- (iv) These rules and procedures should apply equally to all members of the corps, regardless of their origin.

**D. Machinery :**

- (i) The management of senior management should be a special responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary, assisted by the Personnel Secretary and a special cell in the proposed Department of Personnel. His responsibility and management authority should not be diluted by any part of these having to be shared with standing committees like the Central Establishment Board, subject to what is stated later in regard to selection for entry. If he chooses to consult anyone, singly or in groups, there should of course be no bar. The management of levels below senior management should not occupy his time or attention, except to the extent that any particular point there is relevant for building up efficient senior management.
- (ii) At the Cabinet level, policy governing senior management should be considered by the Cabinet committee on administration. Other matters should be left to the Cabinet Secretary, except that approval for senior management appointments should be obtained by him from the Prime Minister through the Home Minister. This arrangement should supplant the Appointments committee of the Cabinet. (See sub-para (5) of para 2.17 in regard to the role of ministers in the selection of their secretaries).

**E. Development for entry :**

There should be programmes for the development of promising middle management personnel for senior management. Selected men from the non-IAS generalist services should be given opportunities, through an appropriate deployment policy, to gain executive or other experience helpful for development. Selected men from the technical and scientific sources should, similarly, be given opportunities to gain administrative experience. After experience has been gathered in this way, these persons and promising IAS officers at middle management level (not excluding those serving in the states) should be put through specially designed training courses to fit them for senior management.

**F. Selection for entry :**

Selection for entry into senior management should be greatly tightened so that only the eminently able come in :

- (i) Eligibility for entry should be fixed in terms of both minimum and maximum years of service, and of age. For IAS officers the service limits should be 17 and 25 years; for others corresponding eligibility standards should be laid down. No one over 50 years of age should ordinarily be eligible for entry.
- (ii) Increasingly, training should become a part of eligibility. In due course, save in exceptional cases, no non-IAS generalist should be considered eligible unless he has had a three years'

exposure to developmental experience (in the sense of E above), and no technologist or scientist unless he has had a similar exposure to administrative experience. No one - IAS, non-IAS generalist, technologist or scientist and should in future be considered eligible unless he has successfully done a training course for senior management. Those who have already entered senior management during the last three years should be made to do such courses now.

- (iii) Actual selection should be based not only on the character rolls of eligible individuals but also on their total bio-data, including in particular their academic background and performance during training. The Cabinet Secretary and Personnel Secretary should, if necessary, have personal discussions with those under whom promising eligibles have recently served, at the Centre or in the states, and with the eligibles themselves, in order to get a true picture of their potential. The final selection should be based on the recommendations of a committee consisting of the Cabinet Secretary, the Personnel Secretary and one other senior secretary to be chosen for this purpose by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Cabinet Secretary.
- (iv) There should be a two years' period of probation for new entrants in senior management, during which duties should be so assigned that the calibre of an entrant can be accurately tested. The performance of such probationers should be carefully watched by the secretaries under whom they are placed, as also by the Cabinet Secretary and the Personnel Secretary. There should be no hesitation in reverting probationers who fail to show the dynamic qualities required of senior managers.

#### G. *Treatment of non-entrants :*

Tight selection for entry into senior management will be possible only if measures are undertaken to give honoured treatment to those who are conscientious without being eminently able, and are thus left behind. The aim should be to produce a climate in which service at, and retirement from, the senior levels of middle management is considered respectable, even attractive :

- (i) Structures and methods of work should be changed in such a way as to give the top men in middle management greater responsibility than now, leading to more job satisfaction and a feeling that they hold positions of respect. (The recommendations in chapter IV are relevant in this connection).
- (ii) There should be a generous raising of wages at the top levels of middle management, not excluding the possibility of the highest wage here being the same or even higher than the lowest in senior management.

- (iii) There should be an honourable way out for those who feel that they cannot reconcile themselves to not being thought eminently able. In other words, senior men in middle management should have the option to retire voluntarily on generous terms.

**H. Status of senior managers :**

Those who successfully complete their probation in senior management should normally stay there indefinitely, subject to the retirement provisions suggested later and subject also to the following :

- The liens of all senior managers should remain in their source cadres.
- The government should have the right to revert an individual at any time for any reason, or even for no specified reason.
- There should be a liability for all senior managers from the IAS to return to their parent states, or go to any other states, if exigencies, as determined by the Central Government in consultation with the state governments concerned, so require. Such postings should be for limited periods and the individuals concerned should continue to be treated as full members of central senior management.

**I. Levels in senior management :**

The levels within senior management should be kept to the minimum number of three :

- Cabinet Secretary
- Secretaries
- Chiefs

Special and additional secretaries should be abolished as functional levels. Some secretaries may, however, draw the pay of present-day additional secretaries; this could happen in the case of the smaller departments in multi-department ministries. And chiefs may draw the pay of present-day joint or additional secretaries [see K (i) below]. There may also be officers on special duty, drawing pay equal to that of chiefs or secretaries, for limited-term assignments to carry out special studies of major problems, particularly in the Cabinet Secretariat.

**J. Posts in senior management :**

There should be a strict watch on the number of posts in senior management, so that it does not happen that the number of senior managers in a particular ministry is so small that they cannot function effectively or in another ministry so large that there is dilution of responsibility and lack of co-ordination. It should be the Cabinet Secretary's responsibility to review the senior management strength of the various ministries from time to time in consultation with the secretaries concerned and with such expert assistance as he may consider necessary. This will

be particularly necessary where structural reform on the basis of the recommendations made in chapter III is not immediately introduced.

*K. Chiefs :*

- (i) Entry into senior management should normally be only at the level of chiefs, which should include joint secretaries and heads of non-secretariat organisations of equivalent rank in ministries not reorganised, and chiefs of administrative offices in reorganised ministries. All chiefs, should, on completing six years' satisfactory service as such, receive pay and rank equal to present-day additional secretaries without a change in their functioning level. If they remain chiefs for another six years, they should retire compulsorily at the end of that period.
- (ii) The deployment of chiefs should be on a carefully planned basis, the maximum possible attention being given to personal factors like previous specialisation, aptitude, background and personal preference as well as to the need for developing the potential of individuals. There should be greater recourse to the device of enabling individuals to train themselves for the responsibilities of new posts by being attached to those whom they are meant to succeed against specially created orientation posts for short periods ranging up to say, four months. A chief should serve for a minimum of four years in a particular charge, unless he is promoted secretary earlier or retires either because of normal superannuation or because of the 12 years rule above. Where he is due to retire, his deployment should be so planned that his last posting is not cut short to less than three years.
- (iii) There should be a well planned training programme for chiefs comprising items for individuals like study leave and deputation for training abroad, as well as group items like seminars and short-term courses. The programme should have two objectives: to increase the administrative capacity and vision of individual senior managers; and to promote team spirit based on a common understanding of the administrative problems senior management is required to handle.
- (iv) The names and records of chiefs should be maintained by the Cabinet Secretary alphabetically, and there should be no seniority list.

*L. Secretaries :*

- (i) Secretaries should normally be selected only from amongst chiefs who have at least five years to go. The most capable and promising persons should be selected, no weightage being given to length of service as chief or to pay. Advising the Prime Minister on the selection of chiefs to be promoted secretaries should be a particularly important responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary.

- (ii) A secretary should serve for a term of five years in a particular charge, the maximum deviation permitted on each side of this being a year. At the end of this term, he should retire compulsorily, except if he has more than three years to go for normal superannuation. In that case he may serve another term as secretary in a different charge. The length of this second term should be the standard five years, if he has that much service to go. If not, it should be confined to four years, suitable extension being given up to this period where necessary. In no case should a secretary serve more than two terms.
- (iii) The device of orientation posts to train secretaries before they take up new assignments should, as suggested for chiefs, be increasingly resorted to in suitable cases.
- (iv) The names and records of secretaries should also be maintained alphabetically, and there should be no seniority list.

#### M. *Cabinet Secretary* :

None of the tenure provisions suggested above should stand in the way of a deserving person becoming Cabinet Secretary. The Cabinet Secretary should be selected from amongst outstanding secretaries who have at least two years to go for normal superannuation, without seniority coming into the picture. On selection, he should be appointed for a four-year term. If this takes him beyond the date of his normal superannuation, his service should be deemed as automatically extended. If not, he should compulsorily retire strictly at the close of his four-year term.

#### N. *Retirement* :

- (i) All senior managers should have the right to retire voluntarily on full pension minus a token amount, if their service in senior management is less than six years; and on full pension, if it is more. When they retire compulsorily under any of the above provisions, they should in any case get full pension. In addition, they should get reasonable compensation proportionate to the period between the date of compulsory retirement and normal superannuation; this could be either in the form of a lumpsum payment or a recurring addition to pension.
- (ii) Permission should be freely given to senior managers, retiring voluntarily or compulsorily under the scheme, to take up jobs in business or elsewhere. Only where there is positive suspicion of some kind should there be any question of permission being withheld.

#### O. *Sanctions* :

Powers should be taken through amendment of service rules, or through legislative action if necessary, to implement the plan that may be formulated by the government on the basis of

these ideas. But it would be a mistake to codify the details of the plan statutorily, as a dynamic situation should have a flexible rather than a rigid control system.

6.21 The above outline attempts to meet the observed defects in a comprehensive manner. It is important to stress that picking out a point here or there for implementation would be as inadequate as the reforms of the past, and might in some cases make things worse. For instance, throwing open entry into senior management to cadres which do not provide experience patterns useful for developing good senior managers would not be an improvement unless this step is accompanied by measures for the development of promising men in those cadres. Again, instituting a programme for training promising men in middle management might turn out to be wasteful and frustrating if training remains unlinked to eligibility for entry into senior management. There would be little point in selection standards being raised, thus bringing up younger men, if those who come up do not make way quickly enough for others to come up after them. And it would be unfair to expect top men to make room for others, by bowing out after contributing their best, unless they are given reasonable retirement terms, including the removal of barriers to their doing something useful in private life. While we do not by any means claim that every para of this plan is the last word in wisdom, we would plead for the whole problem being viewed comprehensively, as we have tried to do, rather than individual aspects being taken up piecemeal.

6.22 We are conscious that the outline presented above has many loose ends. These will need to be attended to, if the approach is accepted, at the time of formulating a plan of reform. The following elaboration on some aspects may be of help both for considering the outline and for working out a plan on its basis.

6.23 First, the basic concepts mentioned in the outline amount to this :

- that there is such a thing as senior management which requires special skills,
- that its effective functioning is of key importance for the efficiency of public administration generally,
- that for its effective functioning, it is necessary to organise the management of senior management,
- that there must be precise ideas about what senior management consists of, and
- that the management of senior management should be viewed as a task embracing a variety of things; in fact everything that is relevant for strengthening senior management.

We need hardly emphasise that these concepts are fundamental to reform in this field, and for that reason to administrative reform generally.



6.24 Second, if the management of senior management is to be efficiently organised, there must be special machinery devoting time and attention to this task. Considering the place occupied by senior management in the administrative system, and considering also that so much hangs on ensuring that there is good senior management, the responsibility for its management in all its aspects must be accepted by the Cabinet Secretary. We realise that he is a busy officer, but the question in our view is not whether, for this reason, he should be allotted this responsibility but how he can be enabled to handle it. We have no doubt, in other words, that the management of senior management must be reckoned as one of his core responsibilities. The following considerations convinced us that what we are suggesting is not infeasible :

- (a) In our earlier report, we recommended that the Cabinet Secretariat should be strengthened by the creation of cells specialising in broad areas of governmental functioning. We had a number of things to say about how these cells should be manned and what tasks they should perform. If all that we recommended is carried out, we are hopeful that the pressure on the Cabinet Secretary in regard to non-personnel work will be greatly eased.
- (b) Even so, the total responsibility for managing senior management will involve a great deal of work. That is why we visualise that the Personnel Secretary should be the Cabinet Secretary's chief lieutenant in handling this work. We also visualise a special cell of an appropriate strength in the proposed Department of Personnel to give whole time attention to the problems of managing senior management.
- (c) At present, in his capacity as chairman of the Central Establishment Board, the Cabinet Secretary has to look into a number of aspects of personnel administration other than senior management (see ¶annexure X). We would suggest that work pertaining to senior management should be taken out of the purview of the Board, *e.g.* the appointments of joint secretaries, so that all senior management problems are handled in one place. For the rest, we would suggest that if a board is considered necessary it may be presided over by the Personnel Secretary.

With the adoption of these measures, it should become possible for the Cabinet Secretary to take up the special responsibility we visualise for him in respect of senior management. We are convinced that there would be much profit to the administration from such an outcome.

6.25 If it is important for the Cabinet Secretary to be relieved of the responsibility for appointments at middle management level, the same is equally true of the Cabinet. The Appointments committee of the Cabinet should not, in other words, be concerned about middle

management appointments. Its task of resolving differences between the UPSC and the various government departments should be taken over by the proposed Cabinet committee on administration. Senior management appointments, which alone need in future receive approval at Cabinet level, should be dealt with under the procedure indicated in para 4.18(i) of our earlier report. The Appointments committee as such should then go. The resultant position in regard to senior management would be that

- policy matters would be considered by the Cabinet committee on administration, and
- individual appointments would be cleared by the Cabinet Secretary making proposals to the Prime Minister through the Home Minister.

6.26 Third, if senior management is to have the best possible talent, there should obviously be no barriers to obtaining it from any possible source, within the administration or outside. There should, in other words, be more plurality in senior management than now. We should like to make the following points in this connection :

- (a) There should be systematic talent hunting for entry into senior management, within the traditional source of the IAS, in the various central services and, most important, amongst the technical and scientific employees of the government. Those marked out as eminently promising should have individually tailored programmes of personal development to fit them for senior management.
- (b) While we are in favour of eminent talent being located and inducted into senior management from all possible sources, particularly from the technical and scientific sides, we would not belittle the contribution of the IAS. It must be recognised that this must remain the principal feeder source providing as it does the right kind of experience for senior management.
- (c) The private sector should be included as a source of intake for senior management. But it may be necessary to tap this source in exceptional situations only, such as when a particular task requires special knowledge beyond what is available within the government. In such cases, the person to be recruited may be taken on contract or on a regular basis, whichever is found most suitable in individual cases. There could well be special terms in the case of contract appointments that would sufficiently attract the right kind of talent.
- (d) While there should be no restriction on utilising senior managers from any source in any post, it would serve as an aid to the purposeful deployment of senior managers if broad areas of administration were, in course of time, to emerge

where those taken into senior management from particular sources or with special background may, while they are chiefs, be more usefully deployed than elsewhere. For instance, an engineer entrant should normally be deployed only in the group of ministries where engineering forms a significant part of the work, including relevant posts on the planning side. An IAS senior manager should be available for deployment anywhere, but his special field should be ministries like home, personnel, finance, defence and planning, as also posts in other ministries dealing with administration, personnel, finance and planning.

- (e) Those who become heads of major organisations by climbing up departmental ladders of promotion, *e.g.* the Chief Engineer, C.P.W.D., should have a special position. They should be treated as full members of the senior management corps, but some of the suggested provisions should be modified for them. For instance, it may not be practical to insist in these cases on a maximum of any particular length of service or on 50 years' age as eligibility prerequisites as contemplated in F. (i) of para 6.20. The right approach here would be to select the head of an organisation on the same principles as suggested for the appointment of the Cabinet Secretary. He should, in other words, be chosen from amongst the outstanding men in the next level who have at least two years to go for normal superannuation, without seniority coming into the picture. On selection, he should be appointed for a fixed term which may be four years. If this takes him beyond the date of his normal superannuation, his service should be deemed as automatically extended. If not, he should move out of the post strictly at the close of his term, retiring compulsorily if he has less than three years to go for normal superannuation or going on to some other assignment as any other chief if he has more.

It occurs to us that the principle for apex appointments underlying what has been suggested for the appointment of the Cabinet Secretary and heads of major organisations is capable of being extended with advantage to other agencies where seniority-based elevations have resulted in markedly short tenures, as for instance chairmen of the Railway Board, Chief Justices of the Supreme Court and perhaps Chief Justices of High Courts. At ¶annexure XV is a statement showing the tenures of the various incumbents of the first two of these high offices.

6.27 Fourth, senior management will be able to get the best possible talent only if there is much greater seriousness of purpose in making selections than now. Two things are necessary for this. For one, selection should be greatly tightened; what we have said in section F of the outline about selection for entry should help in this

connection. Secondly, measures should be taken in related fields which will make it possible for tight selections to be made without building up unbearable pressures from those not selected. The measures indicated in the outline in this second field are the following :

- improving the status and wages of the top levels of middle management so as to reduce the pressure from below,
- giving senior men in middle management not selected for entry into senior management the option to retire voluntarily on generous terms, and
- making room at the top for fresh blood from below by prescribing compulsory retirement for senior managers after completion of set periods of service in different situations and also giving them the option to retire voluntarily.

We consider these important, as techniques for the successful management of senior management, in the realities of the Indian situation. Not unless the status and wages of top middle managers are improved significantly may the selecting authority overcome the tendency to be kind to the conscientious in preference to selecting the eminently able. Not many middle managers may retire on their own, but opening the door for voluntary retirement might help to remove the sting of their non-selection for senior management. The various tenure and retirement provisions suggested for senior managers are essential to ensure an adequate turn-over of talent. It could be said that these provisions would lead to a wasteful escape of valuable and tested human material. We have considered the point but are not deterred from our view for three reasons. Firstly, if the senior management of the government has truly able men of eminence, they should not find it difficult to be gainfully employed in the private sector; there will, in that event, be no waste to the country. Then, senior management positions in the government take a heavy toll from diligent incumbents and it is fair neither to the senior managers concerned nor to the administration for there to be indefinitely long tenures; there is thus a positive advantage in senior managers moving out after a certain period. And lastly, there must be a deliberate policy to continuously bring up significant injection of fresh talent from below; this can be rendered possible only by making room at the top.

6.28 Fifth, there is the question whether reform measures in this field are to be left to a gradual unfolding in the future of a plan based on the outline suggested, or whether something in the spirit of the ideas put forward can and should be done to today's senior management. We would recommend the latter approach, but leave the items of action to be worked out, in the main, by the government. One such item is mentioned in the outline, namely that existing senior managers of less than three years' standing should be put through courses of training for senior management. Another would be a process of weeding out relatively weak material from all

levels of senior management. Here, the initiative taken in this direction by the present Prime Minister must be warmly applauded. We would suggest that it should be pursued steadfastly and with an evenness of judgment that leaves no room for feelings that some weak reeds have escaped the weeding process. The present Prime Minister has given a useful lead in a related direction also, namely the tightening of selection standards at the various levels of senior management. This too needs to be followed up with vigour. Until a comprehensive plan of reform based on our outline of ideas or any modification thereof emerges, these three measures are the least that should be energetically put through : the training of senior managers of less than three years' standing, the weeding out of relatively weak material and the tightening of selection standards for appointments at all levels in senior management.

### III

#### Headquarters staff other than senior management

6.29 We would now like to discuss the problem of getting the right kind of men to fill management posts at the headquarters of the government below the level of senior management. A preliminary point first needs to be got out of the way. Our concern is not only with secretariat posts, important though they are, but also with posts in the headquarters offices of attached organisations. We have taken this view, partly because it is consistent with the broad view we have taken of senior management, but mainly because we see an advantage in treating the total headquarters problem as one. Secretariat and non-secretariat officers do, after all, lean a great deal on each other and jointly assist senior management and political executives in the transaction of governmental business. Strengthening the former alone would yield only limited gain if weaknesses were to remain in the latter. The discussion in this section therefore covers the following types of posts :

- (i) secretariat posts below joint secretaries and above section officers (mosly deputy and under secretaries),
- (ii) non-secretariat posts equivalent to these,
- (iii) "officer" posts under chiefs of administrative offices in the reorganised ministries visualised in chapter III, and
- (iv) posts at directing and executive levels under reorganised wings visualised in chapter IV.

For facility of terminology we shall refer to these as simply "headquarters posts", to the men who occupy them as "headquarters staff or personnel", and so on.

6.30 Headquarters personnel as defined above have a vital role to play in the administrative process. They are the "back-room boys" on whose work to a very considerable extent depends the

soundness of policy-making and certainly the efficient implementation of policies and plans. Shortcomings here can and do nullify the efforts of the most well-intentioned political executives and brilliant senior managers. It is important, therefore, that headquarters staff should be of the right kind and should be adequate in every way for its task. Unfortunately, the general devaluation of the civil services consequent on independence and the adoption of parliamentary democracy as a political system has brought adverse consequences here too. There was a time when the ordinary run of deputy secretary had the same place in decision-making as the more prominent and forceful joint secretary of today. While it may not be possible to put the clock back, it is necessary to ensure that the role of headquarters staff today is correctly understood so that further devaluation can be avoided and, in fact, avoidable devaluation of the past made good by appropriate reform measures.

6.31 As in the case of senior management, there are many who are able and devoted amongst headquarters staff, but the proportion of those who are not up to the mark is far greater here. Many of the causes which produce weaknesses at this level are congruous to those which influence senior management. For instance, unsuited structures and methods of work reduce the effectiveness of headquarters staff as much as they do of senior managers. Personnel policies, with their emphasis on generalism, on cadre rights and on seniority, also affect the two in the same way. The drop in real wages caused by rising prices has affected headquarters personnel in the same adverse manner as senior managers, except that the effect has been more severe because wages here had less margin; also there has been no stepping-up of salaries here to match the salary raise recently allowed to senior managers. Selections for intake and promotions are, if anything, poorer, and deployment less planned, than in the case of senior managers. Such arrangements as are there for the management of headquarters staff are not well enough organised.

6.32 But the overriding deficiency springs from a lack of clarity about the correct role of headquarters staff, on the part of the government as well as on the part of the personnel concerned themselves. Those who labour on problems of policy formulation and implementation at the governmental level fall in three categories: political executives, senior managers and headquarters personnel. Political executives may, in some cases, possess a great deal of familiarity with their subjects, but cannot as a rule be expected to bring anything more than a lay mind to the problems they deal with. Senior managers are, and should continue to be, top administrators first and foremost, because their main specialisation must be senior management itself; any specialisation they possessed before entry into senior management should remain as an extra qualification of a background character only. Thus the specialist inputs which today's policy formulation and implementation necessarily call for must be provided mainly by headquarters personnel. Specialisation must, therefore, be regarded

as an essential feature of headquarters staff. This is not fully recognised by the government; hence the prevalence of generalism in key headquarters posts such as those in the secretariat. Nor are there clear enough ideas about the kinds of specialisations that are required; this is what probably accounts for the limited ambit of the various "pool" schemes (about which more later).

6.33 Before discussing the types of specialisations needed, it is well to take note of the variegation of intake sources in headquarters staff. There was a time when nearly all posts of deputy and under secretaries were manned by ICS officers. Today, as pointed out in para 3.11(b), there are only 78 IAS deputy secretaries out of 303, and only 18 IAS under secretaries out of 457. There has thus been a large influx from non-IAS sources, mainly the CSS and other central services. Since headquarters posts include posts in the headquarters offices of non-secretariat organisation, the extent of variegation is much greater than these figures reflect, because this factor brings in large numbers of technical and other personnel. The following are the major feeder sources today for headquarters posts :

- generalists
  - \* those with general executive experience (from the IAS)
  - \* those without (from the CSS)
  - \* experts deployed outside their fields (e.g. all IA & AS officers in the secretariat, IRS officers in departments other than Revenue, etc.)
- experts
  - \* technical, such as engineers and scientists in the Directorate General of Technical Development and elsewhere
  - \* non-technical, such as customs service men in the Central Board of Excise & Customs and men from the Indian Statistical Service in statistical posts in all ministries.

Any measures to strengthen headquarters staff must take this wide variegation into account. They must ensure that all those who come in from these different sources fit into a coherent plan for headquarters functioning. In this process they should be assisted to overcome the handicaps of limited experience-patterns available to them in their source cadres. All experts should, for instance, acquire a working knowledge of administration. Generalists with little or no executive experience, such as those from the CSS, should be helped to acquire such experience.

6.34 It is important to be clear about the kinds of specialisations that are required for headquarters staff. Three types can be identified :

- A. *Substantive specialisations.*—Those who fill posts in divisions handling substantive work should be either experts in the subject handled or generalists with a degree of familiarity with the area of work enabling them to be thought of as generalist-specialists.

- B. *Staff specialisations.*—Those who work in divisions handling staff subjects should be specialists in their lines. We visualise seven such specialisations : personnel administration, financial management, planning, O & M, economic analysis, statistics and public relations.
- C. *Specialisation in headquarters work.*—All occupants of headquarters posts, generalists or experts, should be specialists in headquarters work. They should know something about the overall policies and plans of the government and a good deal about how administration is organised. They should be skilful in analysing administrative problems and writing papers on them. They should be aware of the need for co-ordination and know how to get about achieving it. They should, in short, be specialists in all the ancillary requirements that go into efficient headquarters functioning.

A comprehensive approach to reform in this field should, among other things, aim to make good the handicaps of limited experience-patterns referred to in para 6.33 and at the same time develop the specialisations mentioned above. We refer to these as specialisations A, B and C later.

