

Kocheril Raman Narayanan

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This the 41st Annual General Meeting of this Institute and we are celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Institute. Just as, after Independence, public administration in India entered a new phase and had to adjust to the developmental problems and welfare problems facing India, today, we are entering a new transition period. The task of public administration in India is in a twilight period. The Government is withdrawing gradually from direct economic administration but, at the same time, the need for governmental intervention and initiative in administration of human resource development is becoming more urgent and important than before. I should, therefore, say that we are entering a new phase of administration, after 40 years of experience. At the same time, we are still in the twilight period. The Government and the public administration have to have a role still in the direction of economic and industrial administration, though not an exclusive and, shall I say, interventionist role.

Apart from that, while we have moved on in this general function for the administration of the new phase, some of the old functions have reasserted their relevance. For example, law and order as a problem has assumed grave dimension in the country and, of necessity, public administration has to think of how to maintain law and order. In our society, there is an upsurge of violence in different sections and different parts. Whatever the reason, it is a problem to be faced.

Then there are emergence of new forces, like fundamentalism, disruptive threat in society, resurgence of communalism, the heightening of caste and class conflicts; these are all new features of the problem we face today.

Therefore, the public administration is changing in a large and fundamental way, withdrawing from economic and industrial functions and concentrating more and more on human development aspect, but simultaneously, it has to deal with practical problems of law and order and other disruptive forces, which have emerged in society. It is a difficult transition. I think, by and large, in a pragmatic way, Indian administration has responded to these challenges.

One major change which has been taking place is in the degree of trust and confidence in the civil service or public administration apparatus. I read that two years ago a public opinion poll was taken in Britain and it revealed that only 29 per cent of the people had trust in the British Civil Service. What is encouraging for the civil service is that only 19 per cent had trust in Parliament and only 11 per cent had trust in the Government! Well, this decrease in the trust of the people in civil service is probably a world phenomenon. I do not know whether we have conducted any studies or opinion polls, or it is possible to conduct such studies accurately in our system. Anyway, such a public phenomenon. I believe, is existing in Indian society also.

In this, the biggest element is probably the relationship between the political masters and the civil servants. We had, right from the beginning, looked upon this relationship in a very healthy way and a very clear-cut manner. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wanted the

independence and initiative of the civil service to be maintained, though he wanted it to be infused and enthused with a certain degree of vision of the new India that he had. Sardar Patel had also a very clear conception of the relationship between political masters and the civil service. In fact, he had, stated very clearly, and I am quoting:

An All India Service, efficient and disciplined, but assured of its prospects as a result of diligent and honest work, is a *sine qua non* of sound administration under a democratic regime, even more than under an authoritarian regime. Service must be above party and we should ensure that political considerations, either in its discipline or its control, are reduced to the minimum, if not eliminated altogether.

Therefore, the concept of our leaders, who fashioned this country, fashioned the new age of India, was very clear; it is a concept which will stand the test of all times, all the modern developments that are taking place in India and in the world.

But, in practice, we have got a different situation. There is a great deal of confusion in the relationship between politics and administration in our country. That may be partly because of the transition of the society itself. After all, the administration reflects the values of the society, the ethics for the society and the relationships in society. It is unavoidable.

We talk about corruption in administration. But that can be traced to different reasons. One larger reason is the deterioration of values in the society as a whole and is reflected in administration, in politics and in civil service. But, nevertheless, we cannot say that it is not a grave problem for us. It is also the result, as I said, of value in society, the fact that materialism and materialistic appetite have been growing in our society. With the process of liberalisation and privatization, which means that the processes in the economy are moving into a more affluent stage, this materialistic appetite is growing, rather than declining.

I am not one of those who believe that it is poverty that produces corruption in society. Really, poor people are not corrupt. The

corruption grows when the materialist appetite grows, when everybody feels that may be a short-cut to material goods in perhaps available. That is the main reason for corruption in government, in politics and in our society. The root of it is the growth, the enormous growth, of the material appetite in India.

We maintain that our society has inherited an old culture. But when we go to an Indian village, your own village, you will find how the material expectations of the people there have changed; how their values have changed and how they consider the pursuit of material means the most important thing, the most important business in life.

So, all this can make it a job for us, specially for this Institute of Public Administration, to see how it can fight this process. There is no inevitability that we should succumb to this on-rush of materialism in society, it can be guided, it can be challenged through healthy ways. This Institute, according to its charter, has been doing the job of a think tank in dealing with these problems. It has conducted training courses, research and consultancy in this field.

In fact, we are in such a critical time that a reorientation, retraining of our entire civil service has become necessary. The world over, in the management of administration, they are *re-training* everybody, because the society has become more technological. If you have got a job, the only way you can maintain is not to sit at the desk and doing the job in the old way have been doing it, but to learn new jobs and new ways of doing them. Otherwise, in advanced countries, they really fear that these people would be left without jobs. So, if we are moving to that stage, we have to train ourselves or retrain ourselves. Maybe, because we are moving in a slow manner, therefore, we may have a little more time to prepare ourselves. In this new situation, the Institute of Public Administration has a very crucial role to play.

As I said earlier, government is withdrawing from various areas of life. But look at the new Panchayati Raj that we have introduced. It is going to produce innumerable new administrative jobs. There will be a proliferation of such jobs at the village level, block level and at district level. I think the training of these people, including

the elected representatives, is a problem, it is a fundamental task, a national task, to which the Institute of Public Administration must direct its attention. Unless real orientation, real training, is given to these lower levels of administration in the country, there is danger of the grassroots pulling us down, in terms of standards and values of administration. Therefore, this task will have to be taken as the primary job of the Indian Institute of Public Administration.

I want to congratulate you on the very meaningful, very useful work that the Institute has done. It has conducted seminars, it has conducted research courses, it has published high-standard articles, publications and studies on the problems of administration. Apart from being intellectually satisfying, these are going to affect the temper and state of the administrative system in India. On the 40th Anniversary, I wish you even more success in facing the new needs of our administration.