6.35 We now venture to offer a few comments on the various "pool" schemes that have been formulated from time to time, as these constitute the major thinking of the government for reform in this area. There have been four such schemes in all; the Finance and Commerce Pool of the thirties, the Indian Civil Administrative (Central) Cadre Scheme of 1950, the Central Administrative Pool of 1957, and the proposed Central Economic Pool. Only the first of these was implemented though not fully because of the intervention of the second world war; to the extent that it was implemented, it appears to have worked well. The second was never much more than an idea. The third was duly approved by the government and even partially implemented when a storm of protests from the states and from IAS associations led to its suspension and to further thinking on the subject. The fourth was the outcome of that thinking; it, too, ran into trouble with the states and is now awaiting consideration at the hands of the government. The underlying idea in all these schemes was that a body of officers should be drawn from the states and the central services and kept at the Centre indefinitely, overriding the normal tenure rules, so that they may acquire specialisation in the work of the Central Government, particularly work in the economic sector, through long familiarity and be continuously available for specialised work. What was laudable in this was the recognition that the headquarters work of the Central Government does call for specialisation and that an important way of developing this is through long tenures. On the debit side, there were three major shortcomings :

Firstly, the "pool" concept came to be associated with privilege. Those not selected for the central administrative pool and the state governments could not be persuaded that pool officers would not become



privileged beings with first claims on senior central positions. The latest scheme for an economic pool has many salutary provisions aimed at restoring confidence, but the suspicion of privileged treatment for pool officers still remains. Perhaps leaving senior management positions out of the scheme altogether might allay some of the suspicion; adding joint secretaries to the already excluded posts of additional secretaries might, in other words, be worth considering.

Secondly, the way in which events took place about launching the central administrative pool was not particularly inspiring. Doubts were raised in certain quarters about the quality of selection made for entry into the pool. No apparent attempt was made to develop predetermined specialisations amongst those selected by following a policy of planned deployment, although a good number of those selected did come to be utilised mainly in the economic sector. There was in any case no systematic training to build up specialisations.

Thirdly, the "pool" idea met only the fringe of the problem of producing good headquarters personnel. The latest scheme, for instance, visualises a single pool for subjects as diverse as foreign exchange and aircraft production. It overlooks the need for specialisations in other substantive areas such as the social services and agricultural administration. It also ignores the need for specialisation in staff subjects, such as personnel administration, financial management, etc. Although its predecessor scheme, *viz.*, the Central Administrative Pool, did make a welcome mention of training, the provision was not spelt out sufficiently and did not cover all that is required in the field of training measures for headquarters staff. In short, the "pool" idea was basically a good one but did not go far enough.

6.36 We would suggest that a new approach should be made which is comprehensive in the sense of what is stated at the close of para 6.34 and which, at the same time, avoids the shortcomings of the "pool" concept as hitherto developed. As in the case of senior management, we have an outline of ideas to offer which, if the ideas are accepted, could become the basis of a plan of reform in this field to be formulated in due course by the government. The following is our outline :

(1) The management of headquarters staff (as defined in para 6.29) should be given more systematic consideration than now, recognising the important role of headquarters personnel in the efficient functioning of the government.

(2) The objective should be that, as far as possible, all headquarters personnel should, after a few years, be trained specialists. This implies that training and planned deployment should be the main planks of the management of headquarters staff.

(3) There should first be basic training, the aim being to impart to promising persons from different sources, not excluding public sector personnel, the basic requirements of headquarters staff. This should be of three kinds :

- (a) administrative training for experts, particularly technical experts, largely through short-term courses focussed on administrative procedures;
- (b) executive training, particularly for CSS men and also perhaps for men from the accounts services, through short-term courses accompanied by two or three years' service in field executive posts of the Centre or the states; and
- (c) training for specialisation C, through special courses up to six months' duration.

It would be desirable for the first two to precede the third. The possibility of examinations for entry into training courses of the third kind, on the lines of a suggestion made by the study team on recruitment, selection, and training, may be considered.

(4) Appointments to headquarters posts should, in due course, be made only from amongst those who have received basic training.

(5) There should then be supplementary training aimed at developing specialisations A and B, largely amongst generalists :

- (i) Training for specialisation A should aim to build up, in the first instance, corps of trained generalist-specialists in three broad sectors of headquarters administration: industries, social services and agriculture. Selections should be carefully made out of generalists who complete their basic training, and should be based on their aptitudes ascertained during that training. Training courses for those selected should be followed by planned deployment for each individual within the sector concerned. (Experts in these sectors do not require to be trained to become specialists).
- (ii) Training for specialisation B should aim to build up corps of specialists, drawn mostly but not necessarily entirely from generalists, in various staff subjects. It is particularly important to develop corps of specialists in four fields; personnel administration, financial management, planning and O&M. (The remaining three staff subjects are already serviced by the Indian Economic Service, the Indian Statistical Service and the Central Information Service). Selections here should, as in the case of the sectoral corps, be based on aptitudes discovered during basic training. Training itself should have three components:
  - a general appreciation course
  - course to develop sub-specialisations
  - planned deployment within staff fields.

The acquisition of more than one specialisation should not be barred and should, on the other hand, be encouraged.

(6) The management of headquarters staff should be primarily the responsibility of the proposed Department of Personnel, with close co-ordination between the division within it handling this management job and the training division. But it should be necessary to centralise only such tasks as are fundamental to the new approach suggested, leaving others to be looked after by the ministries where the personnel are posted.

(7) The performance of centralised tasks in relation to the sectoral and staff corps mentioned in para (5) above should be thought of as "corps management". While overall responsibility for this should remain in the Department of Personnel, corps management authorities should be nominated for different corps somewhat as below.

Industries	. . .	Department of Industrial Development
Social services	. . .	Department of Personnel (for the lack of a clear focal ministry in the social services group)
Agriculture	. . .	Department of Agriculture
Personnel administration		Department of Personnel
Financial management	.	Ministry of Finance
Planning	. . .	Ministry of Planning
O & M	. . .	Department of Administrative Reforms.

Each corps management authority should take responsibility for the training and deployment planning of corps members, under the overall control and guidance of the Department of Personnel. Where the latter is itself the corps management authority, internal arrangements should be made, perhaps by constituting special cells, to see that the detail of corps management is not overwhelmed by the overall responsibilities of the Department of Personnel in regard to headquarters staff management.

(8) The tenures of those who come into headquarters staff from the IAS and the central services other than the CSS should be at least six years, excluding the period spent on basic and supplementary training, with the possibility of extension for those who show exceptional promise. Long tenures are necessary to develop specialisation to the full as also to justify the expense in time and cost on training courses.

(9) Those who come into headquarters staff should not be permitted to return to their parent cadres before the expiry of their tenures, even if favourable promotion opportunities develop there. On the other hand, they should not be denied promotion to higher ranks within headquarters staff simply because they are not senior enough in their parent cadres. Where the concept of vertical flexibility (see

para 4.43) is introduced, it may become possible to concede higher scales of pay to headquarters personnel who miss promotion chances in their parent cadres.

(10) There should be a liability for members of the central sectoral and staff corps to go on deputation to the state governments, if the latter feel the need for specialists and the Centre can spare the men.

(11) Powers should be taken to enforce a plan of reform formulated on this basis. Training, in particular, should be made compulsory.

6.37 We believe a plan of reform on the above basis would deal with the root causes of present weaknesses in headquarters staff. It would be an improvement on the "pool" concept because of its comprehensive ambit, and also because it would have no over-tones of privilege and would instead be grounded on hard training for specialisation. The outline leaves many things incomplete, and we are aware that some of the questions that could be asked would be difficult to answer. But if the underlying approach is held to be right, it would not be impossible to find answers, provided there is willingness to break new ground.

6.38 We have, frankly, not examined in detail the implications of the above outline of ideas, as well as of the one presented earlier for senior management, on the scheme of the IAS, particularly on the role of that service as an integrating machinery between administration at the Centre and in the states. That is not to say that we have overlooked the point. We are convinced that, as things are developing in the country, a service like the IAS serving the needs of both the Centre and the states is more necessary than ever before. It is, therefore, important to check what might become of the IAS in the event of our ideas about reform at the levels of senior management and headquarters staff being implemented. What we have suggested in these two areas will certainly make a major difference to the IAS, but we believe the change will be invigorating because it will enable this indispensable service to bring itself in line with modern requirements. In judging our two schemes, the starting point of thinking must not, therefore, be whether the IAS concept will undergo a change but whether the transformation will be for the good of the service as well as of administration generally. We are satisfied that the latter will be the case.

**CHAPTER VII**  
**DELEGATIONS**

**I**

**General considerations**

7.1 In our study of machinery and procedures, we have been constantly worried by the thought that improving structures and methods cannot by itself guarantee better administration. That is why we ventured to say something in the previous chapter about getting the right kind of personnel at the vital levels of senior management and headquarters staff. We should now like to deal with delegations, which is another area where reform is very necessary if the administrative machinery is to operate reasonably well. Delegations belong essentially to the field of structural relationships and methods, although they have attracted most notice as part of financial administration.

7.2 It is commonplace, but still necessary, to say that delegations are inescapable in the working of any complex organisation. They have a place in an administrative system which is much the same as that of the slope of a canal in its regime. If the slope is too little, the water flows too slowly and the canal silts up; if it is too big, the flow of water scours the bed of the canal. The slope has thus to be adjusted to the amount of water, and the silt in it. Delegations have similarly to be adjusted to the volume of work and its nature. If they are too limited, work gets slowed down; if they are too extensive, things tend to get out of control. There is unfortunately no formula for working out just how far delegations should go in a particular situation. In large private sector organisations, it is relatively easy to deal with the problem, for if the delegations in an organisation are wrongly pitched, the mistake is likely to get reflected in the shape of reduced profit. In public administration, there is no handy test like profit. Instead, therefore, of leaving delegations to be adjusted to particular situations in the normal course, there is need here for deliberate measures being taken from time to time to review existing delegations, bearing in mind general considerations relevant to the problem.

7.3 To begin with, a common misunderstanding requires to be corrected. What is specifically delegated in formal orders is usually financial powers or powers relating to personnel administration. This creates the impression that delegations involve nothing more than the giving out of financial and other powers. The correct view is that what is delegated in a complex administrative system is, first and foremost, responsibility for doing this or that work. The delegation of powers only takes this to a logical end by providing the means for the delegated

responsibility to be discharged. What flows out of this is the principle that responsibilities and powers must match each other. This might be regarded as a statement of the obvious; but it is remarkable how much deviation there is, in practice, from this "obvious" principle. And the deviation is both ways. Frequently, responsibility is delegated to persons or organisations, and powers sufficient for its discharge held back. Less frequently, powers are delegated but responsibility withheld; it is this mainly which produces the strange phenomenon of persons and organisations declining to make use of the powers they possess and preferring to obtain directions from higher authorities.

7.4 There are two distinct types of delegations, inter-organisation and intra-organisation. The delegation of financial powers from the Finance Ministry to administrative ministries is an example of the former; so are the delegation of responsibility and powers by administrative ministries to sub-ministry formations and by the latter to field units. The system of work relationship within, say, the secretariat of a ministry is an example of the latter, because this determines what work will be disposed of at the different levels within the organisation. There is a basic difference between the two types of delegations. In the case of inter-organisation delegations, it is possible to fix responsibility on organisations and allot specified powers to them in support of this; having done so, it is also possible to hold them, or at least their heads, accountable for what is delegated. In the case of intra-organisation delegations, this is mostly not possible; for here the whole staff works as a team and what is disposed of at different levels is governed by flexible and largely unspecified procedures. There are some principles of delegation which apply equally to both types, as for instance the one mentioned in the previous paragraph, namely that responsibility and powers must match. But the two types require separate treatment.

7.5 In respect of inter-organisation delegations, the main powers-holding centres in the Government of India are some of the nodal agencies; the Ministry of Finance in regard to budget and financial powers, the proposed Department of Personnel in the field of personnel administration, the Ministry of Finance again in regard to foreign exchange control, the Planning Commission in respect of planning, and the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply in regard to construction and store purchase. Next in importance are all administrative ministries, including the nodal agencies, in their functioning as administrative ministries, both in relation to sub-ministry organisations and in relation to state governments (in the case of ministries handling subjects concerning the states). With the passage of time all these centres come to exercise more powers and functions than they really need to; this is due to increasing workload and new problems, and also the general tendency of all controlling authorities to act as centralising forces. What is needed, in our view, is a periodical spring-cleaning operation at all these centres aimed at reducing, if not removing, these disparities. Each centre should, we recommend, carry

out a systematic review, say, every five years to see whether the delegations it controls go far enough. The review should be regarded as an exercise in organisational relationships and methods reform, and should therefore be co-ordinated by the Department of Administrative Reforms. The latter should lay down guidelines for the reviewing authorities and prepare a consolidated report at the end for the information of the Cabinet.

7.6 Some of the general considerations that should underline these reviews are briefly discussed below.

- (1) As mentioned in para 7.2, the extent of delegations must be a function of the volume of work to be handled. This is not to say that delegations are the only answer to the problem of increasing work. But when the workload goes up substantially, the first thing to consider should be a significant stepping up of delegations. Where the willingness to do so is not present, there is avoidable proliferation of posts, both in the powers-holding centres and in the organisations lower down the line which remain without adequate powers. Besides this uneconomical outcome is the needless delay that arises in the disposal of work because there are too many people dealing with it. Failure to give full recognition to the link between workload and delegations is one of the major causes for the expansion of the governmental machinery beyond reasonable limits and its general slowness in getting work done.
- (2) As also mentioned in para 7.2, delegations need to be linked to the maximum extent possible, to the nature of work. In some measure, this principle is recognised in the Government of India, in that there are special financial delegations made in favour of the engineering departments, Union territories, scientific laboratories, and so on. But there is not enough of this kind of functional variegation in delegation patterns. All ministries, for instance, are delegated more or less the same financial powers; this means that a heavy programme ministry like Commerce has no more financial powers than a wholly non-programme ministry like Law. Again, below the level of administrative ministries, the financial rules recognise only two types of "delegates"; heads of departments and heads of offices. This leads to major departmental chiefs like the Director General of Health Services having virtually no more powers than, say, commissioners of income tax, since both are reckoned as heads of departments for the purpose of financial rules. It also leads to the head of a large hospital in a big city being treated at par, as a head of office, with a "small town" income-tax officer controlling an office staff of six or seven persons only.

It might be impracticable to tailor delegation patterns to all organisations individually, but it should be possible to go further than the uniform patterns of today in linking delegations to the nature of work handled in various organisations.

- (3) Delegations also need to be linked to the administrative strength of "delegatee" organisations. Weak organisations should not, for instance, be saddled with too much in the way of powers. Nor should administratively strong organisations be denied the powers they can handle safely, for otherwise they are likely to be reduced to the level of weak organisations through a process of atrophy. If considerations of workload and new problems require more powers to be given to an organisation, measures should simultaneously be taken to strengthen it to handle the additional powers efficiently. Where substantial financial powers are given, for instance, measures should be adopted to build up reliable financial management within the organisation. It should also be ensured that the chief of the organisation and his important staff officers possess the administrative capacity to use the additional powers with care and effectiveness; special training measures in the shape of short-term courses might be advisable for this. The link between delegations and administrative strength is, in a way, acknowledged by the government in that recent steps taken in the field of delegation of financial powers have been accompanied by an exhortation to the ministries that they should appoint internal financial advisers. But we do not think that this constitutes adequate recognition of the principle. Much more needs to be done in the way of making "delegatee" organisations worthy recipients of more delegated powers. Our recommendations for structural reform in earlier chapters, with their emphasis on finance and personnel offices in ministries and in major administrative offices, might help in this direction.
- (4) There is a powerful link between delegations and accountability. We mentioned in an earlier chapter that unless the principle of constructive accountability of ministers was kept within reasonable limits, it was likely to make ministers act like magnets pulling work upwards, thus negating delegations. Holding civil servants answerable for their discretionary acts also tends to defeat delegations, if such answerability is pressed beyond the limits of objective fairness. There is unfortunately too much of the wrong kind of answerability at present. Individual acts of discretion are often probed long after the event and out of the total context in which they took place. Current attitudes towards audit and vigilance are chiefly responsible for this. The result is that the average civil servant, who is timid at the best of



times, shies away from the exercise of discretion and is reluctant to use the powers delegated to him. He seeks cover when dealing with a difficult issue, either by referring it to higher authorities for guidance even when he possesses delegated authority to take a decision, or by getting as many persons below him as possible to "examine" it, or by referring it to an inter-departmental committee. Audit and vigilance being outside our purview, we can at best draw attention to the urgent need to remove from the minds of civil servants, as far as possible, the fear that they are likely to be judged unfairly if individual discretionary acts, involving errors of judgment, come to be questioned. Not unless significant measures are taken in this direction will there be full value from increased or, for the matter of that, existing delegations.

(5) There is then the principle, connected in some ways to accountability, that delegation does not mean the same thing as divestment. He who delegates must keep an overall eye on the exercise of delegated powers. This is not to say that he should feel free to interfere in delegated functioning. What it does call for is that he should do three things :

- He should satisfy himself that organisational and personnel arrangements exist for an adequate exercise of delegated powers.
- He should keep himself informed, on an *ex post facto* basis, about the quality of decision-making in the delegated field; for this there should be appropriately devised test checks and, within reason, returns in relation to points considered sensitive.
- He should issue guidance and directions from time to time, in general terms, to keep the exercise of delegated powers in line with overall policy.

Often these things are not attended to. Where that is the case, whatever delegations exist are probably excessive. Where these points are carefully looked after, it should be possible to go quite far in delegating powers.

(6) Lastly, considering the widespread conservatism found in governmental circles in regard to delegations, we commend the approach for consideration that delegations should be the maximum possible rather than the minimum necessary. There are some functions which cannot and should not be delegated; these are basic policy-making and planning, overall co-ordination and ultimate disciplinary control. All remaining matters can and, subject to the other considerations discussed above, should normally be delegated to the maximum extent possible.

7.7 It is not our intention, nor is it a feasible task, to undertake a centre by centre review of the type recommended in 7.5 above. To some extent, the various study teams set up by the Administrative Reforms Commission will, in the course of their labours, cover the problem. It would be a mistake to regard their efforts as rendering the suggested review unnecessary because they may not go over all the ground. It would also be a mistake to regard any specific recommendations made by the Commission in the field of delegations, on the basis of study team reports or otherwise, as the last word on the subject; such recommendations will themselves require to be reviewed after some time. In the three succeeding sections, we offer some specific proposals in the light of the general considerations discussed earlier. These are by no means comprehensive, but we consider them important, some because they arise out of the structural reform suggested in earlier chapters and others because we think they are urgently needed.

7.8 In respect of intra-organisation delegations, the essential issue involved is the devising of measures to relieve the senior management in each organisation of work which can and should be disposed of at lower levels. There is a natural tendency in most governmental organisations for the workload to increase at the senior levels beyond what is necessary. Many factors contribute towards this; notions of accountability, the demands of higher authorities, the inadequacies of senior management itself, those of levels below them and the limitations of prevailing structures and methods of work. Some of these matters have been discussed in earlier chapters and we have suggested measures for improvement at the appropriate places. But aside from those measures, there is need for the senior management in each organisation reviewing work relationships within the organisation in a systematic way at regular intervals so that the natural tendency for work to be pushed upwards may be controlled through deliberate decisions taken on the basis of such reviews. How reviews should be conducted so as to lead to useful results is discussed in a later section in this chapter.

## II

### Budget

7.9 We are aware that the question of budgetary reform was referred by the Commission to another study team which also studied the system of expenditure control and procedure governing financial relations between the Centre and the states. But the budget is so basic to the administration generally that questions relating to it cannot be viewed from the angle of financial administration alone. We have, therefore, thought it fit to examine some aspects of the problems of budgetary reform which we consider have a particularly important bearing on machinery and procedures. The proposals in this section fall

in two areas: budgetary classification and budget-making procedures. In both, our interest stems primarily from the need for appropriate delegations.

7.10 In regard to budgetary classification, we would simply reiterate the thought behind the recommendation in para 3.45(i). What was said there related to the reorganised ministries visualised in that chapter, but its underlying principles are of universal application. These are

- that a ministry's work should be divided into rational charges;
- that for each such charge there should be a separate budget head with operating powers entrusted to the chief of the wing or administrative office;
- that, to the extent possible, budget sub-heads should be similarly linked to administrative echelons next below wings and administrative offices; and
- that the inter-linking of executive and financial responsibility in this way is good for efficiency and economy.

Basically this is a plea for continuing, rationalising and extending the structural bias in existing budget classifications. Latest reform trends in the budgetary fields stress the need for the budget to be built round programmes and activities, so that it becomes possible to check expenditure against performance. We should not be misunderstood as being against this line of thinking; in fact, we favour a carefully planned and gradual move in this direction. But we would strongly advocate that such a move should be within a framework in which budget classifications follow organisational structures based on rationalised grouping of subjects. Unless this is done, the gain in the shape of performance checks becoming possible might be more than offset by the impracticability of fixing responsibility on, and delegating matching powers to, heads of operating organisations divorced from budget heads. In other words, the structural principle must have pre-eminence if there is to be efficient budget formulation and implementation, and in fact efficient administration.

7.11 In regard to budget-making procedures, we would first mention some facts arising from a study made with reference to budget estimates for 1967-68 of three ministries : Home Affairs, Health and Family Planning, and Commerce.

- (i) Budget proposals of these ministries, both revenue and capital, came to the Ministry of Finance for consideration in 1139 statements of estimates, not counting those few which were summarily turned down. Of these, 670 related to the regular establishment budget, 409 to continuing schemes or recurring items of expenditure, and the remaining 60 to new schemes

The following table gives an idea of the flow of these statements into the Ministry of Finance over the five-month budget-making season :

	<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Continuing schemes</i>	<i>New schemes</i>
16 Sep to 15 Oct	15	5	1
16 Oct to 15 Nov	88	36	3
16 Nov to 15 Dec	410	181	40
16 Dec to 15 Jan	144	122	14
16 Jan to 15 Feb	13	65	2
	<u>670</u>	<u>409</u>	<u>60</u>

It will be seen that there is a "peaking" feature in these figures. Most of the burden of scrutiny on the Finance Ministry officials falls in the month 16th November to 15th December. It is but natural in these rushed circumstances for the quality of scrutiny to be less than the best, especially as the study shows that provision for most of the schemes was accepted during the peak period.

- (ii) Of the 60 new schemes mentioned above, no less than 42 were estimated to cost a lakh of rupees or less; 5 between a lakh and five lakhs; and the remaining 13 above five lakhs. Over two-thirds of the schemes were thus of small value. Twenty of these, *i.e.*, one-third of the total, were of "mini-value", being estimated to cost less than Rs. 10,000 each. It is new schemes which require the most careful scrutiny out of the three main components of the budget, and it would seem that small value cases formed a major part of this work.
- (iii) The fate of these 60 new schemes on scrutiny was as shown below:

	<i>Accepted (with or without modifications.)</i>	<i>Accepted subject to post-budget scrutiny</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
Up to Rs. 1 lakh	27	11	4
Between Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 5 lakhs	3	1	1
Over Rs. 5 lakhs	10	3	—
	<u>40</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>5</u>

It will be seen that as many as 25 per cent of the new schemes were held over for post-budget scrutiny, the implication being delayed sanctions in these cases and even more delayed implementation. Two-thirds of these were small-value schemes; four of them were of "mini-value". It is a pity that even small-value work could not be completed in the budget-making season.

The study shows, in brief, that the Ministry of Finance has to handle a great deal of work in a rushed fashion, that much of this work is of relatively low importance, and that too much of it is left undone. These facts suggest the desirability of delegating some of the responsibility to the administrative ministries so that the Finance Ministry is left with tasks which are (a) the most important and (b) manageable.

7.12 We would then dwell for a moment on what associate finance is required to do, under the present system, in the field of budget making. Although it is the budget division of the Department of Economic Affairs which compiles the budget, the bulk of the work of scrutinising proposals received from the ministries is done by the associate financial advisers. It is they who finally accept provisions for establishment budgets, after applying such economy cuts as are prescribed by the Secretary, Department of Expenditure; such cuts usually relate to disallowing provision for new unsanctioned posts, reducing provision for unfilled posts and restricting estimates for travelling allowances and contingencies.

The associate financial advisers approve all schemes which cost less than Rs. 5 lakhs recurring or Rs. 25 lakhs non-recurring. Schemes costing more are cleared through the Expenditure Finance Committee presided over by the Secretary, Department of Expenditure. As regards budget proposals for schemes, it is the associate financial advisers who accept provisions for all schemes, whether new or continuing, plan or non-plan. In the case of capital estimates, what they accept is subject to revision when ministry and scheme-wise ceilings for capital outlay are determined by the Department of Economic Affairs. Provisions of the value of Rs. 1 crore or more are approved by the Finance Minister before they find a place in the budget. Recently, drastic restrictions were imposed in regard to grants-in-aid; all proposals for provision of Rs. 5 lakhs or more in the nature of grants-in-aid to a single organisation are now required to be seen by the Finance Minister, and all those involving lesser amounts by the Minister of State or Deputy Minister. These somewhat extreme steps could be regarded as a passing phenomenon. The point to take note of in all these facts is that the associate financial adviser has a considerably "free" area of operation in which he operates more or less on his own, though subject to set guidelines. If a new approach were to be considered based on delegating some tasks out to the administrative ministries, the broad guiding principle could be to delegate that which lies in this "free" area, keeping back a few exceptional items.

7.13 Next, we would recall what we said under "financial administration" in our earlier report and in para 3.37 of the present one. We recommend that, provided there are adequate intra-ministry arrangements for financial advice and control, the Ministry of Finance should retain only specified functions in conformity with its overall responsibility for financial management and delegate the rest to the administrative ministries for operational independence. We

would reiterate this view, pointing out additionally that unless financial functions are substantially delegated out the appointment of chief finance officers in the reorganised ministries visualised in chapter III may prove to be an expensive business, for then considerable staff may have to be continued in the Ministry of Finance to look after the functions needlessly retained there.

7.14 In this background, we would recommend delegations in the field of budget-making procedures on the following lines :

- (i) Making a major departure from the past, selected responsibilities in regard to the scrutiny and acceptance of budget proposals should be delegated to administrative ministries. But this should be done only where chief finance officers are appointed on the lines suggested in the reorganisation proposals of chapter III. What is to be delegated should be determined with reference to three separate areas ; establishment budgets, continuing schemes and new schemes.
- (ii) *Establishment budgets*—Full responsibility for the scrutiny and acceptance of budget estimates relating to establishment should be delegated to administrative ministries, subject only to two conditions:
  - (a) The scrutiny should be made in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the Ministry of Finance. These could be more or less the same as those given to associate financial advisers today. In other words, they could be somewhat as below :
    - provision for vacant posts should be limited to 50% or less;
    - provision for temporary posts created for specific purposes should be allowed only for so long as the work continues;
    - provision for travelling allowance should be made after taking into account the actuals for the past three years, excluding the amount provided for any special purposes; and
    - provision for ‘other charges’ should be made considering the trend of the previous years’ expenditure on individual items and after allowing for minimum requirements only.
  - (b) The establishment estimates of a ministry taken as a whole should not exceed the previous year’s budget grant, including any supplementary grant sanctioned during the year, by more than, say, five per cent. This should be enough to cover annual increments of pay, inescapable increases in pay and allowances of staff, etc.

The chief finance officer of a ministry should certify, while forwarding the accepted estimates of his ministry to the Ministry of Finance, that these two conditions have been fully fulfilled.

(iii) *Continuing schemes.*—Responsibility should also be delegated to the administrative ministries for the scrutiny and acceptance of budget estimates relating to continuing schemes or recurring items of expenditure other than establishment, provided that :

- any increase in the cost of a particular scheme is not more than 10% of the previous year's budget grant, including supplementary grant if any, or Rs. 5 lakhs, whichever is more; and
- it is certified that the administrative ministry is satisfied, preferably on the basis of an evaluation report, that it is necessary to continue the scheme.

Where there is an evaluation report, a copy should accompany the statement of accepted estimates so that it may form part of the notes on important schemes submitted to the Parliament along with demands for grants. Non-plan schemes and items should be submitted to more rigorous review than plan ones.

(iv) *New schemes.*—Responsibility should further be delegated to the administrative ministries in respect of new schemes and items as follows :

- (a) scrutiny and acceptance of budget estimates of plan schemes or items which do not have to be approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee and in respect of which there has been scrutiny and specific plan allocation;
- (b) scrutiny and acceptance of budget estimates of non-plan schemes or items which are considered essential and can be financed from permanent recurring savings located by the administrative ministries in their budgets relating to establishment and continuing schemes; these are unlikely to be large enough to require the approval of the Expenditure Finance Committee;
- (c) scrutiny of budget estimates of other non-plan schemes which do not have to be approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee, acceptance in their case being left to the Ministry of Finance to be judged in the light of overall priorities; and
- (d) scrutiny of budget estimates of plan or non-plan schemes other than those mentioned above, which have earlier been cleared by the Expenditure Finance Committee and for which the outlay proposed is within the approved phasing of the scheme for the year in question, acceptance being left to the Ministry of Finance to be judged in the light of overall priorities.

- (v) The Ministry of Finance should lay down directives and guidelines to ensure that administrative ministries operate the above delegated functions correctly. It should also carry out test checks from time to time to keep itself informed about the quality of budget scrutiny in the administrative ministries.
- (vi) Within administrative ministries, the main responsibility for operating these delegated functions in accordance with the directions of the Ministry of Finance should vest in the chief finance officers. They should also be responsible for seeing that all matters in the undelegated field go to the Ministry of Finance properly scrutinised in the manner desired by the latter.
- (vii) Nothing in the above delegations should be taken to affect the inherent right of the Ministry of Finance to impose ministry-wise economy cuts on the budgets finally accepted by the administrative ministries under their delegated powers.
- (viii) In the budgets of ministries where these delegations are made, the two inter-related practices of accepting lump sum estimates and accepting estimates subject to post-budget scrutiny should totally cease.

7.15 These recommendations are somewhat radical in that they visualise the delegation out of the Ministry of Finance, for the first time, of responsibility for scrutiny and acceptance of certain types of budget proposals. But, provided this is done only in the case of ministries where chief finance officers are appointed, we see no particular risk in what we have proposed. On the contrary, in that our recommendations involve a clear distinction being made between the important and the relatively unimportant, the former alone remaining with the Ministry of Finance, the new system should have the advantage of important aspects of the budget receiving more careful scrutiny than they do at present. And, in that responsibility for scrutiny of estimates will be shared between the Ministry of Finance and administrative ministries, the possibility will open out of the scrutiny job being completed at the pre-budget stage. In the proposed system, the Ministry of Finance will have two main responsibilities in the field of scrutiny of budget proposals :

- issuing directives and guidelines to administrative ministries about how budget proposals should be scrutinised, and carrying out test checks of the exercise of delegated responsibilities by them;
- scrutinising major budget proposals, *i.e.*, where establishment budgets go above reasonable limits, or where continuing schemes are expected to cost more than they ought to, or where new schemes are involved (other than plan schemes of small value and non-plan schemes financed from savings).

These should enable it to keep a grip on budget-making and yet not be swamped by minutiae.



7.16 A special word of explanation is necessary for the last mentioned recommendation in para 7.14. It is rightly the view of the Estimates Committee and the policy of the Government that, as far as possible, all budget estimates should mention details and should receive scrutiny at the pre-budget stage. In practice, this does not always happen. Despite stringent directions from the Ministry of Finance, instances exist of lump sum provisions finding their way into the budget every year, although happily their number remains small. Instances, however, abound of unscrutinised estimates finding a place in the budget; if the study referred to earlier is a reliable guide, their number is roughly a quarter of the number of new schemes. Both types of provisions go counter to Parliament's wish and the Government's policy, and represent poor budget-making. In both situations, the vote of Parliament does not serve as the green signal for expenditure, and all delegations in the field of financial powers remain inoperative until the scheme or item in question is cleared by the Ministry of Finance, mostly subsequent to Parliament having voted. While provisions of these kinds are recognised as undesirable, they continue to be made because of a notion that there is no way out. This notion rests on the following considerations:

- administrative ministries do not always formulate schemes and estimates in sufficient detail, and this prevents the scrutinising authority from giving quick enough consideration;
- all scrutinising responsibility having been centralised in the Ministry of Finance, some schemes fail to receive pre-budget scrutiny owing to the "peaking" effect mentioned earlier; and
- urgent problems crop up at the last minute for which there is no time to formulate details and scrutinise them.

We do not think that these should be taken to present insuperable barriers. It is our view that, in most of the cases where lump sum provision is made or estimates accepted subject to post-budget scrutiny, the problem can be solved by two measures: better organisation for scrutiny and strict budgetary discipline. With the delegation of some part of the responsibility for scrutinising budget estimates, as suggested, it should become feasible for the scrutiny job to be completed at the pre-budget stage. But feasibility may not be translated into actuality unless there is the budgetary whip that nothing will be accepted for inclusion that is not worked out in detail and has not been scrutinised. The present loophole provided by the very possibility of these two types of provisions must, in other words, be plugged. These measures, *viz.* better organisation for scrutiny and strict budgetary discipline, would, we feel sure, solve most of the problems. The handful of genuinely urgent cases that might be left over could then be provided for, as and when ideas about them develop, through the device of the Contingency Fund, which is there for this very purpose. The argument that this might swell supplementary estimates unreasonably and should therefore be avoided is not valid for two reasons. First, if only genuinely urgent cases are provided for through this device the supplementary estimates should

not go up unduly and there should be no cause for alarm. And second, whatever the magnitude of such financing, that itself should not be allowed to become a reason for not adopting the straightforward course provided by the Constitution.

### III

#### Financial powers

7.17 The question of reform in the field of financial powers is as basic as budgetary reform, and like the latter needs to be treated from an angle wider than that of financial administration alone. For what is mainly involved is the relationship that should obtain between organisations. What is also involved is the degree to which responsibility can be fixed at various levels of the administrative system, because the scheme of financial powers influences this to a considerable extent. Our treatment of the subject is in three broad areas: financial powers of administrative ministries, those of line organisations subordinate to them, and those of specialist organisations.

7.18 A preliminary point first needs to be mentioned. The existing scheme of financial powers is characterised by a baffling profusion of items under which the powers of administrative ministries and others are specified. An error into which it is easy to fall because of this is to treat the problem in an itemised fashion. It is not that such an approach cannot yield useful results; only its ambit necessarily remains limited. A total departure from the itemised approach, on the other hand, tends to produce unimplementable generalisations. We have therefore adopted a middle course. In dealing with the financial powers of organisations in the three broad areas mentioned above, our discussion revolves round a few key points; powers to create posts, powers to re-appropriate funds, powers to purchase stores and enter into contracts, powers to spend on contingencies, and powers to write off losses. This "key points" approach makes it possible to maintain an overall perspective and yet say something of practical use.

7.19 The present financial powers of administrative ministries are fairly wide, but not wide enough when looked at from the consideration discussed in para 7.13, *viz.* that the Ministry of Finance should retain only specified functions in conformity with its overall responsibility for financial management and delegate the rest to the administrative ministries for operational independence. Nor are they wide enough from the angle of the principle that administrative ministries should have a free hand to implement the budget once it has been voted, it being assumed that everything there has been previously scrutinised. Keeping these considerations in mind, we would make the following recommendations with reference to the key points mentioned above:

- (1) *Creation of posts.*—At present, administrative ministries can create posts up to those of joint secretary's rank under their own powers subject to certain specified restrictions. We do

not go along with the view of a sister study team that these powers should be curtailed on the ground that "there is considerable over-staffing in government departments" and that intra-ministry work study units have not built up the expertise required. We consider that delegations in regard to creation of posts cannot be looked at separately from the totality of financial delegations. The fundamental objective of delegating financial powers to administrative ministries is to make them as fully responsible and effective operationally as possible. It would be a contradictory and retrograde measure to make extensive delegations in their favour in other fields and to pull back in this matter of posts. If there is a fear that these powers may be misutilised, the answer should lie in the direction of building up arrangements for good financial management within ministries and a system of test checks from the Ministry of Finance rather than in the direction of recentralisation. There has been far too much of an "on again, off again" approach in regard to powers for the creation of posts in recent years. We would consequently recommend that the present position, which has been arrived at after much thinking and experience and which is in line with the desirable principles mentioned at the commencement of this para, should be maintained.

- (2) *Reappropriation*—The present powers of administrative ministries in regard to reappropriation are set out in rule 8 of the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules, 1958. The ministries have full powers to reappropriate funds except in the situations specified in this rule, where the prior consent of the Finance Ministry is necessary. Three of these situations are as below:
- (i) where the proposed reappropriation is from the primary unit "major works" to another unit [clause (5) (c) of the rule];
  - (ii) where the proposed reappropriation is between the primary units under which provision is made for a scheme and involves augmenting the provision under any such unit by more than 5 per cent, provided that the amount of such augmentation exceeds Rs. 1 lakh [clause (6) (c) of the rule]; and
  - (iii) where the proposed reappropriation is from the provision made for a scheme in one primary unit to meet expenditure for any other purpose provided in another primary unit (except within groups of allied schemes, the grouping having been approved by the Finance Ministry) [clause (6) (d) of the rule].

Restrictions (ii) and (iii) do not apply to "works" in the civil works budget. We understand that there is some thinking already within the government that these three restrictions

should be removed. We consider that this is the right thing to do, because the remaining restrictions on the powers of administrative ministries to reappropriate are adequate to ensure adherence to the basic purposes of the budget as voted by Parliament.

- (3) *Purchases and contracts.*—At present, provided prescribed procedures are followed, administrative ministries can make purchases or enter into contracts upto specified value limits. Where competitive tenders are the basis of a transaction, the value limit is Rs. 25 lakhs. In other situations, such as negotiated or single-tender contracts or purchase of stores of a proprietary nature, there are smaller value limits. Where the specified limits are exceeded, the administrative ministries have to consult their associate financial advisers. On the whole, within the framework of the present system of financial management, these powers seem appropriate. But we would recommend that, where chief finance officers are appointed on the lines suggested in chapter III, the powers should be considerably enhanced. Transactions based on competitive tenders should, for such ministries, have no monetary restrictions and, subject to prescribed procedures being observed, the ministries concerned should have full powers. There should be similar liberalisation for other types of transactions also. Nothing of this should be taken to mean any change in the procedures of centralised purchases through the Director General of Supplies and Disposals; that is an area we have not gone into.
- (4) *Contingent expenditure.*—The administrative ministries have full powers in the field of contingent expenditure, but the rules make these subject to two kinds of restrictions. First, the ministries are required to observe certain procedures in specified types of contingent expenditure; for instance, the Central Public Works Department must be consulted in the renting of accommodation, the Chief Controller of Printing and Stationery in the purchase of stationery, and so on. Second, there are itemised restrictions of a monetary character, for instance, rubber stamps can be purchased locally only to the value of Rs. 100 per annum and that also subject to a limit of Rs. 20 at a time, printing and binding can be done locally only to the value of Rs. 1000 per annum, and so on. We consider the first kind of restrictions salutary, though not necessarily all of them or in the form they are at present expressed. The second kind of restriction should, in our view, be totally removed.
- (5) *Write off of losses.*—Administrative ministries can, at present, write off losses up to Rs. 25,000 where theft, fraud or negligence are not involved, and up to Rs. 10,000 where they are. We consider that, in the case of ministries where chief finance

officers are appointed on the lines recommended in chapter III, the responsibility for writing off losses should be totally passed over to the ministries concerned, along with the consequent answerability direct to audit and the Public Accounts Committee. The only restriction that we would suggest in such cases is that instances of write-off above certain limits should be reported to the Ministry of Finance, so that the latter is kept in touch with the more important events in this field and can devise such remedial measures in the shape of guidelines or anything else that may be called for. These limits should be prescribed on a ministry-wise basis to take account of the variation in the nature of work. For example, the limit in the case of the Department of Food may have to be considerably higher than for others because of the large number of relatively high-value write off cases that necessarily occur there owing to the circumstances involved in importing, storing and transporting large quantities of foodgrains.

Our specific proposals based on the above discussion will be found against the first entry in the table at †annexure XVI.

7.20 Coming to line and specialist organisations (see para 7.22) subordinate to administrative ministries, we would first dwell on a general point arising out of one of the considerations discussed in para 7.6, namely that delegations should be linked to the nature of work handled in various organisations. As mentioned there, the present scheme of financial powers, which recognises only two categories of repositories of powers below administrative ministries, *viz.* heads of departments and heads of offices, leads to anomalies. Organisations with diverse functions have to be fitted into one or the other of the two prescribed delegation patterns. We consider that the number of "patterns" should be increased so that there is one for each of the more typical organisations, delegations thus being brought more closely in line with the nature of work in an organisation than now. Concretely, we would suggest that there should be a delegation pattern for each of the following types of organisations:

- Line organisations
  - headquarters
  - supervisory level, *i.e.* the level next below the headquarters covering organisations like offices of superintending engineers,
  - executive level, covering organisations like offices of executive engineers,
  - sub-executive level.
- Specialist organisations
  - training agencies-
  - major ones
  - others

hospitals

  large ones

  others

scientific institutions

commercial organisations (run departmentally).

This is an illustrative rather than an exhaustive list. In other words, there could be delegation patterns for other typical organisations not mentioned above. The delegation pattern for each type of organisation should be treated as a norm, deviations from which should be freely permitted by the administrative ministry concerned depending on the special circumstances of particular organisations within these broad types.

7.21 We have given thought to what the delegation pattern should be for each of the types of organisations illustratively mentioned above. Our specific recommendations are set out with reference to the five key points – creation of posts, reappropriation, purchases and contracts, contingent expenditure and write off of losses – in the table at Annexure XVI. We do not consider it necessary to set out justification for each item of delegation proposed there, for we have done no more than apply a common-sense judgment. There could, in other words, be a difference of opinion about some of the particulars recommended, though we would hope the broad scheme we have in mind will be found acceptable.

7.22 A word of explanation is called for in regard to the expression “line organisations” used above. What this should be taken to mean is all organisations under a ministry other than specialist organisations. This may not please purists as a definition, but that is the sense in which we have used the term. Defined in this fashion, it includes all attached and subordinate offices which deal directly with the secretariat of a ministry, whether they perform mainly executive functions or advisory and whether they have field units below them or not. It would also include the administrative offices proposed in the reorganised ministries visualised in chapter III. There is of course a wide variation in the nature of work that line organisations handle, and also in their stature. This needs to be taken account of, by making deviations from the standard pattern, when settling the delegation scheme of a particular organisation. We do not rule out the possibility of more than one delegation pattern being evolved for line organisations, if it is felt that that would make it easier for ministries to make a distinction between, say, large and small line organisations.

7.23 It is necessary to stress that delegations must be accompanied, and in some cases preceded, by reliable arrangements for good financial management within organisations. While setting out our proposals

we have assumed that the minimum arrangements required in this connection will be present. This should mean two things:

First, the ministry concerned should have a chief finance officer on the lines recommended in chapter III. It should be one of his important responsibilities to keep an eye, through reports and test checks, on the quality of delegated functioning on the part of subordinate organisations, and generally to guide and supervise financial management at those levels.

Second, viable line and specialist organisations should have internal finance offices which should help to see that financial powers are wisely utilised.

It is not that none of the delegations suggested can be put through until those two prerequisites are fulfilled. But the full working out of a new scheme of delegations on the lines of what we have recommended should preferably be accompanied by the above mentioned minimum arrangements.

7.24 What should be regarded as viable line and specialist organisations for the purpose of setting up internal finance offices is a point which requires careful consideration. In the case of specialist organisations, at least, we offer the thought that viability should be judged in the context of the volume of spending under "other charges" and "stores and equipment". Finance cells should be set up only where their cost can be fitted into an amount not exceeding, say, 5 per cent of this spending. The smallest finance cell to be permitted should consist of a finance officer (Rs. 700—1250) assisted by an accountant, the annual cost of such a cell coming to about Rs. 20,000. This should mean that all specialist organisations in which the volume of spending under the heads mentioned above exceeds Rs. 4 lakhs per annum should be given finance cells manned, it is important to emphasise, with trained personnel. We would caution that such cells should be set up only under ministries where chief finance officers are appointed, so that the latter may guide and supervise the work of the cells, as a result of which the additional expense on the latter may be expected to yield maximum possible value.

7.25 Our five key points (para 7.18) do not include powers to sanction expenditure on schemes. The present position about these is that administrative ministries have full powers to sanction expenditure on schemes or projects, provided funds are available and the scheme or the project as a whole has been scrutinised and accepted by the Ministry of Finance. Line and specialist organisations have powers to sanction expenditure on schemes within prescribed monetary limits. Consultation with the Ministry of Finance is not necessary for issuing expenditure sanctions unless a particular scheme has only "lump sum provision". In the case of large projects having various constituent schemes, expenditure sanctions are issued not only for the project as a whole but also for each constituent scheme separately. What exact purpose do

expenditure sanctions serve? We have not been able to discover a satisfactory enough answer to this question. Certainly the sanction-issuing authority gets an opportunity for a more leisurely and detailed scrutiny of schemes than is available at the time of budget-making. But we suspect that the very existence of expenditure sanctions, apart from constituting an additional and somewhat delaying step in an already complex drill, tends to introduce casualness and superficiality in the initial formulation of schemes by providing a second stage of scrutiny. We have, therefore, considered whether the right measure here is not elimination of these sanctions rather than greater delegation for issuing them. In the case of minor works, the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules, 1958 make it clear that the act of appropriation or reappropriation of funds itself operates as a sanction to incur expenditure and there is no need to issue any formal orders sanctioning expenditure. Following this approach, we would recommend that after authorisation by Parliament, there should be specific allotment of budget grants scheme-wise and each such allotment should be accompanied by broad details of the budget estimates of the scheme as accepted, which would contain particulars of expenditure as are now given in the expenditure sanction; since the two documents will serve the same purpose as the expenditure sanction, the act of appropriation or reappropriation of funds should itself operate as sufficient sanction to incur expenditure of schemes.

#### IV

#### **Powers in relation to personnel administration**

7.26 If responsibilities and powers are to match each other in the administrative ministries as well as in the various types of sub-ministry organisations mentioned in the previous section, the delegation of adequate powers in the field of personnel administration is as important as the delegation of financial powers.

7.27 We would first deal with the powers of administrative ministries. These, it may be said straightaway, are quite considerable. The nodal points of authority in regard to personnel administration are the establishment division of the Ministry of Finance for service rules having financial implications and the services wing of the Ministry of Home Affairs for other matters. If our proposal for setting up a Department of Personnel is accepted, there will in future be a single nodal point. We recommend that in the first review of delegations that the proposed Department of Personnel carries out in pursuance of the suggestion in para 7.5, it should specifically examine what additional powers could be delegated to the ministries where chief personnel officers are appointed on the lines of the reorganisation proposals in chapter III. The objective should be that ministries which are reorganised according to those proposals are enabled to handle their personnel administration on progressive lines. If, for instance, training is to be given fresh importance, the ministries concerned may need a wide range of powers to set up new courses, to send personnel to these as well as to courses



organised by other authorities, to make consequential arrangements so that work does not suffer and so on. Most of these powers ministries already possess; what they may need additionally is a point for detailed examination at the time of the suggested first review. It may also be worth considering at that time whether these reorganised ministries should not be given the power to redelegate their own powers under the various rules, such as the Fundamental Rules and the Supplementary Rules, to sub-ministry organisations; it may not be safe to extend this delegation to ministries where there are no chief personnel officers who could be expected to keep an eye on the quality of delegated functioning.

7.28 While the administrative ministries have considerable powers in relation to personnel administration, the same cannot be said for sub-ministry organisations. Studies made in the case of a few organisations to analyse the work coming up from them to the secretariat show that over 40 per cent of this relates to personnel administration. Since the relationship of administrative ministries with sub-ministry organisations follows a more or less uniform pattern, this figure could be taken as a fairly reliable index of the total position. The detailed and rather cautious study made by the Department of Administrative Reforms of the relationship between the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply and the Central Public Works Department showed that roughly a quarter of what was coming to the secretariat of the ministry in the field of personnel administration was of relatively low importance and need not have come. It is evident that too much has been retained by administrative ministries in the way of responsibilities and powers. It seems, therefore, that there is considerable scope and need for effecting delegations here.

7.29 We have given thought to the principles on which delegations from administrative ministries should be based, and we recommend the following approach:

- (1) The more significant tasks to be performed in a line organisation in the field of personnel administration should be listed in two categories, major and minor. Appointments and promotions should obviously be major; so should the infliction of major penalties, *i.e.* dismissal, removal and reduction. But the grant of leave, the control of travelling, etc. could be treated as minor tasks; so could the infliction of minor penalties, *i.e.* those other than the three mentioned above.
- (2) The personnel of the organisation should be placed in three grades; senior management, middle management and others. The senior management of the organisation should ordinarily be taken to consist of its head and all those at the next level below that. The middle management of the organisation should comprise its officers other than those who are senior managers. The third category should then consist of the remaining staff of all categories.

- (3) Administrative ministries should normally concern themselves with all tasks in relation to the head of the organisation, and major tasks only in relation to the senior management of the organisation. They would in any case deal with overall policy issues concerning the personnel administration of the organisation. All else should be delegated out.
- (4) The headquarters of the organisation should, following the same principle, normally concern itself with minor tasks in relation to the senior management of the organisation, and major tasks only in relation to its middle management. It should of course have total control over other staff in the headquarters office. All else should be delegated out.
- (5) Supervisory and executive levels should normally have powers to handle minor tasks in relation to the middle management personnel under them and full powers in relation to other staff. The general principle here should be that the man directly in charge of a unit should be in a position to deal effectively with the personnel placed under him.
- (6) The above approach should, with suitable modifications, be also adopted in the case of the various specialist organisations.

Specific proposals based on this approach are in the table at †annexure XVII. These should be regarded more in the nature of providing a starting point of thinking than final recommendations.

7.30 We should mention that, as in the case of financial powers, the greater delegations suggested above should be accompanied by arrangements for good personnel administration within organisations. We have assumed that the minimum arrangements required for this will be present. This should mean two things :

First, the ministry concerned should have a chief personnel officer on the lines recommended in chapter III. It should be one of his important responsibilities to watch, through reports and test checks, the quality of delegated functioning on the part of sub-ministry organisations, and generally to guide and supervise the latter in the field of personnel administration.

Second, viable line and specialist organisations should have internal personnel offices which should help to ensure that personnel administration is handled efficiently and that, in particular, delegated powers are exercised with care.

It may be that many of the suggested delegations can be effected without fulfilling these two prerequisites. But full implementation of a scheme of delegations on the above lines should, as far as possible, be accompanied by the minimum arrangements set out above. We do

not rule out the possibility of the same officer looking after both the internal finance office and the internal personnel office of a particular viable line or specialist organisation.

7.31 A good deal of the correspondence entered into by sub-ministry organisations with the secretariat is because rules and orders in the field of personnel administration are extremely complex and raise many questions of interpretation. Several such questions eventually go to the Finance Ministry, and the interpretation given often adds to the complexity. It might lend point to what we have in mind if we were to mention that the rules, instructions and interpretations relating to travelling allowance alone cover no less than 134 pages of print; those relating to leave 81 pages; to pay 62 pages; and so on. In addition, there is the unprinted "case law" in the establishment division of the Finance Ministry which presumably influences the decisions made in situations requiring exemptions and relaxations. It seems to us that there is an urgent need for a drastic simplification of rules in this field. We ourselves have not had the time, nor did we see it as a part of our assignment, to study the problem in detail. We understand that the Commission has constituted a special working group for the simplification of rules. Whether on the basis of this group's proposals or otherwise, we would like the end-product of a new initiative in simplification to emerge somewhat as follows :

- (a) There should be a simplified, omnibus code on establishment matters, including not only subjects like travelling allowance, leave, pay and so on, but also health, accommodation, etc.
- (b) There should be arrangements for keeping up to date all manuals which contain rules governing recruitment and seniority as also instructions about matters like promotion and confirmation.
- (c) All circulars of general interest in the field of personnel administration, whether involving finance or not, should be brought out in weekly bulletins on the lines of army instructions.
- (d) The circumstances in which exemptions and relaxations are made in individual cases at the nodal point should be circularised as something in the nature of case law for the ministries and other organisations to keep in mind.

## V

### Delegations within organisations

7.32 Work which lends itself to quantified or specific description can, and is, delegated to the different levels within organisations in precise terms. In the office of the Director General of Supplies and Disposals, for instance, the officers at various levels are allotted specified powers expressed in monetary terms for the disposal of purchas

cases. Much the same is the position in the office of the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports, where powers are delegated in terms of the value of the import licences that can be issued. In all organisations, some tasks relating to office management and personnel administration are specifically delegated, such as powers in regard to contingent expenditure or powers to impose penalties on personnel. Wherever work can be delegated in precise terms, the problem of intra-organisation delegations is of the same nature as that of inter-organisation delegations, and the approach in dealing with it could therefore be much the same as recommended for the latter. We would make two important recommendations of detail :

- (a) Heads of organisations should be enabled to redelegate some of their powers to responsible officers within their organisations, whether in the financial field or in relation to personnel administration. Powers which can be so redelegated should be spelt out and placed in two categories : powers which can be redelegated only with the prior approval of higher authorities, and those which can be redelegated at the discretion of the head of the organisation.
- (b) Where such redelegation is made, the head of the organisation should not be expected to carry any more responsibility than any other delegating authority. In this connection, we would refer to the financial rule which permits heads of offices to authorise gazetted officers serving under them to incur contingent and miscellaneous expenditure on their behalf. The rule contains the following unusual provision :
  - “The Head of Office shall, however, continue to be responsible for the correctness, regularity and propriety of the expenditure incurred by the gazetted officer so authorised.”

No other delegating authority has to reckon with this kind of proviso, which tends to negate the purpose of delegations.

7.33 In this section, our primary concern is with the area of work where quantified or specific descriptions are not possible. In most organisations this area covers the bulk of substantive work. The delegations which obtain here, whether in the secretariat of a ministry or in the office of a line organisation or in a specialist organisation like a hospital, are unspecified and flexible. They are unspecified because the nature of work does not permit precise description of work packets. And they are flexible because of several types of variables. One is the changing attitudes and requirements of higher authorities, *i.e.* ministers in the case of the secretariat, the secretariat in the case of non-secretariat organisations, and the headquarters of line organisations in the case of field units. The second variable is the differing capacity of the senior managers of an organisation, as also their differing ability and willingness to entrust matters to their juniors. Next is

the uneven capacity of junior officers at the same level to take responsibility. And, finally, there is the varying importance of individual problems. A view was taken by an important ministry some time ago that any attempt to codify the charges of officers would tend to restrict the discretion of various grades of officers and would adversely affect the objective of encouraging officers at lower levels to dispose of as many cases as possible. Notwithstanding the unspecified and flexible character of delegation in this area of work, the individual officers of an organisation generally have a good idea of the scope of their responsibilities. This is because of fairly well-understood conventions and practices, which no doubt keep changing from time to time but are clear enough to operate on the basis of, at any given point of time. It seems to us inevitable and even desirable that there should be flexibility and lack of codification in the delegation systems within organisations.

7.34 What is wrong in intra-organisation delegation systems is not that they are flexible and uncodified, but that tasks which should normally be performed at lower levels keep getting pushed up to the level of senior management. Some of the reasons for this are of a fundamental character. There is, for instance, the incorrect emphasis often placed on accountability, because of which ministers feel compelled to keep themselves acquainted with everything that might become controversial and officers feel they must play safe by pushing files upwards. There are then basic short-comings in existing structures, methods of work and personnel policies, which also contribute to excessive pressure of work for senior managers. What could be done to remedy these fundamental defects is discussed elsewhere in this report. Here, we would like to discuss three immediate reasons which tend to increase the workload of senior managers unjustifiably and for which answers could perhaps be found more easily than for the basic causes mentioned above.

7.35 Firstly, the workload of the senior managers of an organisation increases unreasonably when the demands of higher authorities become excessive. It is not denied that all higher authorities have the right to ask organisations below them for information on any matter dealt with by them. But it is important for good administration that this right should be exercised with restraint and judgment, so that healthy vigilance from above does not degenerate into confidence-sapping interference for the organisations below. In particular, intervention by higher authorities should be rare in cases involving individuals, whether government servants or others, where the discretion to take decisions normally vests in the lower organisations. Higher authorities should welcome practical suggestions from the heads of organisations below them about how to reduce their demands to the minimum, and should show a willingness to adjust their functioning in the light of such suggestions. This applies equally to the functioning

of ministers *vis-a-vis* the secretariat, the secretariat *vis-a-vis* non-secretariat organisations having direct dealings with it, and the headquarters offices of line organisations *vis-a-vis* field units. Often political pressures lead ministers to interfere in individual cases and this should be avoided.

7.36 Secondly, the pressure on senior managers often increases unduly because of defects in their own attitudes and methods of working. Many of them fail to grow into their higher responsibilities, and make the mistake of trying to do the work of those below them instead of, or in addition to, their own. It needs to be consciously accepted by those in senior positions that they should refrain from tasks best left to lower levels. They must constantly endeavour to appraise their contribution to the administrative process faithfully and frankly. The head of each organisation, whether he is the secretary of a ministry or the head of a line organisation or the head of a specialist organisation like a hospital, carries a special responsibility in this direction. He should not only set an example by organising his work in such a way that he keeps nothing with himself except the most important tasks, but should also see to it that his immediate lieutenants do likewise. His style of work and that of his senior colleagues should not be such that it attracts work to them. The most significant delegations in an organisation are those which flow out of the right attitudes and work habits of its senior management, and we would consequently underline the importance of continuous and candid self-examination on the part of the senior managers of all organisations.

7.37 Thirdly, the inadequacies of the staff at levels lower than senior management prove an ever present cause for the unnecessary uprush of work. Here we would allot another important role to senior managers. Those in senior positions should make it their business consciously to encourage and train the personnel placed below them to take as much responsibility as possible. The head of each organisation should, again, set an example in this matter, setting aside time for an active programme of personally encouraging and training those below him. He should also see that his senior colleagues do the same. It is no good senior administrators complaining of overwork and bemoaning the lack of good men below them. They must recognise it as an important part of their job to build up the men placed under their charge.

7.38 We would suggest that the senior management of each organisation, led by its head, should make a review of the prevailing work relationship in the organisation at regular intervals, not less frequently than once a year. The objective of these reviews should be to identify dispensable work at the level of senior management and to devise measures for its final disposal at lower levels. The task of identification should be done with reference to the three contributory reasons discussed above. Items of dispensable work relatable to the

first of these reasons should be frankly discussed by the head of the organisation with the higher authority chiefly concerned. In the case of the secretariat of a ministry, for instance, the secretary should discuss the items located by a review as falling in the first category with the minister in charge; in the case of a non-secretariat organisation, the head should similarly hold discussions with the secretary; and so on. Items of dispensable work relatable to the other two reasons will call for remedial steps on the part of the head of the organisation himself and his immediate colleagues. We need hardly stress that, in order that these reviews should yield fruit, they should be preceded by systematic work studies, for which purpose the head of an organisation may well depute one of his immediate lieutenants to carry out detailed studies a month or two preceding a particular review.

7.39 We would recommend that the Department of Administrative Reforms should aim to develop expertise in this matter. It would be useful if it were to participate in two or three of the suggested reviews, particularly those in the secretariats of ministries. Where such participation takes place, it should of course be at the invitation of the head of the organisation concerned, and any studies undertaken thereafter should be made in consultation with the senior management of the inviting organisation. It is necessary to mention that studies involving the method of working of senior managers have not so far been undertaken in the Government of India, and consequently special arrangements may have to be made within the Department of Administrative Reforms to ensure that the studies made are competent enough to command the confidence of the senior management within the organisations studied. On the basis of participation in two or three such reviews, it might become possible for guidelines to be developed for the benefit of those who make similar reviews in other organisations.

#### IV

##### **Powers of authentication**

7.40 Article 77(1) of the Constitution stipulates that all executive action of the Government of India should be expressed to be taken in the name of the President. Article 77(2) provides that orders and other instruments made and executed in the name of the President should be authenticated in such manner as may be specified in rules to be made by the President. The Authentication (Orders and other Instruments) Rules, 1958, framed under Article 77(2) authorise all officers with secretariat status to authenticate orders and other instruments made and executed in the name of the President. They also give this authority to a few non-secretariat officials, ministry by ministry. The system works well on the whole, but two issues require to be discussed.

7.41 Firstly, the existing system of delegations in this field is based on the present secretariat-centered machinery. As argued in para 3.21, in another kind of structure authentication powers would have to be given on a different basis. What should be that basis in the case of the reorganised ministries visualised in chapter III? Orders which require authentication fall broadly into three groups :

- orders in the personnel field,
- orders relating to financial matters, and
- orders arising out of policy and other decisions of the Government of India.

A practical arrangement would be for the chief and other officers of the chief personnel office of a reorganised ministry to have authority to authenticate orders in relation to the first group of orders, the chief and other officers of the chief finance office in relation to the second, and the chiefs and other officers of the remaining administrative offices in relation to their respective areas of work excluding personnel and financial matters. Where personnel or financial units are set up within administrative offices, it may help to delegate limited authentication powers to the heads of such units even in the personnel and financial fields, particularly where this is necessary to match substantive personnel or financial powers delegated to the chief of the administrative office.

7.42 Secondly, there is a connection between authentication powers and secretariat status, taking advantage of which we would like to discuss a general problem which frequently crops up. We understand that for many years there has been continuous pressure on the Government to concede what is referred to as "*ex-officio* secretariat status" to particular non-secretariat officials. A study of individual instances shows that the decisions taken have not always been consistent, the status claimed being conceded in one case and refused in another more according to the pressure of a particular claim than to its intrinsic merit. This unevenness in individual decisions is not due to the lack of policy in this field. Instructions have existed since 1948, and have been reiterated as recently as November, 1967, the gist of which is that secretariat status is necessary only for those officers who sign communications, orders or notifications on behalf of the Government, or for those, who, within the limits of the rules of business or secretariat instructions, take decisions on behalf of the Government, and that the grant of secretariat status in individual cases should depend on the fulfilment of these criteria. To begin with, we must draw attention to what appears to us to be an incorrect proposition in this. We do not agree that secretariat status is necessary for those who sign communications, orders or notifications on behalf of the Government. All that is necessary is an amendment in favour of such officers in the Authentication (Orders and other Instruments)



Rules, 1958. But leaving this aside, it seems to us that the difficulty experienced in evenly implementing the existing policy has arisen mainly because changing circumstances have created doubts in many minds as to whether a secretariat-centered machinery is particularly relevant to present-day requirements. It is this which lent force to the individual claims made in the past for the grant of *ex-officio* secretariat status, and also introduced uncertainty in the stand of the Ministry of Home Affairs while considering these claims. During all the years since independence, no comprehensive enquiry was made probing the validity of the secretariat-centered machinery inherited from British days and, since no rational alternative could be seen, there was understandable doubt about what exactly was the right view to take in issues like these. With the whole subject now having been comprehensively enquired into, there should in future be no justification for an uneven approach to claims for *ex-officio* secretariat status. As mentioned in para 3·15, the grant of such status to essentially non-secretariat functionaries creates confusion by blurring the precise role of the secretariat. We consider that in future there should be no question of *ex-officio* status being given to any functionary. There should be either of two situations only. In ministries where it is possible to introduce reorganisation on the lines of what is suggested in chapter III, the secretariat as such should go, arrangements for authentication of orders being made as recommended in the previous para. Elsewhere the concept of a secretariat-centered machinery should be allowed to function until reorganisation can take place there too, without elements of confusion being permitted to enter in the shape of *ex-officio* secretariat status for essentially non-secretariat functionaries. The salutary practice of giving authentication powers to non-secretariat officials, wherever necessary, should of course continue in this latter category of ministries.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

8.1 Our earlier report identified nine nodal functions and discussed organisational arrangements for them. It omitted to deal with two such functions of great importance. This chapter makes the omission good in respect of one of them, *viz.* public relations. The other is dealt with in the next chapter.

8.2 The expression "public relations" means different things to different people. Some think of it in the context of what the term means in business, where the focus is on salesmanship, and import a similarly narrow meaning from there. Others think of it as publicity; this is mainly because publicity and propaganda were the main functions of the early organisations set up in this field, those in the provinces having even been called directorates of publicity. Still others go further and allot to the public relations function a wide meaning, including matters like arrangements for the reception of visitors and enquiry counters; but these make a distinction between public relations and information, which latter function they think of in the context of relations with the press. All these views are unnecessarily narrow. The report of a study of the information services of the United Kingdom describes the government's public relations as the deliberate, planned and sustained effort it makes to establish and maintain mutual understanding between itself and the people of the country. This is how we also would like to view the public relations function.

8.3 That this function is a vitally important one needs no great elaboration. There is something about public administration which makes its practitioners, both political executives and civil servants, so absorbed in its processes that they get out of touch with the people. For the former, there are correctives in the shape of having to face Parliament and, every five years, the electorate; but even with these many political executives find themselves becoming captives of the administration and unable to keep their links with the people as continuously fresh as they would like. For civil servants, there are no such correctives and, on the other hand, there are three factors which actually promote isolation. There is, first, the authoritarian tradition inherited from the past, which pervades the administration and discourages popular contacts; the experience of 20 years of independence shows that this tradition is hard to eradicate and infects even some political executives. There is, next, the fairly wide-spread attitude of civil servants that keeping in touch with the public is exactly what elected ministers are there for and that civil servants should think of themselves primarily as specialists in administration; this leads many of them to make a virtue of keeping away from the public. And, thirdly,

civil servants derive a handicap from the fact that they belong to the educated class; the latter being small and separated from the bulk of the people, civil servants are correspondingly isolated. As a result of all these considerations, the administrative machinery gives the impression of being at a distance from the people, too preoccupied with itself and not concerned enough about what does or does not happen to the citizens. This damages both the cause of democracy and the progress of development. What is called for is a new place of importance to be given to public relations, so that deliberate measures can be undertaken to counteract these forces. It is not that a good system of public relations can operate as a cure-all, making up for bad policies and inefficient administration. What it can do is to help in providing greater value from reasonably good policies and reasonably efficient administration.

8.4 We thus visualise public relations to have a much wider range and greater importance than has hitherto been conceded to the subject. What kind of things should enter a new public relations policy and what organisational arrangements would be desirable to handle public relations work effectively are matters which need to be examined carefully. Considering the amount that needs to be done in this area, we would recommend that a special committee of knowledgeable persons should be appointed by the government to study the whole subject. But some steps could be taken straightaway. In the succeeding paragraphs we offer a few basic ideas, some of which could be considered for immediate implementation and others help as a starting point of further thinking, through the special committee recommended or otherwise.

8.5 An outline of our ideas is as follows :

(1) We consider that there should be public relations policy to govern three main areas :

- the supply of information at the instance of the government itself ;
- the supply of information at the instance of members of the public; and
- other matters.

This should provide the framework within which individual ministries and organisations may then elaborate their own public relations measures.

(2) The responsibility for evolving public relations policy in the Government of India and reviewing it from time to time should vest in a single ministry. We recommend that this should be the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and that organisational arrangements should be made within this ministry, in the shape of a public relations wing, to ensure that the responsibility is appropriately discharged. The position of this nodal ministry *vis-a-vis* the various ministries should be analogous to that visualised for, say, the proposed Department of Personnel.

(3) There should be full-time public relations officers in all ministries, except where the work is of a wholly staff variety, (e.g. the Ministry of Law or the proposed Department of Personnel). Their main function should be to assist the ministries in implementing the government's public relations policy. No public relations officer should be of rank less than that of a deputy secretary. In the bigger ministries public relations officers might be of higher rank, *i.e.* equivalent to directors or even joint secretaries. Every public relations officer should work under the administrative control of the ministry to which he is posted, should be placed directly under the secretary of the ministry and should be given access to the working of the ministry sufficient for his task. There should be a cadre of specially trained public relations officers, managed by the nodal ministry, which should be the main source for manning posts in administrative ministries. But this should not preclude the posting of non-cadre men in some public relations officer posts, *e.g.* officers from the armed forces in the public relations units of the Ministry of Defence.

8.6 Underlying this outline is the thought that the primary lack today is not that there are poor public relations measures, which is undoubtedly so, but that there is no public relations policy and no one to worry about it. So long as this root defect remains unremedied, the government's public relations will remain insufficient and somewhat incoherent. The most important needs in this field, therefore, are that there should be clear public relations policy and that some ministry should be specially charged with the responsibility of worrying about what this should be and how it should be modified from time to time. With this at the centre of our thinking, we would like to elaborate a few points.

8.7 We would first like to discuss what policy in relation to the supply of information to the public should rightly cover. But before we proceed to do so it is necessary to mention that all supply of information, whether at the instance of the government or at the instance of the members of the public, is a legitimate field of concern for the government's public relations. An information policy must therefore be an important part of public relations policy, and must make sense in the overall public relations context. Although information as a subject is specifically and prominently allocated to the charge of a minister, it seems that there is a policy void here almost as much as there is for public relations as a whole. This is not to say that a good deal of useful information work is not done through press relations, broadcasting and films, but that this does not have the benefit of being part of a systematically devised information policy. In regard to the release of news-worthy information, for instance, what goes for policy is the rule of discretion that important announcements should be reserved for Parliament, coupled with the rule of safety that Parliament should be told as little as possible. The net result is that, whether Parliament is in session or not, the government's approach in this

area is equally uncommunicative. We feel that if information policy-making were to be given more systematic attention, the supply of information to the public could be placed on a sounder footing.

8.8 Policy in regard to the supply of information at the instance of the government should not be confined to the single aspect of release of news-worthy information to the press, but should provide guidelines in other relevant aspects also, such as the compilation of annual departmental reports, the preparation of policy statements on important problems and the publication of material supplemental to these.

(1) *Annual departmental reports.*—We discussed the need for improving departmental reports in para 2.26 and recommended there that a parliamentary committee should examine the possibility of laying down the minimum information that departments should be required to furnish in their reports and should also suggest standard formats for groups of departments. That was in the context of Parliament's need for data for making systematic reviews of departmental working. We would only add here that the annual reports of departments can very usefully serve a wider purpose also, namely the supply of well arranged information about the government's activities to the public as a whole. If the question of improving these reports comes to be examined in detail, through a parliamentary committee as recommended by us or otherwise, this wider purpose should be borne in mind, and, in fact, incorporated in the terms of reference of such an enquiry.

(2) *Policy statements.*—The need for well articulated policy statements on the major aspects of a ministry's work was brought out in para 3.34. We said there that such statements would make for clarity and qualitative improvement in the work of ministries, and would also be a practical reflection of the responsibility which ministers owe to Parliament in the field of formulation and articulation of policy on major problems. Apart from promoting efficiency and the successful working out of the principle of accountability, policy statements can also be an effective tool in the government's public relations. It goes without saying that only such policy articulations can serve this purpose as are capable of being made public. Wherever possible, policy statements meant for publication should take the form of white papers presented to Parliament. The points which an information policy in this area should insist upon are that

- ministries should not fail to articulate policy on all major problems of current interest,
- having done so they should not be unduly secretive and should take the first opportunity to announce policy (other than that which must be kept secret) to the public, in the form of white papers or otherwise, and

- they should conform to a style of drafting policy statements which is accurate and at the same time good from the public relations angle. (In other words policy statements should avoid the usual ambiguity and complexity of official drafting).

The information policy here should require ministers to avoid making off-the-cuff policy pronouncements, as far as possible, and the government's information machine (the Press Information Bureau, All India Radio, etc.) to avoid giving such pronouncements the spotlight.

(3) *Other publications.*—The ministries of the Government of India publish considerable material, the volume and contents of the publications of individual ministries depending on their felt needs. In addition, the Publications Division in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting puts out a good deal of publicity material, and some ministries (*e.g.* Commerce) have special arrangements for publicity work. There is a secretaries' committee which screens proposals for new periodicals, chiefly from the angle of printing capacity and paper shortage. As is the case for public relations policy generally, there is no policy in regard to publications. Reviews or evaluations of the government's publications from the public relations angle take place only rarely. No systematic attempt is made to locate voids where new publications might be of help. A newly devised publications policy should fill these gaps. We would like to see ministries bringing out factual reports from time to time relating to major areas of their functioning; these should supplement annual departmental reports, but need not themselves be annual. We would also like to see all ministries bringing out pamphlets and guides aimed at giving the fullest possible information to their clientele public about how they are organised, where members of the public should go for what kind of work or information, and so on. We would further like to see ministries commissioning reliable and independent evaluations of their periodicals from time to time, harnessing university talent for this purpose wherever possible.

(4) *Release of news.*—This is an area where shortcomings in information policies and practices make themselves felt most keenly, because this is where the press has to be reckoned with. The study team on relations between the press and the administration having gone into the subject in detail, we do not propose to say much. We would only remark that there is at present a tendency to overdo things in the matter of publicising the sayings and doings of ministers and, as observed earlier, to be not communicative enough about real news. Much of this is a question of strengthening the machinery for news releases, but even a strengthened machinery may fail to produce markedly better results without support and inspiration from an enlightened and continuously reviewed information policy in this area.

8.9 Coming to supply of information at the instance of members of the public, fresh thinking will need to be done in regard to secrecy in the government before a really worthwhile information policy for this area can be formulated. The Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923, makes it an offence to pass on without authority not only secret information but all information obtained owing to their position by persons holding office under the government. Conduct Rules prescribe that no government servant shall, except in accordance with any general or special order or in the performance in good faith of his duties, communicate any official information to an unauthorised person. The Manual of Office Procedure refers to these two provisions and goes on to make the following clarification :

“It should be clearly understood that all communications received in a department as well as the papers connected therewith are to be regarded as confidential so far as the public and government employees, other than those who are required to handle them in the course of their duties, are concerned and government servants are prohibited from communicating or making any reference, direct or indirect, to any information acquired by them in the course of their official duties to anyone whatsoever unless its communication is authorised by a competent authority.”

Two points deserve special notice in these provisions :

- No distinction is made between secret and non-secret information, the unauthorised passing on of both being treated as a criminal offence as well as an act of misconduct.
- Authorisation by a competent authority is the key controlling the communication of official information, secret or non-secret, to the outside world.

It seems to us that placing secret and other information at par damages both security and public relations, for in this process not enough seriousness is given to protecting that which must be kept secret and unnecessary barriers are introduced in the remaining area to a generous sharing of information with the public. We would suggest that those responsible for formulating public relations policy should give thought, in consultation with those who look after security policy, to the devising of measures to ensure that the secret classification is used only where necessary and of a new approach that would free non-secret information from dispensable shackles, thus clearing the way for a more open information policy in this area. There should be no hesitation in amending the Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923, the Conduct Rules and the Manual of Office Procedure, if that should be found necessary.

8.10 The more important matters which policy governing the supply of information at the instance of the public should cover are the following :

(1) *Requests from scholars.*—The old records of the various ministries (*i.e.* records older than three years) stay in their record room till they are twenty-five years' old, when they are screened and placed in three categories. Those adjudged not worth further retention are destroyed. Of the remainder, those which are secret are retained in the record rooms of the ministries. The rest are supposed to be passed on to the National Archives, though many ministries fail to do so. The records so transferred do not immediately become open to scholars for inspection. The normal rule is that only records more than 40 years' old are "open", but two important ministries (External Affairs and Home) have recently made sensible reductions in this period. Even where records are "open", scholars cannot, in the case of confidential papers, take copies or use the information they glean without the prior permission of the ministry concerned; here, too, the two ministries mentioned have liberalised matters by waiving the clause about prior permission. We consider these provisions unduly restrictive and would recommend a substantial liberalisation somewhat on the following lines :

- (a) All records transferred to the National Archives should be treated as open to scholars, not only for inspection but also for taking copies or otherwise making use of the information gathered. The ministries should however have the right to impose restrictions at any time after transfer on specific categories of records; they will presumably exercise this right only where specific justification exists.
  - (b) All records in the record rooms of ministries, other than secret and confidential records, should also be treated as open to scholars for inspection. But the latter should be required to obtain the prior permission of the ministry concerned if they wish to take copies or make use of the information they collect. Here also the ministries should have the right to impose restrictions for specific justification in specific areas.
- (2) *Requests from aggrieved persons.*—At present aggrieved persons have no access to records having a bearing on their cases. We consider this a serious shortcoming in the existing administrative system. According to evidence tendered before the study team on Union territories, the Portuguese administration in Goa permitted citizens to see papers concerning cases in which they were directly interested; the practice came to an end with the incorporation of Goa in India. We would



recommend that aggrieved persons, other than government servants, should be given access to old records, other than notings, having a bearing on their cases on the lines suggested above for scholars. In addition, where a person's grievance is up before an administrative tribunal or before the proposed Lokpal institution, he should have the right to see even records (excluding notings) which have not been transferred to the record room, provided their relevance is certified by the administrative tribunal concerned or the Lokpal and provided further they are not adjudged privileged documents. We would hope that administrative tribunals will be gradually extended to cover all areas of administration which generally give rise to grievances amongst members of the public. We are not saying more on this point because the question of extending and strengthening administrative tribunals appropriately concerns the study team on administrative tribunals.

- (3) *Requests from others.*—The question of inspecting records should not arise when persons other than scholars and those with grievances seek information. The present practice in answering the requests of such persons is to furnish the minimum possible information (very often less than that) couched in forbidding and unhelpful officialese. We would like to see an information policy here of providing the maximum information relevant to a particular request and of doing so in as courteous and helpful language as possible. This of course is easier said than done. If there is to be any hope of implementation, there should not only be clear standing instructions in the matter but also arrangements for imparting training to those who ordinarily deal with requests for information in the various ministries. In other words, a training policy in this field should be an inherent part of whatever information policy is devised here.

8.11 We understand that the laws of Sweden permit citizens to examine all state documents except those which are likely to endanger the security of the state. In that this reflects a method of administration which is commendably open to the public, it offers an attractive ideal to work towards. But, in our opinion, conditions in this country do not permit going so far at present. What we have recommended above, coupled with the fact that the proposed institution of Lokpal will presumably have access to all records necessary for its functioning, constitutes enough in the way of a beginning in this direction.

8.12 Policy in areas other than the supply of information to the public should concern itself with other major inputs required for effective public relations. An idea of the variety of subjects that might have to be covered can be had from the following illustrative list :

- measures for public participation, particularly of the clientele public of individual departments

- measures for involving professional groups and eminent individuals (statesmen, educationists, economists, etc.), particularly in the consultative sphere
- expert surveys of the public reaction to governmental policies and programmes
- the setting up and proper functioning of enquiry counters in all offices frequently visited by members of the public
- the training of receptionists, telephone operators and the personal staff of officers in the handling of visitors and telephone calls
- the drawing up, in consultation with those responsible for administrative reform, of administrative procedure codes to provide for matters such as time limits for the disposal of applications from the public, the communication of reasons for the rejection of applications, and procedures for appeal to higher authorities in cases of delay or unreasonable rejection (not to be confused with administrative tribunals).

8.13 In regard to organisational arrangements for the effective handling of the government's public relations, we have little to add to what we have set out in sub paras (2) and (3) of para 8.5, because most of this is uncontroversial. The only point on which there could be doubt is whether, considering the wide reach of public relations, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting would be the correct repository of nodal functions in this field. Firstly, the present organisation of this ministry is perhaps not geared to handle the expanded responsibilities visualised by us. If the allocation of nodal responsibilities to this ministry is justified, what is necessary is that it should be organisationally strengthened, by the creation of a well-manned public relations wing, to look after the new tasks. A second doubt is more serious. This arises from the fact that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting does not seem to have the prestige and importance that it should. Therefore, however competently it may handle this work, it will have to be ensured that other ministries support its efforts by giving importance to the advices and directives that go out from here. We consider no other ministry better suited for carrying nodal responsibilities in respect of public relations, if only because the subject of information which constitutes a large part of public relations already belongs to this ministry. Given the right measure of support from the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should not find the task we have in mind for it more than it can effectively manage.

## CHAPTER IX

### MACHINERY FOR "ADMINISTRATION" AND INSPECTION

9.1 In this last chapter, we should first like to deal with some problems of "administration", using the term in a special sense to mean the work handled in the various "administration" units of the secretariats of ministries and of non-secretariat organisations. We exclude from this discussion those items of work falling within "administration" which have been covered earlier; these are personnel administration, financial management and O & M. The more important items of work in the remaining area are

- general office discipline, including control over office attendance, supervision and inspection
- caretaking including responsibility for the neatness and cleanliness of office premises
- departmental security, including reception arrangements, security guards, identity cards, etc.
- office accommodation, including its procurement for expanded needs, the layout and allocation of accommodation in hand and the maintenance of buildings
- office furniture, equipment, stationery, forms and liveries
- records management
- centralised arrangements for typing, duplicating and mail-handling
- office services such as messenger service, staff cars, library, telephones and weather comforts
- general co-ordination.

9.2 These items of work have an importance of their own. The public impression about the working of the machinery of the Government of India is that there is a great deal of slackness and not enough concern amongst those responsible for supervision to pull things up. A visible manifestation of slackness is the large numbers who seem to be able to get away with coming late to work and leaving early, loitering in office canteens and public lawns, or idling at their desks. Another sign is the poor condition of most government offices, with shabby furniture, unclean premises, badly maintained buildings and untidy heaps of files everywhere. Still another is the slow working of the machinery, which leads to even simple letters not being answered promptly and anything with the slightest complexity taking months to be settled. The reform measures suggested in the earlier chapters will need to be supplemented by measures to deal specifically with at least the more obvious of these visible ills.

9.3 The most prominent of these is the lack of sense of duty displayed by a substantial number of government servants, evidenced by late-coming and early-going, loitering during office hours and idling at office desks. To gauge the extent of the problem we had three surveys conducted and should first like to present the results of these:

- (a) The first survey related to the incidence and extent of late-coming in government offices. It covered a total of 4289 office goers spread over several offices. Observations showed that only 31.5 per cent officials arrived at their place of work punctually. Another 21 per cent arrived within 10 minutes, which is the permitted grace period. The rest numbering 47.5 per cent of the total were late by varying periods ranging up to an hour. It would seem from this that almost half the staff of the government including officers come late to office.
- (b) Snap observations were made in the second survey to find out the idle-work ratio amongst office staff. Altogether 1950 observations were made in selected offices spread over three days, the number of persons observed being 172. The observations showed only 42.7 per cent staff as working. Of the rest, 31.1 per cent were idling, *i.e.* gossiping, reading newspapers or just relaxing, while the remaining 26.2 per cent were absent from their seats. No observations were made between 1.00 P. M. and 2.00 P. M. which is the universally observed lunch interval though not the official one. It is possible that some of those found absent were away on official work in other offices. But making reasonable allowance for this, it would seem that on an average office personnel devote only 50 per cent of their office time to their work.
- (c) The third survey was conducted in five offices canteens selected at random to see how many people visit canteens outside the unofficial lunch interval (during which all canteens and recreation rooms are in any case filled to capacity) and how long they stay there. Each of the five canteens was observed for a full day. The total number of visits to all five canteens was 4729. The average duration of stay of a visitor, based on time observations of a few tables, came to 11.7 minutes. To this must be added the time spent by an official in going to the canteen, returning to his desk and settling down to work; the working time lost per visit is probably not less than 20 minutes. Two of these canteens are located in the security area of a single office building. Making a correlation between the man-days lost in these canteens due to such visits as also due to the lunch interval being universally extended by half an hour, on the one hand, and the number of personnel working in this building, on the other, it appears that no less than 15.3 per cent of the available man-days are lost every day for the reasons discussed in this sub-para. Most of the visits to the

canteens were observed to be within an hour of the commencement or close of normal working hours and the lunch interval, over 50 per cent of the visits being relatable to these periods. It would seem that office personnel use canteens as an outlet for their desire to delay getting down to earnest work as much as possible and to get away from their desks as early as they can manage.

The facts revealed by these surveys not only confirm the popular impression that there is widespread dereliction of duty in government offices, but do so in a startlingly concrete form.

9.4 What can be done to put a stop to all this? We recognise that much of the evil springs from sociological causes. The growing tendency on the part of government servants to show a lack of awareness of discipline and of a sense of duty is largely due to environmental influences. This appears to us to call for special measures for improving matters in this respect.

9.5 The enforcement of punctuality and order is essentially a hierarchical responsibility. In other words, it is for all superior authorities to ensure that those serving under them are faithful in the performance of their duty. In para 4.25, we visualised this responsibility as specifically belonging to the chiefs of reorganised wings. We would generalise this proposition here and recommend that hierarchical responsibility in this field should be brought home to all superior officers, not only through instructions but also through the pulling up of hierarchical superiors who permit laxity on the part of their subordinates.

9.6 But this by itself may not mend matters. Having regard to the fact that the disease seems both widespread and deep-seated, we have formulated what we consider minimum measures. Before we present these, we should like to say that we have considered whether an administrative police force should not be organised on the lines of the military police for the armed forces. If such a force were to be considered advisable, it would have to be centrally controlled, perhaps from the Cabinet Secretariat. Its members would have to be invested with special powers. Its functions broadly would have to be to patrol the haunts of slackers, to carry out surprise checks and to bring offenders to book by reporting their cases for action to their supervising officers. If the disease as it exists today is not arrested by the measures suggested below the time may well come when a police approach on these lines is regarded as the only way out. Fortunately, the problem has not reached that stage yet, and lesser measures should be enough for the time being.

9.7 What should these lesser measures be, over and above the hierarchical responsibility mentioned in para 9.5? We recommend the following :

- (1) The enforcement of punctuality and order should be given first place in the field of "administration" by joint secretaries (administration) in unreorganised ministries and chief finance

officers in the reorganised ones. These officers should draw lessons from the way this subject was handled in the Ministry of Home Affairs when Shri M. G. Pimputkar held charge of "administration" there as a joint secretary. We understand that in his time vigorous measures were initiated to ensure punctual office attendance and devotion to work. These included steps like attendance checking at the entrances, strict enforcement of the provision under which late-coming is converted into casual leave, surprise visits by designated officers as also by the joint secretary himself to the various sections to check on attendance, and so on. We gather that these measures improved office attendance and discipline considerably. We would recommend that similar measures should be ruthlessly undertaken in all ministries. It may be useful for the joint secretaries (administration) and the chief finance officers concerned to be given one or two special officers each to assist them in this important enforcement task.

- (2) The present practice of office canteens remaining open to employees throughout the day should cease. Instead canteens should open for an hour before the commencement of office and stay open for an hour after office closes. During these periods the tariff of tea and coffee should be lower than the normal; this should be arranged by subsidising the canteens for the purpose, employees obtaining subsidised refreshment against special coupons given to them by their departments. Apart from these periods, canteens should open only for one hour covering the lunch interval; it should be for the supervising staff of the clientele government officials of a particular canteen to organise and enforce a staggered utilisation of the canteen services during this hour. Further, canteens should be assisted to organise and run trolley services for serving tea and coffee to office staff at specified times at their desks.
- (3) The prevailing evil of the lunch hour not being observed by anybody requires to be dealt with firmly. So far as office personnel are concerned it should be the duty of the supervising staff to ensure that employees stay away for only the permitted period of half an hour. But it may be difficult to enforce this if the right example in this matter is not set by officers. We recognise that some officers are heavily overburdened with responsibilities and have perforce to work several hours outside the office time. Insistence on any particular period for the lunch interval of such officers would be unrealistic. However, this argument is not available to most officers, and we would recommend that they should make every effort to adhere to the prescribed lunch interval.
- (4) We are of the view that games, whether indoor or outdoor, should not be allowed to be played during the lunch interval. This is because those involved in playing games, and often also

those involved in watching the players, overstay the lunch interval. The only recreation that should be provided within office premises should be a well-equipped reading room. The facility of games as part of a staff welfare programme should be confined to residential localities.

- (5) The tendency on the part of office personnel to absent themselves on the slightest pretext is aggravated by the orders that frequently come out permitting office workers to leave their work in order to welcome foreign dignitaries visiting India or to witness important sports events. Although these orders provide that permission should be given subject to the exigencies of work, in practice office staff takes such permission for granted and there is a wholesale exodus. We consider that the scope of such orders should be considerably restricted so as to suit a particular occasion.

9.8 The second visibly evident ill about which we think something ought to be done is the shabby physical condition of most government offices. The main reason for neglect in this area is that the value of a neat and clean work environment for promoting brisk efficiency is not recognised at the managing levels within the government. But there are defects of organisation too which contribute to neglect. Keeping office premises neat and clean depends on three factors: the habits of the personnel in an office, the efficiency of caretaking arrangements and the quality of maintenance of the building in which the office is housed. The first of these is squarely within the control of the head of the office concerned, at least to the extent that the habits of office personnel are capable of being influenced. The second is not always within his control, because caretaking responsibilities in large office buildings are shared. The office occupying the major portion of a building carries responsibility for common services like the cleanliness of common areas (approaches to the building, entrances, garages, etc.), the operation of lifts, the working of canteens, and so on. Caretaking internal to the space allocated to an individual office is mainly the responsibility of that office. Where offices are not allocated compact accommodation, the major office in the building has to take over some of this internal responsibility and in these cases it looks after even the corridors and bathrooms used by the staff in the offices which are housed in a scattered fashion. The third factor is in any case wholly outside the control of all heads of offices, since responsibility for the maintenance of office buildings belongs solely to the Central Public Works Department. We would mention in passing that it is our impression that not enough attention is paid to the maintenance of buildings considering the huge capital cost they entail in being put up. Control over the key contributing factors is thus dispersed. Furthermore, except for a few big buildings which have full-time caretakers, the caretaking job is generally assigned to a clerk in the "administration" section of the major office concerned, and he often fails to do justice to this work. Efficient caretaking does require special capabilities, but this has yet to be fully accepted within the government.

9.9 In the light of the above we have the following recommendations to make:

- (1) In para 4.26(g), we have already stressed the connection between compact accommodation and efficient caretaking so far as the reorganised wings visualised there are concerned. We would now generalise that and urge that all the offices lodged in a large building should be allocated accommodation compactly and then made squarely responsible for caretaking in relation to the space they occupy.
- (2) The primary responsibility for such internal caretaking should rest with hierarchical supervisors. In other words, it is office supervisors who should be primarily concerned with the maintenance of cleanliness within office rooms. Inspection questionnaires as well as confidential report forms should contain specific entries for assessing the attention paid by office supervisors to this work.
- (3) It should become a regular practice for the entire premises under the caretaking charge of a particular office to be inspected every day, either by the officer in charge of "administration" or by roster officers designated for the purpose by the head of the office. The defects observed in these inspections should be briefly noted in a register, and it should be the job of the caretaking authority to remove them before the day is out and make an entry to that effect in the register. The next day's inspecting officer should check whether the action taken is good enough.
- (4) One of the reasons for poor caretaking is that there is not enough janitor staff available to offices. As against this, there is usually a considerable strength of under-employed peons, who are reluctant to undertake any piece of work which they consider belongs to the janitor staff. There should be an overall review in each office of the relative strengths of janitor and peon staff, with the object of diverting some of the latter to the former wherever the need for this is justified.
- (5) Each large building should have, under the administrative control of the major office in the building, a full-time qualified caretaker. He should be primarily responsible for common services, but should also keep an eye on the internal caretaking of the various offices in the building with a view to ensuring that a uniformly high standard of neatness and cleanliness is maintained throughout the building. Lapses in this latter area should be brought to the personal attention of the head of the office concerned. The caretaker should be provided residential accommodation within or near the building under his charge so that he can organise and supervise the many operations in the caretaking field which must necessarily take place outside office hours.



- (6) Increasingly caretaking responsibilities should be linked to the maintenance of office buildings. Funds provided in the budget of the Central Public Works Department for the maintenance of individual office buildings should be expended by the engineering authorities according to a programme of maintenance approved by the caretaking authority concerned. The latter may find it necessary to insist upon more frequent attention than the usual practice of once annually to portions of the building which tend to look shabby more quickly than others, such as bathrooms and canteens.

9.10 The third conspicuous ill we should like to discuss is the irrational distribution and utilisation of office accommodation. It is a basic principle that organisations should be compactly housed, not only because of the relatively minor point that this makes better caretaking possible (as mentioned earlier), but because of the far more important consideration that this is an essential prerequisite to well supervised and efficient office functioning. It seems to us that the value of compact accommodation as a means to promote efficiency is not recognised in the Government of India. The following facts illustrate this:

- (1) There are several instances of organisations being housed in two or more buildings placed widely apart. Thus, for instance, the Ministry of Education is housed in six different buildings, namely North Block, E Block, I Block, M Block, Curzon Road barracks and the Theatre Communications Building. The Department of Economic Affairs is in three buildings : North Block, Jeewan Deep Building and Church Road Hutments. There are other examples too.
- (2) Even when only a single building is involved, organisations are not given compact accommodation. At †annexure XVIII is a floor-plan of Udyog Bhavan showing the accommodation allotted in that building to ten different organisations. It will be seen that there is very little evidence of compactness. Taking the example of just one of these organisations, namely the Ministry of Commerce, accommodation is held by this organisation in no less than 76 pieces scattered over the six floors and four blocks of this large structure. Much the same is the case for the other organisations in this building. Supervision, enforcement of office discipline and good caretaking are impossible in such a situation.
- (3) The internal distribution of accommodation allotted to organisations tends to suffer from the same kind of defect. At †annexure XIX is another floor plan of the same building, viz. Udyog Bhavan, this time showing the accommodation allotted to the Department of Industrial Development and the manner of its distribution over the various joint secretaries' charges within that department. It will be seen that the extent of dispersal here too is large. The very first of the secretariat wings illustrated in this plan is spread over 31 separate pieces of

accommodation scattered over all the floors of the building. It would be surprising if the joint secretary in charge were even to know the physical location of all these pieces. And in any case he must find it extremely difficult to supervise the work of his wing.

- (4) When offices are spread over more than one building, there is a tendency to position senior officers in the most central and prestigious building, and junior staff in the others. In the case of one ministry, for instance, all officers of and above the rank of joint secretary sit in the North Block, while many of their junior officers and staff work in other buildings. In the case of another department, although 27 of its 61 sections are located in Jeewan Deep Building, only 16 (14 under secretaries and 2 deputy secretaries) of its 71 officers sit here. All joint secretaries and most of the deputy secretaries concerned with the sections housed in this building prefer to sit in North Block. These are examples of irrational utilisation of given accommodation, for obviously supervision of the work and the organisation is given less importance than other factors.
- (5) The same approach is also visible in the practice of earmarking different floors of multi-storeyed buildings for different levels of the hierarchy. First floor accommodation usually goes to officers of and above the rank of joint secretary; the second floor is occupied by deputy secretaries; and the third and higher floors go to lower staff. Here again supervision and control is given low value.

9.11 In the past, attempts to rationalise accommodation have yielded discouraging results. This is because any plan of rationalisation has to reckon with the personal likes and dislikes of individuals. Unfortunately, senior officials have been known to give the wrong lead by digging their toes in about issues like the floor on which they must be given a room, the minimum size the room must have, the aspect it must face, and so on. So long as the wishes of individuals are given overriding importance, there can be no rationalisation of accommodation. We consider that the problem should be viewed first and foremost from the angle of office efficiency and that all other considerations should take second place. With this as the basic principle we recommend the following:

- (a) Every organisation should be housed compactly, as far as possible, in a single building. Where it has to be spread over more than one building, it should be so arranged that each individual piece is viable from the point of view of its ability to run its own "administration".
- (b) Within organisations, every wing should again be housed compactly, all officers right up to the wing chief (*i.e.* joint secretaries in the case of the secretariat) sitting adjacent to the rest of their staff.

- (c) It should be the responsibility of the nodal agency which handles problems of office accommodation to review the present situation (including the situation within single buildings, as in the case of Udyog Bhavan), prepare a rationalisation plan and implement it uncompromisingly. A good deal of rationalisation has taken place already in the course of allocation of accommodation to ministries in the newly constructed buildings in New Delhi, but much still remains to be done.
- (d) It should be the responsibility of the secretary of each ministry to ensure rational utilisation of the accommodation allotted to the ministry, keeping in mind the principle at (b) above.
- (e) The nodal agency should make it its business to keep an eye on the utilisation of accommodation by individual ministries so that irrational utilisation of the types mentioned in sub paras (4) and (5) of para 9.10 is avoided. A useful device in this connection would be periodical reviews of the utilisation of the office space in each building.

9.12 The three visible ills of "administration" discussed above do not exhaust the topic. There are, in other words, many other aspects which require thought and which could have been discussed in this chapter. A prominent example is the concept of orderlies, about which subject we have no doubt that previous notions will need to undergo changes if "administration" is to be modernised. We have deliberately confined our attention to three areas only in order to highlight what in our opinion deserves priority action.

9.13 This brings us to an important organisational point. Who is to see to it that purposeful action is taken in regard to the above recommendations? Who, also, is there to examine other sick areas of "administration" in the above manner and institute remedial measures? Nodal responsibilities in respect of "administration" used, in a limited way, to lodge in the Ministry of Home Affairs at one time. With the setting up of an O & M Division in the Cabinet Secretariat, some tasks came to be looked after there, as for instance procedures in regard to records management and mail-handling. Today there are different agencies carrying nodal responsibilities for different aspects of "administration". The Home Ministry is quite clearly the nodal agency for departmental security; it is not as clearly so for general office discipline and caretaking. The Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply carries nodal responsibilities of a limited character in respect of office accommodation, office furniture, stationery and forms. The Department of Administrative Reforms looks after the issue of instructions in regard to records management and paper-handling generally. The Ministry of Finance and the Home Ministry jointly lay down scales for peons and their liveries. The former by itself prescribes the yardsticks and issues instructions in several fields, such as telephones and weather comforts.

There is, in short, a very dispersed situation. The result is that when things go wrong there is no single point from which the levers of control can be operated to set them right. We consider this a serious lacuna, which needs to be made good by allocating the total nodal charge for "administration" to some one ministry.

9.14 We would recommend that, wherever this may be, there should be a full wing for the purpose with a senior joint secretary in charge, not necessarily on a whole-time basis. The main functions of the wing should be

- to be responsible for policy-formulation in the field of "administration", and
- to keep an eye on how the "administration" task is performed in the various ministries, with the object of ensuring a certain minimum standard throughout the Government of India.

In the carrying out of the second of these functions, the head of the wing will need to keep in touch with those responsible for "administration" in the various ministries, give them advice, issue such instructions as may be called for from time to time, review practices in the ministries in order to pool good ideas and carry out test checks to locate weaknesses requiring remedial measures.

9.15 As for the location of this wing, one possibility could be to allot the charge to the Ministry of Home Affairs. We have no doubt that it would be handled there better than in any other ministry, if only because of the prestige which attaches to this ministry and the fact that it is here that the job was looked after in the past, in howsoever limited a fashion. However, while the Home Ministry offers the best choice as compared with other ministries, we consider there is a better choice available in the shape of the Cabinet Secretariat. Apart from the fact that such a location would lend this work support from the highest quarters, both political and bureaucratic, there is the advantage that would accrue by this wing and the inspection wing discussed later being lodged together. We cannot help feeling that the nodal charge for "administration" is closely allied to the inspection function.

9.16 Finally, it appears to us that there is a lack in the governmental machinery in regard to inspection arrangements. We would suggest that the government should consider the advisability of setting up a small inspection wing manned by specially selected and fairly senior officers. It should be the business of this wing to keep the working of government offices continuously under review through test checks on the basis of recognised indices of efficiency. The object should be to ascertain the areas within the administrative machinery where inefficiency and delay is particularly marked, so that remedial measures can then be launched in such areas. If such a wing is considered desirable, it goes without question that it must be located in the Cabinet Secretariat. And if this happens, there would be considerable advantage in placing it

under the charge of a senior joint secretary who could also be given the charge of the "administration" wing referred to earlier. The combined inspection and "administration" wing will need to work in collaboration with the Department of Administrative Reforms; it should not be difficult to achieve this owing to the fact that both agencies will be under the Cabinet Secretary.

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New Delhi

Dated the 9th February, 1968.

C. D. Deshmukh  
*Chairman*

K. T. Chandy  
*Member*

M. R. Chopra  
*Member*

J. N. Khosla  
*Member*

N. K. Mukarji  
*Member-Secretary*

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Chapter I - Introduction

(1) The Administrative Reforms Commission may consider making appropriate recommendations to the Government as to what should be an appropriate machinery for implementing the Commission's reports on various aspects of public administration.

[Para 1.9]

### Chapter II - Parliament, Government and Administration

(2) The practices and conventions listed in paragraph 2.4 have in a large measure made for orderly governance of the country and should be continued and strengthened wherever necessary. There should be a concerted attempt to identify and remove the major shortcomings that may come to light in the day to day observance of these practices and conventions.

[Paras 2.6 and 2.7]

(3) The powerful position which the Prime Minister enjoys both in respect of his colleagues as well as in relation to civil servants should be recognised as desirable for the purpose of ensuring effective government. The following proposals already made in the earlier report for strengthening the Prime Minister's hands are reiterated:

- (a) The Department of Administrative Reforms should be allocated to the Prime Minister's charge while simultaneously strengthening the department functionally and organisationally.
- (b) The Prime Minister's association with the work of making key appointments should continue, with Cabinet Secretary being regarded as a secretary-general of the proposed Department of Personnel without being styled so.
- (c) The Prime Minister should meet the secretaries and heads of departments individually by rotation at least once in two months.
- (d) The Prime Minister should be the Leader of the House in Parliament and should handle the subject of Parliamentary Affairs.

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Note: The recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) are of basic character.



- (e) It is an essential prerequisite of good public administration that there should be directions from a harmonious team at the level of Government and the wholehearted acceptance by ministers of the Prime Minister's leadership is the least that is necessary for this. Those ministers who find it difficult to accept this position, should have the courage to leave the Government.

[Para 2.9]

\* (4) Recommendations already made in the earlier report for improving arrangements, including proposals for Cabinet committees and for strengthening the Cabinet Secretariat are reiterated as essential for a healthy operation of the principle of collective responsibility. In this context, the following principles should be observed:

- (a) The Cabinet should be agreed on fundamentals, all matters of fundamental importance being discussed in the Cabinet and not settled by individual ministers.
- (b) A minister should not announce a new policy of a basic character without the prior consent of the Cabinet. If he does, there should ordinarily be only two options; either the Cabinet should support him or he should resign.
- (c) A minister should not ordinarily speak or make announcements on matters not within his portfolio. If however circumstances compel him to do so, it should be his duty to brief himself about the correct position from the ministry concerned. It would help greatly if all ministries were to bring out well-articulated policy statements on important topics. Whether these are published or not, they could assist ministers in keeping within the confines of accepted policy when speaking in public.

[Para 2.10]

\* (5) Where there are circumstances constituting a case of personal responsibility, such as allegations of corruption or abuse of power attributable to a minister, he should be held answerable and it is he who should pay the penalty if the case is brought home to him. Parliament may find it advantageous to develop suitable machinery to deal objectively with allegations of corruption or abuse of power. The proposal for the appointment of Lokpal already made by the Administrative Reforms Commission may provide the answer.

[Para 2.12]

(6) Broad principles on the following lines should be evolved for the application of the principle of individual responsibility of ministers to Parliament.

- (a) When ministers fail to formulate and articulate policy in respect of major problems in their portfolios or when there are major weaknesses in the policy actually articulated;

- (b) when important issues (other than the formulation of policy) which ought, in the judgment of Parliament, to have received their personal attention have been neglected or having received attention have been wrongly handled; and
- (c) when there is general or major mismanagement or mal-administration in their departments.

[Para 2.13]

\* (7) The scope of administration greatly improves where ministers are not afraid to take decisions according to what they consider to be right and are prepared to face the consequences of their decisions. This consideration should be borne in mind by a Prime Minister when selecting his colleagues.

[Para 2.15]

\* (8) Top ranks of civil servants, particularly secretaries of ministries must be of the highest calibre.

[Para 2.16]

\* (9) While it is best to leave [the relationship between the ministers and the civil servant largely flexible and undefined, the following principles should generally govern their relationship:

- (a) The minister should work in close partnership with the secretary so far as policy making goes and leave administration almost entirely to the latter. This, however, does not mean that the minister divests himself of responsibility for keeping himself informed about the progress of implementation or for promoting good administration generally in his ministry.
- (b) It is the secretary's duty to tender advice to the minister but it is his further duty to implement the decisions of the minister as faithfully as possible and to keep him informed of the progress of implementation and of important happenings generally. Any tendency on the part of secretaries to shape their advice to fit in with what they think their ministers want is to be severely deprecated.
- (c) A minimum record of discussions on all important matters between the minister and the secretary embodying the views of both, particularly where there is difference of opinion, should be maintained.
- (d) Advice tendered by secretaries to the ministers should take into account the interests of the Government as a whole. The secretary should have the right and in fact it should be his duty to bring to the notice of the Cabinet Secretary cases in which a minister passes an order considered by the secretary as seriously prejudicial to the public interest.

- (e) While the minister should have a say in the selection of his secretary out of a panel prepared by the Cabinet Secretary and the Department of Personnel, the final decision should rest with the Prime Minister which should be accepted and worked by the minister in the right spirit.
- (f) If the procedure outlined above is followed, there should ordinarily be no question of a minister asking for a change of his secretary.
- (g) While there should be no question of a forum of appeal for a secretary in the event of differences cropping up with his minister, the device of periodical meetings between the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Secretary and the secretaries should be enough to smooth matters over at an early stage.

[Para 2.17]

\*(10) It is important that members of the Government and Parliament should at all times be treated by the civil service with respect and consideration. It is equally important that they should give to the civil service the same measure of respect and consideration that they expect for themselves. Political and civil service leadership should constantly work towards the upholding of this convention. Opportunities should be explored and developed which bring politicians and civil servants together more frequently particularly at the social level.

[Para 2.18]

\*(11) It is of basic importance that the civil servants should remain non-political though loyal to the Government in power.

[Para 2.19]

\*(12) It should be regarded as un-ethical for a minister to act in such a way as to encourage formation of unhealthy loyalties around him and equally unhealthy for civil servants to join any such groups. It should be the special responsibility of the Prime Minister assisted by the Cabinet Secretary and the Department of Personnel to spot out and deal effectively with such situations.

[Para 2.20]

(13) The proposed Department of Personnel should involve service leadership in its thinking out of plans and policies for improving the calibre and performance of civil servants as also for inculcating a true spirit of service in them. The civil service leadership needs to be animated into purposeful action to arrest the fall in the standards, morale and *esprit de corps* of the civil servants.

[Para 2.21]

(14) The convention that civil servants should be faceless and nameless in Parliament should be scrupulously upheld. Parliament's desire to probe individual cases should be channelled into a special machinery for investigating such matters, e.g., the Lokpal.

[Para 2.22]

(15) It should be the duty of ministers to investigate individual cases brought to notice by Members of Parliament to satisfy themselves about the *bona fides* of any civil servant involved. If satisfied with the *bona fides* they should defend the civil servants in Parliament.

[Para 2.22]

(16) Parliament has to be selective about the problems it seeks to discuss and an inter-party parliamentary select committee on procedures should study the subject and enable Parliament to review its time budget.

[Para 2.24]

(17) The inter-party parliamentary committee already suggested should also prescribe the minimum information that annual reports should contain as well as the format in which it should be put.

[Para 2.26]

(18) While departmental committees of Parliament in place of the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee should be ruled out, the question of having committees for broad sectors of administration is worth considering, the grouping being somewhat as under.

Committee on social services.

Committee on economic administration.

Committee on defence and foreign affairs.

Committee on food and agriculture.

Committee on transport.

A move in the direction of setting up these committees may be gradual it being sufficient if only any two of the above are constituted in the first instance. The functions of these committees should not include association with the formulation of policy at the pre-natal stage but they should function broadly in the same manner as the Committee on Public Undertakings except that they should not take over the functions of the Public Accounts Committee.

[Para 2.30]

(19) Informal consultative committees existing at present may or may not continue after sectoral committees on the above lines are set up.

[Para 2.31]

(20) Occasional appearances of ministers before at least the new sectoral committees would help to secure the maximum advantage out of the idea underlying such committees besides helping to promote the concept of partnership between ministers and civil servants.

[Para 2.32]

### Chapter III - Structures and Methods: an overall view

(21) The minimum reforms outlined in para 3.17 call for three kinds of structural changes; specialised cells for certain types of work, rationalised arrangements to replace the present type A and type B situations (*i.e.*, type A in which work is wholly handled in the secretariat and type B in which it is handled through non-secretariat organisations) and a machinery for group thinking at top levels. The present secretariat-centered machinery should disappear while its essence is retained in the new system.

[Paras 3.25 and 3.27]

\*(22) At the apex should continue to be the secretary of the ministry. Under him ranged along the same level should be "administrative offices" for handling three kinds of work: staff, substantive and special.

- (i) Each ministry should have three staff administrative offices: office of planning and policy, the chief personnel office and the chief finance office. There should also be a unit for public relations.
- (ii) Administrative offices for substantive work should be formed out of two sources. First, type A work should be grouped into compact and rational charges. Each such group should be large enough to need being looked after by a full-time officer of joint secretary's rank; small groups should be combined to form viable charges. Second, for type B work, the headquarters offices of the present non-secretariat organisations should be converted into administrative offices.
- (iii) Administrative offices for special items of work, such as those relating to public enterprises, projects, research and evaluation should be set up in ministries where necessary.

[Para 3.27]

\*(23) Linking the whole arrangement at the top should be a policy advisory committee headed by the secretary. Its members should be the chiefs of the three staff offices and selected chiefs of the other administrative offices.

[Para 3.27]

(24) The office of planning and policy should be responsible for overall planning tasks of the ministry as a whole, and for formulating its policy in the strategic field. It should also service the policy advisory committee.

[Para 3.27]

(25) The chief personnel office should provide leadership within the ministry in the field of personnel administration, and to be able to do so it should have staff who are experts in their subject. It should keep in touch with the proposed Department of Personnel.

[Para 3.27]

(26) The chief finance office should perform similar functions in the field of financial management.

[Para 3.27]

(27) The chiefs of non-staff administrative offices should be responsible for policy as well as administration in their respective sectors, and should be given powers to match their responsibilities. This should mean three things:

- (i) the method of budgeting should be so adapted that there is a separate budget head for each non-staff administrative office and its chief should be held responsible for his budget area;
- (ii) adequate administrative and financial powers should be delegated to the chiefs of such offices;
- (iii) the chiefs of these offices should deal directly with the secretary and the minister on the one hand, and the three staff offices on the other. Disagreements with the chiefs of personnel or of finance on issues where the powers of the ministry are not delegated to the chiefs of non-staff offices should be settled by the secretary.

[Para 3.27]

\* (28) The policy advisory committee should function as an amplification of the office of the secretary to make sure that the policy advice tendered to the minister takes all aspects into account. The minister should receive advice on policy matters only after it has been formulated in the committee except on matters which cannot wait for its next meeting.

[Para 3.27]

(29) Instead of being the chief adviser to the minister for both policy and administration, the secretary would be the chairman of the policy advisory committee and the administrative head of the ministry.

[Para 3.27]

**\* (30)** Administrative offices should be variously structured and staffed according to their respective needs for the diverse functions to be performed by them, thus facilitating the induction of expertise.

[Paras 3.28 and 3.40]

**(31)** The responsibilities of the office of planning and policy in regard to planning should be additional to, and not in replacement of, intra-administrative office planning efforts. This office should identify problems of major importance for policy formulation and study them from the long-range point of view. It should have a cell to service the policy advisory committee. While this should be the broad pattern of the functions of this office, there should be considerable flexibility to allow for the varying circumstances of ministries.

[Paras 3.32 and 3.33]

**(32)** Administrative offices handling substantive work should where necessary, have cells to give specialised attention to overall problems of policy, planning and programming concerning these offices. The central office of planning and policy of the ministry should maintain liaison with such intra-administrative office units and provide leadership and guidance to the extent necessary.

[Para 3.34]

**(33)** There should be a series of well-articulated policy statements on the major aspects of the work of the ministry or administrative offices concerned. There should be a programme of reviewing these statements at regular intervals and bringing about such changes as analytical study of fresh facts and circumstances suggest. Wherever possible, such policy statements should be placed before the Parliament and made public.

[Para 3.34]

**\* (34)** The structuring and manning of planning and policy offices should be linked to the kind of inputs the situation in individual ministries calls for. It should have personnel of the highest calibre at whatever level of seniority they may be found; the structure of the office should have vertical flexibility to allow for this. The chief of planning and policy office should be the best qualified and available person from experts and generalists.

[Para 3.35]

**(35)** Personnel work should be the whole-time charge of the chief personnel officer; in small ministries the job could be combined with that of the chief finance officer. A pool of specialists in personnel administration should gradually be developed to man posts in the chief personnel office, which should also service such administrative offices as are not big enough to have their own personnel units.

[Para 3.36]

(36) The chief finance office should, in addition to its main responsibility of financial management of the ministry and of servicing those administrative offices which are not big enough to have their own units, carry responsibility for four important functions: overall office management for the ministry, organisation and methods, parliamentary work concerning the ministry and co-ordination in administrative matters. A pool of specialists in financial management should be developed from which posts in these offices could be filled.

[Paras 3.38 and 3.39]

(37) Intra-administrative office personnel and finance units, where found necessary, should reflect the functions and staffing arrangement of the chief personnel and chief finance offices.

[Para 3.40]

(38) The manning of policy, planning and programming cells in administrative offices handling substantive work should be patterned on what is proposed for the office of planning and policy of the ministry. The structure of the cell should be flexible enough to accommodate one or more senior officers who may have no specific duties but may be utilised for undertaking special studies and research of major problems entrusted to them from time to time.

[Para 3.40]

\*(39) Posts of chiefs of administrative offices should be regarded as key posts to be filled with great care. The selection should be governed by three main criteria; outstanding merit, familiarity with the specialisations of the sector concerned, and administrative talent required for top levels. A pool of officers should gradually be developed for such appointments, and entry should not be reserved for any particular cadre or cadres.

[Para 3.40]

\*(40) For providing training opportunities and developing promising young men as well as giving relief to the chief of a non-staff administrative office either or both of the following two devices could be adopted. One is nomination, wherever feasible, of a "number two"; this need not mean creating a fresh post, as an existing deputy could fill the role. The other is the provision of an *aide* to the chief in the person of a picked young officer of outstanding promise.

[Para 3.40]

(41) Such administrative offices as have hitherto functioned as non-secretariat organisations should develop qualitative standards consistent with their new position in the organisational structure of the ministry. This would include drafting of high quality staff into important posts and divisions within such offices.

[Para 3.40]



\*(42) Every ministry having public sector enterprises under its charge should have an office of public enterprises specialising in the handling of government level tasks relating to enterprises in operation, specially the task of evaluating their working through scientific efficiency analysis. Organisationally, these offices should be akin to the Bureau of Public Enterprises and should, in fact, seek inspiration from the Bureau and feed it with information. The size of intra-ministry offices of public enterprises would have to vary a good deal depending on the number of enterprises in the different ministries, though the complexion should not. As far as possible, these offices should be manned by persons who have experience in senior management positions in industry or commerce and by experts in subjects like management accounting and industrial engineering.

[Para 3.41(1)]

\*(43) In every ministry that has to handle the work of progressing the construction of a project, there should be a specialist-manned unit for the purpose after a project officer has been appointed. If project work is considerable in volume, the unit could even have the position of an administrative office; otherwise it could form part of one of the administrative offices of the ministry with the work of which it has the closest affinity.

[Para 3.41(2)]

\*(44) Sectoral research should find an appropriate place in the new structure proposed for ministries. This should aim to cure two kinds of defects: lack of priority in the allocation of funds and consideration of its organisational and personnel problems, and inadequate interchange of ideas between the man of research and the policy-maker. Where sectoral research is of significant importance, it should enjoy the position of an administrative office. Ordinarily the research chief should be a member of the policy advisory committee. Where another function goes naturally with research, *e.g.*, medical education in the Department of Health, there should be no objection to this administrative office extending its ambit to cover that also.

[Para 3.41 (3)]

\*(45) Effective evaluation agencies should be set up in ministries like Health and Family Planning, Education and Agriculture. Evaluation machinery should be organisationally as independent as possible and should have a status that would command respect for its studies and conclusions. Where evaluation is to be given high importance, there should be an administrative office of evaluation with the chief brought in as a member of the policy advisory committee whenever necessary.

[Para 3.41(4)]

\*(46) A beginning may be made in the direction of having a top-flight scientific adviser for every ministry where the need for inducting a scientific approach is pronounced. To attract men of right calibre, it should be made clear that he will not be part of the hierarchy of the ministry and will have direct access to both the minister and the secretary. He will have to be someone who is not only a scientist of eminence but has the capacity to yoke his knowledge to the solving of the kind of problems that he is likely to face. His office should be a small one, since such impact as requires to be made must come from the man himself rather than from his staff. If a ministry of science and technology comes into being he should maintain liaison with that on the one hand and with Research and Development cells within his ministry on the other.

[Para 3.42]

(47) For the success of the policy advisory committees, the secretaries should know how to get the best out of the members, and the committees should have good secretarial assistance. These should consider not only issues referred to them by chiefs of administrative offices and papers on strategic policy put up by the offices of planning and policy, but also standing items which need to be continuously reviewed.

[Para 3.43]

\*(48) If the circumstances in a particular ministry justify, the secretary there should be provided with an *aide* who should be a selected officer of outstanding promise, the appointment being regarded as a unique training opportunity.

[Para 3.44]

(49) The development of personnel who can appropriately fill posts of secretaries and the adoption of an appointments policy which ensures that none but the best men are posted to these vital positions should be regarded as two of the most important responsibilities of the Government of India on the administrative side.

[Para 3.44]

(50) It would be appropriate and logical if the classification of budget heads within the ministry's budget were to follow the same criterion of rationality as the division of the ministry's work. The principle of having a separate budget head for each non-staff administrative office with operating powers entrusted to the chief of the office should, to the extent possible, apply at lower levels also, effecting a link between budget sub-heads and echelons next below administrative offices.

[Para 3.45(1)]

(51) There should be a "free" area for the chief of each administrative office where he may operate on his own with facilities for specialised advice made available to him either through personnel and finance units under him or through the chief personnel and chief finance offices.

[Para 3.45(2)]

\*(52) Consultation between administrative offices should as far as possible be oral. Inter-administrative office contact for purposes of consultation need not be confined to the top levels only; lower level contact should not only be permitted but encouraged. Where non-staff administrative offices have to seek the advice of staff offices in writing, a single-file system should obtain.

[Para 3.45(3)]

(53) The pattern of relationship of a chief with the secretary and the minister should be broadly the same as that of today's joint secretary. All communications requiring decisions going from a chief to the policy advisory committee or the secretary or the minister should be in the form of self-contained papers which should be brief but modelled on notes for the Cabinet, *i.e.*, where an issue concerns any of the three staff offices, the views of the latter should be fully incorporated in such papers.

[Para 3.45(4)]

(54) Chiefs of administrative offices should have full authority to communicate with other ministries and so should the officers under them in their headquarters offices. But references to the Department of Personnel or the Ministry of Finance should normally go only from the chief personnel office or the chief finance office, as the case may be.

[Para 3.45(5)]

(55) The approach to major administrative reforms, when "framework" changes are involved, should be governed by principles other than those applied to lesser reform proposals. For judging the reorganisation scheme, the primary consideration should be whether the new system would be so much better than the present one as to justify making a change, the cost and personnel implications being looked after as a necessary accompaniment of the change.

[Para 3.47]

\*(56) The proposed scheme should be implemented in a phased manner. In the first instance, it should be introduced in a few selected ministries only. The four ministries, where skeleton reorganisation exercises have been undertaken, may be chosen for the purpose.

[Para 3.54]

\*(57) In the selected ministries, it would be advisable to phase out implementation over a period of, say, three years. A plan of implementation should be drawn up separately for each ministry showing the precise steps to be completed each year, with their personnel and finance implications worked out.

[Para 3.55]

(58) The implementation of this scheme and the one proposed in the next chapter should be so phased as not to result in any personnel having to be retrenched or reduced in rank. This would require two things to be built into an overall plan of implementation; an effective machinery to redeploy personnel who are rendered surplus, and a strict curb on fresh recruitment at the appropriate levels.

[Para 3.56]

(59) Implementation of the full scheme in ministries other than the four suggested should be taken up only after first phase implementation has gone far enough to justify commencing the next phase. However, some measures could be adopted even earlier, *e.g.*, setting up of rudimentary personnel and finance offices in all non-staff ministries, forming planning and policy offices where the need is pronounced, setting up of suitably constituted policy advisory committees, rationalising the charges of subject joint-secretaries with unity of command at all levels, and decentralising functions and powers in regard to type B work. Those responsible for drawing up overall plan of implementation should identify the measures which could be adopted, the objective being to make a gradual move towards the proposed system even here.

[Para 3.57]

(60) If pressing need is felt in the other ministries to do something more in the way of reform before the stage comes for commencing the second phase, such piecemeal measures as have to be taken up should be consistent with, and constitute moves towards, the blueprint here presented.

[Para 3.57]

\*(61) There should be a central reorganisation committee, consisting of the Cabinet Secretary as chairman, the two staff secretaries of personnel and finance (expenditure), and the secretaries of ministries selected for the first phase of implementation. It should be responsible for evolving an overall plan of implementation and seeing to its being carried out. It should be serviced by the Department of Administrative Reforms.

[Para 3.58]

(62) In each of the ministries selected for the first phase, those who will later function as chief finance officers should be chosen at an early stage and made available on a whole-time basis as reorganisation officers for their respective ministries. In addition to their finance and other functions, one of their first tasks should be to draw up plans of implementation for their respective ministries.

[Para 3.58]

(63) At an appropriate stage, it might be useful to have reorganisation committees in each of the first phase ministries, presided over by the secretaries concerned and consisting of the three staff chiefs of planning and policy, personnel and finance, and one or two other chiefs.

[Para 3.58]

(64) There must be full acceptance of and backing for the scheme on the part of Government and civil service leadership for its successful implementation. The crucial importance of having men of outstanding abilities in the key posts of the ministries selected for the first phase must be recognised. There should also be a willingness to draft good staff into the first phase ministries at some of the posts at lower levels, the deliberate objective being to make a success of the scheme in the first stage of implementation. There must be energetic and continuing follow up to remove the difficulties that are bound to arise in the course of implementation.

[Para 3.59]

#### Chapter IV – Structures and Methods : a close up

\*(65) Homogeneity of charge and unity of command should be brought about in all secretariat wings whether or not the scheme of reorganisation suggested in chapter III or this chapter is accepted.

[Para 4.2]

(66) The scheme of reorganisation recommended in this chapter is consistent with that of overall reorganisation of ministries suggested in chapter III, but is capable of implementation independently.

[Para 4.3]

(67) From the point of view of overall reform type A secretariat wings should be converted into administrative offices having a functional and administrative identity of their own. In case it is not possible to introduce that reform, such wings should at least be accepted as administrative units which should be the focus of all future reform effort in the secretariat.

[Para 4.17]

\*(68) The basic strategy for intra-wing reorganisation should be :

- (i) Treating the wing as a distinct unit within the secretariat and securing its separate identity.
- (ii) Replacing the present rigid officer-office structure by an arrangement which does away with the distinction between officers and dealing officials and which is flexible enough to provide for the different types of work handled in a wing. The new pattern should have only two categories; administrators and ancillary staff.
- (iii) Gradually developing specialisation amongst generalists and freely inducting technical personnel into secretariat wings. They should as far as possible be fitted into integrated hierarchies within wings.
- (iv) Eliminating noting in the divisions and cells.

[Paras 4.17 to 4.22]

\*(69) There should be the following units horizontally arranged below the chief of the wing :

- (i) two to four divisions for handling the substantive work of the wing;
- (ii) a cell to give specialised attention to overall problems of policy, planning and programming;
- (iii) cells for special tasks, where need be, such cells could consist of either a single functionary or as many as in a substantive division; and
- (iv) a unit each for office management and registry work.

[Para 4.24]

(70) Each substantive division should be headed by a director with five to twelve executives ranged horizontally below him and allotted responsibilities like desk officers. All executives should have stenographic support.

[Para 4.24]

\*(71) The entire work of a wing should be categorised into : correspondence-handling, tactical problem-solving, and strategic policy-making. Correspondence-handling part of the work should be attended to by the executive concerned through the draft system; and the problem-solving and strategic policy-making by the technique of paper writing.

[Para 4.24]

(72) Each executive should be allotted a defined area of functioning and should be expected to become specialist in that. He should draft fair replies to communications and submit these to the head of the division for signatures. In cases of doubt, he should have personal discussions with the divisional/deputy divisional head and send out replies either on his own or submit drafts for approval.

Each division should list its standing problems and review them periodically; such and other *ad hoc* problems should be entrusted either to individuals or study teams nominated by the divisional head for study in all aspects and preparation of papers.

Such papers should list all substantive and operational issues arising out of the problems, describe the background and precedents, take account of all relevant facts and figures and suggest alternative solutions with their advantages and disadvantages carefully worked out.

[Paras 4.20 and 4.29]

\*(73) Each of the three levels in the structure of the wing should have more than one scale of pay – two for wing chief, three for directing level and five for executives; sanction for a post should deem to cover any of the scales fixed for that level. It should be open to the appointing authority to invoke any of these scales at the time of selection of personnel.

[Para 4.24]

\*(74) Personnel for the three levels should be drawn from the existing generalist as well as appropriate specialist sources after careful selection.

[Para 4.24]

\*(75) For efficient functioning of the wings, the following measures should be adopted :

- (i) The wing chief should be held primarily responsible for good administration within the wing. The common services provided from the "administration" side of the ministry should be regarded as aids for this purpose.
- (ii) He should be held primarily responsible for supervision and control of his staff.
- (iii) He should have greater say in selection of personnel for appointment to posts in the wing; no member of his staff, particularly on the non-ancillary side, should be transferred without his specific consent.
- (iv) He should have elementary powers in the field of personnel management, such as to sponsor subordinates for training and fellowships, to grant honorarium, to impose minor penalties, to fill short term leave vacancies, etc.

- (v) The budget of the wing should appear as a distinct unit in the budget of the secretariat of the ministry. The wing chief should have a hand in its formulation and should be mainly responsible for proper expenditure. The administration side of the ministry should keep the chief informed of the progress of expenditure.
- (vi) He should have freedom, within broad limits, to vary the pattern of organisation as circumstances may demand as also powers to create posts within the wing subject to budget provision.
- (vii) He should have final say in regard to contingent expenditure which should be separately allocated to the wing, although actual expenditure may continue to take place on the administration side.
- (viii) The wing should be housed compactly. The wing chief should be responsible for arranging a rational layout.
- (ix) Government officers and public should be encouraged to address correspondence to a particular wing/division instead of to the secretary or to the ministry generally.

[Para 4.26]

(76) The span of control of the wing chief should on an average be three new divisions plus cells and units for extras.

[Para 4.27]

\*(77) The existing section-centered pattern should be done away with. There should be only three effective levels in a wing - the chief of the wing, the head of the division and the executives.

[Para 4.28]

(78) In the new type of wing one executive may be provided for every two existing dealing hands. In a wing two of the divisions may be medium sized one with upto 8 executives and the third a large one with as many as 12 executives; the larger one may have a deputy director.

[Para 4.30]

(79) Rigid approaches must as far as possible be avoided when applying the scheme to live situations.

[Para 4.30]



(80) To ensure that there is no crossing of wires between planning and policy cells and substantive divisions, the following steps are recommended :

- (i) The cell should confine attention to overall problems of the wing while the division should look after correspondence handling and tactical problem-solving.
- (ii) The cell should be small in numbers but strong in quality content. Its director and the few executives should be men of outstanding capability specially selected for the purpose who can handle their functions with tact and delicacy.
- (iii) The chief should ensure that the concept of a cell to handle overall policy, planning and programming operates in a healthy and helpful fashion.

[Para 4·31]

(81) For tackling particularly complex and major problems additional staff should be appointed in the policy cell, if necessary, upto the rank of director; such *ad hoc* staff may be carried for a year or even more at a time.

[Para 4·33]

(82) The method of work of this cell should be based on study and research. The problems to be studied should be carefully selected in consultation with divisional head/wing chief.

[Para 4·33]

(83) Greater manoeuvrability should be introduced in intra-wing structure. Cells of varying kinds should be quickly formed when new situations and tasks arise, and should be equally quickly disbanded when the need ceases. If necessary the chief of a wing should be enabled to have posts created quickly beyond the sanctioned strength of the wing for this purpose.

[Para 4·34]

\* (84) Unless there are special circumstances to the contrary, every wing chief under the reorganised system should have an *aide* who should be a picked officer from amongst senior executives.

[Para 4·35]

(85) The *aide* should assist the chief in the efficient discharge of the responsibility in regard to administration of the wing with the help of one or two clerical subordinates. This would be the office management unit of the wing. The registry of the wing should also be under his charge.

[Para 4·36]

\*(86) The registry should be the repository of all records which are at present kept on section-wise basis; the current records will remain with the executives. The registry would also handle registration of incoming mail and fair typing of drafts for issue. It should have sub-units in it corresponding to the divisions and cells of the wing. It should be headed by a registrar who should be an expert in records management. It should be generously staffed at least in the first two years or so. A functional file index should be introduced for opening and storing records.

[Para 4.37]

(87) The elimination of noting recommended earlier would also necessitate evolving a suitable mode of submitting drafts and papers through the three levels. Such submissions should be made through router slips of which printed forms should be made available to every executive.

[Para 4.40]

(88) For purposes of public accountability, in paper-writing technique, brief minutes indicating the precise nature of the decision and most prominent reasons therefor, should be recorded; in the draft system the replies to communications should be as briefly self-contained as possible so that reasons can be located within correspondence itself, else, brief minutes of reasons should be recorded at the back of the office copies.

[Para 4.40]

\*(89) In case of inter-ministry consultations, views of various ministries consulted should be incorporated in the paper itself. The draft paper should be prepared by the team leader after suitable discussions in the team and shown to every member and amendments suggested recorded on the draft paper itself. In case of correspondence-handling technique consultation should be verbal, with a brief record at the back of the office copy of the draft regarding the fact of such consultation. Unless the ministry consulted desires to see the draft before issue, it should be sufficient to send a copy of the outgoing communication to that ministry.

[Para 4.40]

(90) All the posts in a reorganised wing should be treated as temporary on tenure deputation until a point of stabilisation is reached in regard to this type of reorganisation. Ordinarily, the tenure period for all staff should be six years, extendable for a second six years' period in suitable cases.

[Para 4.47]

\*(91) The development of personnel appointed to the three functional levels in a reorganised wing should be given careful attention by the wing chief in consultation with the personnel side of the ministry. Suitable orientation and training programmes should be devised which extend the capacities and knowledge-content of both directing staff and executives. The training programme should include short-term fellowship for study in selected areas of relevance to the work of the wing, whether in the country or abroad. The selected personnel should be sent out for a year or two at a time to executive agencies of the central government or to the state governments. An incentive should be provided to such personnel in the form of special pay of Rs. 200/- per mensem.

[Para 4.48]

(92) To facilitate undertaking of meaningful training programmes, there should be a development reserve in the sanctioned strength of a wing.

[Para 4.48]

(93) For healthy functioning of the proposed scheme integration should be brought about between personnel drawn from generalist and specialist sources by enabling the generalists to acquire gradually specialised knowledge and the specialists administrative grasp. They should be treated functionally at par regardless of their sources of recruitment or pay scales.

[Para 4.49]

\*(94) There should be a phased programme for the implementation of the proposed scheme; the phasing should be adjusted to the redeployment of personnel rendered surplus in reorganised wings and the location of good enough staff to man these wings. There should be a curb on fresh recruitment at appropriate levels.

[Para 4.52]

(95) In the first phase, three or four wings should be selected for implementation. It would be useful if these were to be in the ministries where the overall reform of the previous chapter is to be brought in.

[Para 4.52]

(96) If this scheme is introduced in ministries other than where the overall reform of previous chapter is introduced, suitable reorganisation machinery consisting of secretary, assisted by the chief of the wing to be reorganised and a specially strengthened O & M unit should be set up. The guiding consideration should be that the wings to be organised are under the charge of a secretary and a wing chief who are sold on the idea. Nothing short of the fullest support at these levels should be regarded as an adequate prerequisite for the successful implementation of this scheme.

[Para 4.52]

(97) The central reorganisation committee recommended in para 3.59 should have the full responsibility in regard to the implementation of this scheme as well.

[Para 4.53]

(98) The secretaries of the ministries concerned could also be included in the central reorganisation committee as members, if this scheme is introduced in ministries other than those where the scheme of overall reorganisation is introduced.

[Para 4.53]

#### Chapter V - Structures and Methods : staff ministries

\*(99) It is recommended that the major functions and organisation of the Department of Personnel should be on the lines suggested in the report of the working group as briefly summarised in para 5.6. The report should be treated more as furnishing a blueprint to be implemented in stages having regard to the availability of the requisite expertise, than as a basis for immediate reorganisation. The blueprint will itself need to be interpreted and if necessary amplified in the light of the recommendations in chapter VI.

[Para 5.7]

\*(100) The functions and organisation of the Department of Administrative Reforms should be on the lines suggested by Mr. C. James Gardner, UN inter-regional Adviser in public administration, in his report as briefly summarised in para 5.9, subject to what is stated in 101 to 103 below.

[Para 5.10]

(101) Though the Gardner report contemplates work measurement as a function to be allotted to the Department of Administrative Reforms, there is not enough justification to change the previous view that it should continue to be handled by the Ministry of Finance.

[Para 5.10(a)]

(102) The proposal in the report that wing heads of this department should be equivalent in rank to joint secretaries, implying thereby that the departmental head should be higher in rank, is based on the premise that the lieutenants to the departmental head should be able to deal on equal terms with those in various ministries who are at effective decision making levels, namely, joint secretaries. This should be treated as a blueprint towards which things can gradually move rather than as something which must be brought about immediately.

[Para 5.10(b)]

(103) The Department of Administrative Reforms should provide leadership in the matter of inducting into the government modern aids to management including measures like statistical quality control, systems analysis, computerisation and so on, wherever their introduction is called for.

[Para 5·10(c)]

(104) It should be one of the responsibilities of the department to go beyond management advice in a limited sense and, on a continuing basis, to examine the overall questions in the field of public administration or to get them examined through specially constituted committees. The department should work in close conjunction with the Planning Commission and should perhaps have a unit specialising in the problems of development administration.

[Para 5·11]

(105) Another major concern of this department should be to keep under review the role of self-governing institutions of all kinds, so that development and other tasks allotted to such institutions are matched by measures to improve their administrative competence.

[Para 5·11]

(106) An additional division should be fitted into administrative reforms wing proposed in the study report for what might be called "perspective reforms" (*cf.* 104 and 105 above)

[Para 5·12]

(107) The Department of Administrative Reforms will need to keep in close touch with the proposed Lokpal on the one hand and the nodal agency for "administration" and inspection recommended in chapter IX, on the other.

[Para 5·12]

\*(108) The functions and the organisation of the Department of Regional Planning, which should be known as the "Department of Regional Planning, Housing and Local Government", should be on the lines of the study report of the working group, as summarised in para 5·14. The suggestions contained in the report should be implemented in a liberal spirit taking what has been said as a set of broad indications and gradually working towards achieving the set-up envisaged as and when trained personnel become available.

[Para 5·15]

\*(109) The government should institute special studies of other staff agencies, such as the Department of Expenditure and the Ministry of Law, on lines similar to the ones arranged for the Departments of Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Regional Planning.

[Para 5·4]

## Chapter VI - Personnel in the Machinery

\*(110) Moving away from the prevailing generalism in the service cadres towards greater specialisation, particularly at the levels of middle and lower management, is inescapably necessary, whether the structural reforms recommended in earlier chapters are put through or not.

[Paras 6·3 and 6·11(1)]

\*(111) More than in any other area of administration, there is need for flexibility in regard to the principles governing promotion so that the best men can be selected from whichever source they are available and at whatever level of seniority, without considerations of seniority and reservation standing too rigidly in the way.

[Para 6·11(4)]

\*(112) There should be a comprehensive plan of reform to ensure that the senior management of the government at all times has the best possible talent operating in circumstances that enable it to produce the maximum possible results. The recommendations at 113-142 below seek to give an outline of the reform plan in the field. If the ideas find acceptance, the outline can become the basis of a plan to be formulated by the government in due course.

[Paras 6·19 and 6·20-B]

\*(113) The concept of senior management as an institution of key importance for the efficiency of public administration should be accepted by the government as a point of basic policy. Along with it should also be accepted the importance of efficient management of senior management, and the need for special arrangements for this task.

[Para 6·20-A]

\*(114) "Senior management" should be taken to mean the body of personnel who man posts of joint secretary and above in the secretariat and their equivalent outside. Where the reorganisation proposed in chapter III is put into effect, chiefs of administrative offices and above should be treated as senior managers.

[Para 6·20-A]

\*(115) "Management of senior management" should be taken to comprise everything required for building up efficient senior managers and should cover, among other things, responsibility for overall personnel and wage policies, training and development, advancement and planned deployment.

[Paras 6·10 and 6·20-A]

\*(116) Only the eminently able should find a place in senior management. Senior management positions should be open to all sources and should not be the preserve of any cadre or set of cadres.

[Para 6.20-C]

\*(117) Those who become senior managers should constitute a corps, for which there should be specially devised rules embodying conditions of service and procedures of management. These rules and procedures should apply equally to all members of the corps, regardless of their origin.

[Para 6.20-C]

\*(118) The management of senior management should be a special responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary, assisted by the Personnel Secretary and a special cell in the proposed Department of Personnel. His responsibility and management authority should not be diluted by any part of these having to be shared with standing committees like the Central Establishment Board, subject to what is stated later in regard to selection for entry. The management of levels below senior management should not occupy his time or attention, except to the extent that any particular point there is relevant for building up efficient senior management.

[Paras 6.20-D and 6.24]

\*(119) At the Cabinet level, policy governing senior management should be considered by the Cabinet committee on administration. Other matters should be left to the Cabinet Secretary, except that approval for senior management appointments should be obtained by him from the Prime Minister through the Home Minister. This arrangement should supplant the Appointments committee of the Cabinet.

[Paras 6.20-D and 6.25]

\*(120) There should be programmes for the development of promising middle management personnel for senior management. Selected men from the non-IAS generalist services should be given opportunities, through an appropriate deployment policy, to gain executive or other experience helpful for development. Selected men from the technical and scientific sources should, similarly, be given opportunities to gain administrative experience. After experience has been gathered in this way, these persons and promising IAS officers at middle management level (not excluding those serving in the states) should be put through specially designed training courses to fit them for senior management.

[Paras 6.11(3) and 6.20-E]

\*(121) Selection for entry into senior management should be greatly tightened so that only the eminently able come in. Eligibility for entry should be fixed in terms of both minimum and maximum years of service, and of age. For IAS officers the service limits should be 17 to 25 years; for others corresponding eligibility standards should be laid down. No one over 50 years of age should ordinarily be eligible for entry.

[Para 6.20-F]

(122) Increasingly, training should become a part of eligibility. In due course, save in exceptional cases, no non-IAS generalist should be considered eligible unless he has had a three years' exposure to development experience and no technologist or scientist unless he has had a similar exposure to administrative experience. No one - IAS, non-IAS generalist, technologist or scientist - should in future be considered eligible unless he has successfully done a training course for senior management. Those who have already entered senior management during the last three years should be made to do such courses now.

[Para 6.20-F]

\*(123) Actual selection should be based not only on the character rolls of eligible individuals but also on their total bio-data, including in particular their academic background and performance during training.

[Para 6.20-F]

(124) Final selection should be based on the recommendations of a committee consisting of the Cabinet Secretary, the Personnel Secretary and one other senior secretary to be chosen for this purpose by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Cabinet Secretary.

[Para 6.20-F]

\*(125) There should be a two years' period of probation for new entrants in senior management, during which duties should be so assigned that the calibre of an entrant can be accurately tested. The performance of such probationers should be carefully watched by the secretaries under whom they are placed, as also by the Cabinet Secretary and the Personnel Secretary. There should be no hesitation in reverting probationers who fail to show the dynamic qualities required of senior managers.

[Para 6.20-F]

\*(126) Structures and methods of work should be changed in such a way as to give the top men in middle management greater responsibility than now, leading to more job satisfaction and a feeling that they hold positions of respect.

[Para 6.20-G]



\*(127) There should be a generous raising of wages at the top levels of middle management, not excluding the possibility of the highest wage here being the same or even higher than the lowest in senior management.

[Para 6.20-G]

\*(128) There should be an honourable way out for those who feel that they cannot reconcile themselves to not being thought eminently able.

[Para 6.20-G]

\*(129) Those who successfully complete their probation in senior management should normally stay there indefinitely, subject to the retirement provisions suggested later and subject also to (a) retention of the liens of all senior managers in their source cadres, (b) Government's right to revert an individual at any time for any reason, or even for no specified reason, and (c) liability on the part of all senior managers from the IAS to return to their parent states, or go to any other state, if exigencies, as determined by the Central Government in consultation with the state governments concerned, so require.

[Para 6.20-H]

\*(130) The levels within senior management should be kept to the minimum number of three, namely, Cabinet Secretary, secretaries, and chiefs. Special and additional secretaries should be abolished as functional levels. Some secretaries may, however, draw the pay of present-day additional secretaries and chiefs may draw the pay of present-day joint or additional secretaries. There may also be officers on special duty, drawing pay equal to that of chiefs or secretaries, for limited-term assignments to carry out special studies of major problems, particularly in the Cabinet Secretariat.

[Para 6.20-I]

\*(131) A strict watch should be kept on the number of posts in senior management. It should be the Cabinet Secretary's responsibility to undertake such a review from time to time in consultation with the secretaries concerned and with such expert assistance as he may consider necessary. This will be particularly necessary where structural reform on the basis of the recommendations made in chapter III is not immediately introduced.

[Para 6.20-J]

\*(132) Entry into senior management should normally be only at the level of chiefs, which should include joint secretaries and heads of non-secretariat organisations of equivalent rank in ministries not reorganised, and chiefs of administrative offices in reorganised ministries. All chiefs, should, on completing six years' satisfactory service

as such, receive pay and rank equal to present-day additional secretaries without a change in their functioning level. If they remain chiefs for another six years, they should retire compulsorily at the end of that period.

[Para 6.20-K]

\*(133) The deployment of chiefs should be on a carefully planned basis, the maximum possible attention being given to personal factors like previous specialisation, aptitude, background and personal preference as well as to the need for developing the potential of individuals. There should be greater recourse to the device of enabling individuals to train themselves for the responsibilities of new posts by being attached to those whom they are meant to succeed against specially created orientation posts for short periods ranging up to, say, four months. A chief should serve for a minimum of four years in a particular charge, unless he is promoted secretary earlier or retires either because of normal superannuation or because of the 12 years rule above. Where he is due to retire, his deployment should be so planned that his last posting is not cut short to less than three years.

[Para 6.20-K]

\*(134) There should be a well planned training programme or chiefs, comprising items for individuals like study leave and deputation for training abroad, as well as group items like seminars and short-term courses. The programme should have two objectives : to increase the administrative capacity and vision of individual senior managers; and to promote team spirit based on a common understanding of the administrative problems senior management is required to handle.

[Para 6.20-K]

\*(135) Secretaries should normally be selected only from amongst chiefs who have at least five years to go. The most capable and promising persons should be selected, no weightage being given to length of service as chief or to pay. Advising the Prime Minister on the selection of chiefs to be promoted secretaries should be a particularly important responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary.

[Para 6.20-L]

\*(136) A secretary should serve for a term of five years in a particular charge, the maximum deviation permitted on each side of this being a year. At the end of this term, he should retire compulsorily, except if he has more than three years to go for normal superannuation. In that case he may serve another term as secretary in a different charge. The length of this second term should be the standard five years, if he has that much service to go. If not, it should be confined to four years, suitable extension being given up to this period where necessary. In no case should a secretary serve more than two terms.

[Para 6.20-L]

\*(137) The device of orientation posts to train secretaries before they take up new assignments should, as suggested for chiefs, be increasingly resorted to in suitable cases.

[Para 6.20-L]

\*(138) The names and records of secretaries as also of chiefs should be maintained alphabetically, and there should be no seniority list.

[Paras 6.20-K and 6.20-L]

\*(139) None of the tenure provisions suggested above should stand in the way of a deserving person becoming Cabinet Secretary. The Cabinet Secretary should be selected from amongst outstanding secretaries who have at least two years to go for normal superannuation, without seniority coming into the 'picture'. On selection, he should be appointed for a four-year term. If this takes him beyond the date of his normal superannuation, his service should be deemed as automatically extended. If not, he should compulsorily retire strictly at the close of his four-year term.

[Para 6.20-M]

\*(140) All senior managers should have the right to retire voluntarily: on full pension minus a token amount, if their service in senior management is less than six years; and on full pension, if it is more. When they retire compulsorily under any of the above provisions, they should in any case get full pension. In addition, they should get reasonable compensation proportionate to the period between the date of compulsory retirement and normal superannuation; this could be either in the form of a lump sum payment or a recurring addition to pension.

[Para 6.20-N]

\*(141) Permission should be freely given to senior managers, retiring voluntarily or compulsorily under the scheme, to take up jobs in business or elsewhere. Only where there is positive suspicion of some kind should there be any question of permission being withheld.

[Para 6.20-N]

(142) Powers should be taken through amendment of service rules, or through legislative action if necessary, to implement the plan that may be formulated by the government on the basis of these ideas. But it would be a mistake to codify the details of the plan statutorily, as a dynamic situation should have a flexible rather than a rigid control system.

[Para 6.20-O]

\*(143) Picking out a point here or there for implementation would be as inadequate as reforms of the past, and might in some cases make things worse. The whole problem should be viewed comprehensively, as has been done in the outline plan, rather than individual aspects being taken up piecemeal.

[Para 6.21]

\*(144) The work pertaining to senior management should be taken out of the purview of the Central Establishment Board, e.g. appointments of joint secretaries, so that all senior management problems are handled in one place. For the performance of the rest of the functions, if a board is considered necessary, it may be presided over by the Personnel Secretary.

[Para 6.24(c)]

\*(145) The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet should not be concerned about middle management appointments. Its task of resolving differences between the UPSC and the various government departments should be taken over by the proposed Cabinet committee on administration.

[Para 6.25]

\*(146) There should be systematic talent hunting for entry into senior management within the traditional sources and most important, amongst the technical and scientific employees of the government. Notwithstanding this the contribution of the I.A.S. as the principal feeder source should not be belittled, providing as it does, the right kind of experience for senior management.

[Para 6.26(a) and (b)]

(147) The private sector should be included as a source of intake for senior management. But it may be necessary to tap this source in exceptional situations only such as when a particular task requires special knowledge beyond what is available within the Government. In such cases, the person recruited may be taken on contract or on regular basis, whichever is found most suitable in individual cases. There could well be special terms in the case of contract appointments that would sufficiently attract the right kind of talent.

[Para 6.26(c)]

(148) While there should be no restriction on utilising senior managers from any source in any post, it would serve as an aid to purposeful deployment of senior managers if broad areas of administration were, in course of time to emerge where those taken to senior management from particular sources or with special background may, while they are chiefs, be more purposefully deployed than elsewhere.

[Para 6.26(d)]

(149) Those who become heads of major organisations by climbing up departmental ladders of promotion, e.g. the Chief Engineer, CPWD, should have a special position. While they should be treated as full members of the senior management corps, some of the suggested provisions, e.g., those regarding length of service and age should be modified for them. The right approach here would be to select the head of an organisation on the same principles as suggested for the appointment of the Cabinet Secretary.

[Para 6-26(e)]

(150) The principle for apex appointments underlying what has been suggested for the appointment of Cabinet Secretary and heads of major organisations is capable of being extended with advantage to other agencies where seniority-based elevations have resulted in markedly short tenures as for instance Chairmen of the Railway Board, Chief Justices of the Supreme Court and perhaps Chief Justices of High Courts.

[Para 6-26(e)]

\*(151) Something in the spirit of the ideas put forward can and should be done to today's senior management rather than leave the reform measures to a gradual unfolding in the future of a plan based on the outline suggested. Until a comprehensive plan of reform based on the outline of ideas given or in modification thereof emerges, three measures are the least that should be energetically put through : the training of senior managers of less than three years' standing; the weeding out of relatively weak material; and the tightening of selection standards for appointments at all levels in senior management.

[Para 6-28]

\*(152) Specialist inputs which today's policy formulation and implementation necessarily call for, must be provided mainly by headquarters personnel. The three types of specialisations visualised for this purpose are substantive specialisations, staff specialisations and specialisation in headquarters work.

[Paras 6-32 and 6-34]

\*(153) A comprehensive approach to reform in this field should seek not only to make good the handicaps of limited experience-patterns and the shortcomings of 'pool' concept but also develop the requisite specialisations. It must also take into account the variegated sources that feed it. An outline of ideas in this field has been indicated below. If the ideas are accepted, these could become the basis of a plan of reform in this field to be formulated in due course by the government.

[Paras 6-33, 6-34 and 6-36]

\*(154) The management of headquarters staff should be given more systematic consideration than now, recognising the important role of headquarters personnel in the efficient functioning of the Government.

[Para 6.36(1)]

(155) The objective should be that, as far as possible, all headquarters personnel should, after a few years, be trained specialists.

[Para 6.36(2)]

\*(156) There should first be basic training, the aim being to impart to promising persons from different sources, not excluding public sector personnel, the basic requirements of headquarters staff.

[Para 6.36(3)]

\*(157) Appointments to headquarters posts should, in due course, be made only from amongst those who have received basic training.

[Para 6.36(4)]

\*(158) There should then be supplementary training aimed at developing substantive and staff specialisations largely among generalists; the former designed to produce a corps of generalist-specialists in three broad sectors of substantive administration *viz.*, industries, agriculture and social services and the latter to produce a corps of specialists in staff subjects particularly, personnel administration, financial management, planning and O&M. The acquisition of more than one specialisation should not be barred and should, on the other hand, be encouraged.

[Para 6.36(5)]

\*(159) The management of headquarters staff should be primarily the responsibility of the proposed Department of Personnel, with close coordination between the division within it handling this management job and the training division. But it should be necessary to centralise only such tasks as are fundamental to the new approach suggested, leaving others to be looked after by the ministries where the personnel are posted.

[Para 6.36(6)]

\*(160) The performance of centralised tasks in relation to the sectoral and staff corps mentioned in 158 above should be thought of as "corps management". While overall responsibility for this should remain in the Department of Personnel, corps management authorities should be nominated for different corps as indicated in para 6.36(7). Each corps management authority should take responsibility for the training and deployment planning of corps members,

under the overall control and guidance of the Department of Personnel. Where the latter is itself the corps management authority, internal arrangements should be made, perhaps by constituting special cells to see, that the detail of corps management is not overwhelmed by the overall responsibilities of the Department of Personnel in regard to headquarters staff management.

[Para 6.36(7)]

\*(161) The tenures of those who come into headquarters staff from the IAS and the central services other than the CSS should be at least six years, excluding the period spent on basic and supplementary training, with the possibility of extension for those who show exceptional promise.

[Para 6.36(8)]

\*(162) Those who come into headquarters staff should not be permitted to return to their parent cadres before the expiry of their tenures, even if favourable promotion opportunities develop there. On the other hand, they should not be denied promotion to higher ranks within headquarters staff simply because they are not senior enough in their parent cadres. Where the concept of vertical flexibility (referred to in para 4.43) is introduced, it may become possible to concede higher scales of pay to headquarters personnel who miss promotion chances in their parent cadres.

[Para 6.36(9)]

(163) There should be a liability for members of the central sectoral and staff corps to go on deputation to the state governments, if the latter feel the need for specialists and the Centre can spare the men.

[Para 6.36(10)]

(164) Powers should be taken to enforce a plan of reform formulated on this basis. Training, in particular, should be made compulsory.

[Para 6.36(11)]

(165) Reforms at levels of senior management and headquarters staff as outlined in this chapter will be invigorating to the IAS which as a service serving the needs of both the Centre and the states is more necessary now than ever before.

[Para 6.38]

## Chapter VII - Delegations

\*(166) Delegations have to be adjusted to the volume of work and its nature.

[Para 7·2]

\*(167) Responsibilities and powers must match each other. Frequently responsibility is delegated to persons or organisations, and powers sufficient for its discharge held back.

[Para 7·3]

\*(168) There is need for a periodical spring-cleaning operation at all the power-holding centres to reduce, if not remove, the unnecessary powers and functions which they exercise. A systematic review on the basis of the general considerations set out in para 7·6 should be carried out every five years to see whether the delegations the centre controls, go far enough. The review should be co-ordinated by the Department of Administrative Reforms, which should lay down guidelines for the reviewing authorities and prepare a consolidated report at the end for the information of the Cabinet.

[Paras 7·5 and 7·6]

(169) There is need for the senior management in each organisation reviewing work relationship within the organisation in a systematic way at regular intervals so that the natural tendency for work to be pushed upwards may be controlled through deliberate decisions taken on the basis of such reviews.

[Para 7·8]

\*(170) The principles of budgetary classification should be :

- (i) that a ministry's work should be divided into rational charges;
- (ii) that for each such charge there should be a separate budget head with operating powers entrusted to the chief of the wing or administrative office;
- (iii) that to the extent possible, budget sub-heads should be similarly linked to administrative echelons next below wings and administrative offices; and
- (iv) that the interlinking of executive and financial responsibility in this way is good for efficiency and economy.

While the formulation of the budget round programmes and activities is favoured, such a move should be within a framework in which budget classifications follow organisational structures based on rationalised grouping of subjects.

[Para 7·10]



**\*(171)** Selected responsibilities in regard to the scrutiny and acceptance or scrutiny only as the case may be of budget proposals relating to establishment, continuing schemes and new schemes should be delegated to administrative ministries. But this should be done only where chief finance officers are appointed on the lines suggested in the reorganisation proposals of chapter III. Thus,

- (1) full responsibility, subject to reasonable conditions as set out in para 7·14, should be delegated to the administrative ministries for
  - (a) scrutiny and acceptance of budget estimates relating to establishment budgets;
    - continuing schemes or recurring items of expenditure other than establishment (non-plan schemes and items should be submitted to more rigorous review than plan ones); and
    - new plan schemes or items which do not have to be approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee and in respect of which there has been scrutiny and specific plan allocation;
  - (b) scrutiny only of
    - new non-plan essential schemes to be financed from permanent recurring savings;
    - budget estimates of other non-plan schemes requiring approval by the Expenditure Finance Committee; and
    - budget estimates of plan or non-plan schemes other than those mentioned above, already cleared by the Expenditure Finance Committee and for which the outlay proposed is within the approved phasing of the scheme for the year in question;
- (2) within administrative ministries, the main responsibility for operating delegated functions and exercising scrutiny in the undelegated field in accordance with the direction of the Ministry of Finance should vest in the chief finance officers;
- (3) nothing in the above delegations should be taken to affect the inherent right of the Ministry of Finance to impose ministry-wise economy cuts on the budgets finally accepted by the administrative ministries under their delegated powers;
- (4) in the budgets of ministries where these delegations are made the two inter-related practices of accepting lump sum estimates and accepting estimates subject to post-budget scrutiny should totally cease. The handful of genuinely urgent cases that might be left over could then be provided for, as and when ideas about them develop, through the device of the Contingency Fund, which is there for this very purpose.

[Paras 7·14 and 7·16]

(172) In the proposed system, the Ministry of Finance should have the two main responsibilities in the field of scrutiny of budget proposals of issuing directives and guidelines to administrative ministries, and scrutinising major budget proposals (other than plan schemes of small value and non-plan schemes financed from savings).

[Paras 7.14 and 7.15]

\*(173) Keeping in view the consideration that the Ministry of Finance should retain only specified functions in conformity with its overall responsibility for financial management and delegate the rest to administrative ministries, enhanced financial powers are recommended for delegation to administrative ministries as shown in Annexure XVI in respect of five following key points, viz. creation of posts, reappropriation, purchases and contracts, contingent expenditure, and write off of losses.

[Para 7.19]

\*(174) Having regard to the consideration that delegations should be linked to the nature of work handled in line and specialist organisations, there should be a delegation pattern for each of the following types of organisations mentioned illustratively :

- line organisations
  - headquarters
  - supervisory level
  - executive level
  - sub-executive level
- specialist organisations
  - training agencies
    - major ones
    - others
  - hospitals
    - large ones
    - others
  - scientific institutions
  - commercial organisations (run departmentally)

[Para 7.20]

\*(175) The delegation pattern for each type of above organisations should be treated as a norm, deviations from which should be freely permitted by the administrative ministry concerned depending on the special circumstances of particular organisations within these broad types.

[Para 7.20]

\*(176) The delegation pattern for each of the types of organisations illustratively mentioned above is set out with reference to the five key points in the table at †annexure XVI.

[Para 7.21]

(177) There could be more than one delegation pattern for line organisations.

[Para 7.22]

(178) The new scheme of delegations proposed should preferably be accompanied by certain minimum arrangements such as appointment of a chief finance officer in the ministry concerned for keeping an eye on the quality of delegated functioning on the part of subordinate organisations and generally guiding and supervising financial management at those levels, and viable line and specialist organisations also having internal finance offices of their own.

[Para 7.23]

(179) Finance cells manned with trained personnel should be set up in all viable specialist organisations in which the volume of spending under the heads "other charges" and "stores and equipment" exceeds Rs. 4 lakhs per annum under ministries where chief finance officers are appointed. The smallest finance cell to be permitted should consist of a finance officer (Rs. 700—1250) assisted by an accountant, the annual cost of such a cell coming to about Rs. 20,000.

[Para 7.24]

\*(180) As in the case of minor works, separate issue of expenditure sanctions should be discontinued in respect of schemes and the act of appropriation or reappropriation of funds itself should operate as a sanction to incur expenditure.

[Para 7.25]

(181) The proposed Department of Personnel should specifically review in pursuance of suggestion in para 7.5 what additional powers in the personnel field could be delegated to the ministries where chief personnel officers are appointed and whether these reorganised ministries should not be given the power to redelegate their own powers under the various rules, to sub-ministry organisations.

[Para 7.27]

\*(182) Delegations to sub-ministry organisations from administrative ministries should be on the lines indicated in para 7.29. Specific proposals which should be regarded more in the nature of providing a starting point of thinking than final recommendations are in the table at †annexure XVII.

[Para 7.29]

(183) As in the case of financial powers, minimum arrangements should accompany the scheme of delegations, such as the appointment of a chief personnel officer in the ministry concerned for watching the quality of delegated functioning on the part of sub-ministry organisations, and generally guiding and supervising the latter in the field of personnel administration and viable line and specialist organisations having an internal personnel office of their own.

The possibility of the same officer looking after both the internal finance office and the internal personnel office of a particular viable line or specialist organisation is not ruled out.

[Para 7.30]

(184) There is an urgent need for a drastic simplification of rules in the field of personnel administration, on the lines indicated in para 7.31.

[Para 7.31]

\*(185) Heads of organisations should be enabled to redelegate some of their powers to responsible officers within their organisations, whether in the financial field or in relation to personnel administration. Powers which can be so redelegated should be spelt out and placed in two categories: powers which can be redelegated only with the prior approval of higher authorities, and those which can be redelegated at the discretion of the head of the organisation. Where such redelegation is made, the head of the organisation should not be expected to carry any more responsibility than any other delegating authority.

[Para 7.32]

(186) It is desirable that there should be flexibility and lack of codification in the delegation systems within organisations.

[Para 7.33]

(187) The right of all higher authorities to ask organisations below them for information should be exercised with restraint and judgment so that healthy vigilance from above does not degenerate into confidence-sapping interference. Higher authorities (*i.e.*, ministers *vis-a-vis* the secretariat, the secretariat *vis-a-vis* non-secretariat organisations and the headquarters offices of line organisations *vis-a-vis* field units) should welcome practical suggestions from the heads of organisations below them about how to reduce their demands to the minimum; and should show a willingness to adjust their functioning in the light of such suggestions.

[Para 7.35]

(188) Senior managers should refrain from tasks best left to lower levels. The head of each organisation should not only set an example by organising his work in such a way that he keeps nothing with himself except the most important tasks, but should also see to it that his immediate lieutenants do likewise.

[Para 7.36]

(189) The head of each organisation and his senior colleagues should recognise it as an important part of their job to set aside time for an active programme of personally encouraging and training those below them in the exercise of responsibility.

[Para 7.37]

\*(190) The senior management of each organisation, led by its head, should make a review of the prevailing work relationship in the organisation at regular intervals say once a year, with a view to identifying dispensable work at the level of senior management and to devise measures for its final disposal at lower levels. Items of such dispensable work should be frankly discussed by the head of the organisation with the higher authority chiefly concerned, such discussions being preceded by systematic work studies.

[Para 7.38]

(191) The Department of Administrative Reforms should develop expertise in regard to studies involving the method of working of senior managers.

[Para 7.39]

\*(192) In ministries where it is possible to introduce reorganisation on the lines suggested in chapter III, the secretariat as such should go, arrangements for authentication of orders being made as under :

The chief and other officers of the chief personnel offices/ chief finance offices should have authority to authenticate orders in the personnel field/financial matters respectively. The chiefs and other officers of the remaining administrative offices should have, in relation to their respective areas of work, excluding personnel and financial matters, powers of authentication of orders arising out of policy and other decisions of the Government of India.

Where personnel or financial units are set up within administrative offices, it may help to delegate limited authentication powers to the heads of such units even in the personnel and financial fields, particularly where this is necessary to match substantive personnel or financial powers delegated to the chief of the administrative office.

[Para 7.41]

\*(193) In future, there should be no question of *ex-officio* status being given to any functionary.

[Para 7.42]

(194) The salutary practice of giving authentication powers to non-secretariat officials wherever necessary should of course continue in those ministries which are not reorganised as suggested in chapter III.

[Paras 7.41 and 7.42]

### Chapter VIII – Public Relations

\*(195) Public relations function should be viewed as the deliberate, planned and sustained efforts to establish and maintain mutual understanding between the government and the people and given a new place of importance.

[Paras 8.2 and 8.3]

(196) A special committee of knowledgeable persons should be appointed by the government to determine what kind of things should enter a new public relations policy and what organisational arrangements would be desirable to handle public relations work effectively. The chapter outlines a few basic ideas some of which could be considered for immediate implementation while others taken as a starting point of further thinking by the proposed committee.

[Para 8.4]

\*(197) There should be public relations policy to govern three main areas, namely, the supply of information at the instance of the government itself; the supply of information at the instance of members of the public; and other matters.

[Para 8.5(1)]

\*(198) The responsibility for evolving public relations policy in the Government of India and reviewing it from time to time should vest in a single ministry, namely the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. This ministry should be organisationally strengthened by the creation of a well-manned public relations wing to enable it to perform the new tasks adequately. The position of this nodal ministry *vis-a-vis* the various ministries should be analogous to that visualised for the proposed Department of Personnel.

[Paras 8.5(2) and 8.13]

\*(199) There should be full-time public relations officers of a rank not less than that of a deputy secretary in all ministries, except where the work is of a wholly staff variety to assist them in implementing the government's public relations policy. Every public relations officer should work under the administrative control of the ministry to which he is posted, should be placed directly under the secretary of the ministry and given access to the working of the ministry sufficient for his task.

[Para 8.5(3)]

(200) There should be a cadre of specially trained public relations officers managed by the nodal ministry which should be the main source for manning posts in administrative ministries. This should however not preclude the posting of non-cadre men in some public relations officer posts, *e.g.*, officers from the armed forces in the public relations unit of the Ministry of Defence.

[Para 8.5(3)]

\*(201) An information policy must be an important part of public relations policy and must make sense in the overall public relations context.

[Para 8.7]

(202) Policy regarding the supply of information at the instance of government should not be confined to the single aspect of release of news-worthy information to the press but should provide guidelines in other relevant aspects also, *e.g.*, annual departmental reports.

[Para 8.8]

(203) Annual departmental reports can serve the purpose of supplying well arranged information about government activities to the public as a whole. If, therefore, the question of improving these reports comes to be examined in detail through a parliamentary committee as recommended in para 2.26 or otherwise this wider purpose should be borne in mind and in fact incorporated in the terms of reference of such an enquiry.

[Para 8.8(1)]

\*(204) Policy statements can also be an effective tool in government's public relations. Ministries should not fail to articulate policy on all major problems of current interest. Having done so, they should not be unduly secretive, and should take the first opportunity to announce policy (other than that which must be kept secret) to the public in the form of white papers or otherwise. They should conform to a style of drafting policy statements which is accurate and at the same time good from public relations angle. The information policy in this area should require ministers to avoid making off-the-cuff policy pronouncements, as far as possible, and the government information machine to avoid giving such pronouncements the spotlight.

[Para 8.8(2)]

\*(205) A publications policy should be devised to provide among other things for reviews and evaluations of government's publications from the public relations angle. Ministries should bring out from time to time (a) factual reports relating to major areas of their functioning to supplement annual reports (without themselves being annual), and (b) pamphlets and guides aimed at giving fullest possible information to their clientele public about how they are organised, where members.

of the public should go for what kind of work or information and so on. They should also commission reliable and independent evaluations of their periodicals from time to time, harnessing university talent for this purpose wherever possible.

[Para 8.8(3)]

\*(206) There is at present a tendency to overdo things in the matter of publicising the sayings and doings of ministers and to be not communicative enough about real news. While much of this is a question of strengthening the machinery for news release, even a strengthened machinery may fail to produce markedly better results without support and inspiration from an enlightened and continuously reviewed information policy in this area.

[Para 8.8(4)]

\*(207) Those responsible for public relations should give thought, in consultation with those who look after security, to the devising of measures to ensure that the secret classification is used only where necessary, and of a new approach that would free non-secret information from dispensable shackles and thus clear the way for a more open information policy. There should be no hesitation in amending the Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923, the Conduct Rules and the Manual of Office Procedure, if that should be found necessary.

[Para 8.9]

(208) The existing provisions regarding access to open records by scholars are unduly restrictive and a substantial liberalisation is called for. Subject to such restrictions as the ministries might for sufficient justification impose on specified categories of records :

- (a) all records transferred to the National Archives should be treated as open to scholars, not only for inspection but also for taking copies or otherwise making use of the information gathered; and
- (b) records in the record rooms of ministries, other than those classified secret and confidential, should also be treated as open to scholars for inspection but the latter should be required to obtain the prior permission of the ministry concerned if they wish to take copies or make use of the information they collect.

[Para 8.10(1)]

(209) Aggrieved persons, other than government servants, should be given access to old records (other than notings) having a bearing on their cases on the lines suggested for scholars. In addition, where a person's grievance is up before an administrative tribunal or before the proposed Lokpal institution, he should have the right to see even records (excluding notings) which have not been transferred to the record room,



provided their relevance is certified by the administrative tribunal concerned or the Lokpal and provided further they are not adjudged privileged documents.

[Para 8.10(2)]

(210) Maximum information relevant to a particular request from the member of the public should be given and this should be done in as courteous and helpful a language as possible. For this there should not only be clear standing instructions in the matter, but also arrangements for imparting training to those who ordinarily deal with requests for information in the various ministries. A training policy for this field should be an inherent part of whatever information policy is devised.

[Para 8.10(3)]

(211) Policy in areas other than the supply of information to the public should concern itself with other major inputs required for effective public relations. An illustrative list of the variety of subjects that might have to be covered is given in para 8.12.

[Para 8.12]

#### **Chapter IX – Machinery for “Administration” and Inspection**

\*(212) The enforcement of punctuality and order is essentially a hierarchical responsibility. This responsibility should be brought home to all superior officers, not only through instructions but also through the pulling up of hierarchical superiors who permit laxity on the part of their subordinates.

[Para 9.5]

\*(213) The enforcement of punctuality and order should be given first place in the field of “administration” by joint secretaries (administration) in unreorganised ministries and chief finance officers in the reorganised ones. Measures like attendance checking at the entrances, strict enforcement of the provision under which late-coming is converted into casual leave, surprise visits to sections to check on attendance, should be ruthlessly undertaken in all ministries. To assist these functionaries in this important enforcement work, they may be provided with one or two special officers each.

[Para 9.7(1)]

(214) The present practice of office canteens remaining open to employees throughout the day should cease. Instead canteens should open for an hour before the commencement of office and stay open for an hour after office closes. During these periods the tariff of tea and coffee should be lower than the normal. This should be arranged by subsidising the canteens for the purpose and introducing special coupon system. Apart from these periods, canteens should open for one hour covering the

lunch interval; it should be for the supervising staff of the clientele government officials of a particular canteen to organise and enforce a staggered utilization of the canteen services during this hour. Canteens should be assisted to organise and run trolley services for serving tea and coffee to office staff at specified times at their desks.

[Para 9·7(2)]

\*(215) The prevailing evil of the lunch hour not being observed by anybody requires to be dealt with firmly. So far as the office personnel are concerned, it should be the duty of the supervising staff to ensure that the employees stay away for only the permitted period of half an hour. But it may be difficult to enforce this if the right example in this matter is not set by officers.

[Para 9·7(3)]

(216) Games, whether outdoor or indoor, should not be allowed to be played during the lunch interval. The only recreation that should be provided within office premises should be a well equipped reading room. The facility of games as part of a staff welfare programme should be confined to residential localities.

[Para 9·7(4)]

(217) The scope of orders permitting office staff to leave their work in order to welcome foreign dignitaries visiting India or to witness important sports events should be considerably restricted so as to suit a particular occasion.

[Para 9·7(5)]

\*(218) All offices lodged in a building should be allocated accommodation compactly and then made squarely responsible for caretaking in relation to the space they occupy.

[Para 9·9(1)]

(219) The primary responsibility for internal caretaking should rest with hierarchical supervisors. Inspection questionnaires as well as confidential report forms should contain specific entries for assessing attention paid by office supervisors to this work.

[Para 9·9(2)]

(220) The entire premises under the caretaking charge of a particular office should be regularly inspected everyday either by officer in charge of "administration" or by roster officers, designated for the purpose by the head of the office. The defects observed in these inspections should be briefly noted in a register and it should be the job of the caretaking authority to remove them before the day is out and make an entry to that effect in the register. The next day's inspecting officer should check whether the action taken is good enough.

[Para 9·9(3)]

(221) There should be an overall review in each office of the relative strengths of janitor and peon staff with the object of diverting some of the latter to the former wherever the need for this is justified.

[Para 9.9(4)]

(222) Each large building should have, under the administrative control of the major office in the building, a full time qualified caretaker. He should be primarily responsible for common services, but should also keep an eye on internal caretaking of the various offices in the building with a view to ensuring that a uniformly high standard of neatness and cleanliness is maintained throughout the building. Lapses in this latter area should be brought to the personal attention of the head of the office concerned. The caretaker should be provided residential accommodation within or near the building under his charge.

[Para 9.9(5)]

(223) Increasingly caretaking responsibilities should be linked to the maintenance of office buildings. Funds provided in the budget of the Central Public Works Department for the maintenance of individual office buildings should be expended by the engineering authorities according to a programme of maintenance approved by the caretaking authority concerned.

[Para 9.9(6)]

\*(224) The problem of irrational distribution and utilization of office accommodation should be viewed first and foremost from the angle of office efficiency and all other considerations should take second place.

[Para 9.11]

\*(225) Every organisation should be housed compactly, as far as possible in a single building. Where it has to be spread over more than one building, it should be so arranged that each individual piece is viable from the point of view of its ability to run its own "administration".

[Para 9.11(a)]

\*(226) Within organisation, every wing should be housed compactly, all officers right up to the wing chief (*i.e.*, joint secretaries in the case of secretariat) sitting adjacent to the rest of their staff.

[Para 9.11(b)]

(227) It should be the responsibility of the nodal agency which handles problems of office accommodation to review the present situation (including the situation within single buildings, as in the case of Udyog Bhavan), prepare a rationalisation plan and implement it uncompromisingly.

[Para 9.11(c)]

(228) It should be the responsibility of the secretary of each ministry to ensure rational utilisation of accommodation allotted to the ministry, keeping in mind the principle at 226 above.

[Para 9.11(d)]

(229) Nodal agency should make it its business to keep an eye on the utilisation of accommodation by individual ministries so that irrational utilisation of the types mentioned in sub paras (4) and (5) of para 9.10 is avoided. A useful device in this connection would be periodical reviews of the utilisation of the office space in each building.

[Para 9.11(e)]

(230) Previous notions [about the] concept of orderlies will need to undergo changes if "administration" is to be modernised.

[Para 9.12]

\*(231) The total nodal charge for "administration" should be allocated to some one ministry. There should be a full wing in the nodal ministry for the purpose with a senior joint secretary in charge, not necessarily on a whole-time basis. The main functions of the wing should be to be responsible for policy-formulation in the field of "administration", and to keep an eye on how the "administration" task is performed in the various ministries, with the object of ensuring a certain minimum standard throughout the Government of India.

[Paras 9.13 and 9.14]

(232) The proposed wing should be located in the Cabinet Secretariat.

[Para 9.15]

\*(233) Government should consider the advisability of setting up a small inspection wing manned by specially selected and senior officer to keep the working of government offices continuously under review through test checks to ascertain the areas where inefficiency and delay is particularly marked so that remedial measures can then be launched in such areas. Such a wing could be located in the Cabinet Secretariat and placed under the charge of a senior joint secretary who could also be given the charge of the "administration" wing referred to earlier. The combined inspection and "administration" wing should work in collaboration with the Department of Administrative Reforms.

[Para 9.16]

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Note : The recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) are of basic character.

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