

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MORALE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES
&
IMPROVING CITY GOVERNMENT

(New Delhi, April 26, 1959)

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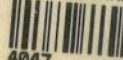
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PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

April 26, 1959

9.30 a.m.

First Session

"Morale in the Public Services"

Chairman : *Shri V.T. Krishnamachari*,
Deputy Chairman,
Planning Commission.

2.30 p.m.

Second Session

"Improving City Government"

Chairman : *Shrimati Aruna Asaf Ali*,
Mayor, Delhi Municipal
Corporation.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Shri N.H. Athreya, Director, Modern Management Council, Bombay.
2. Shri Bodh Raj Sharma, Head of the Department of Political Science, P.U. College, Hoshiarpur.
3. Shri Chetkar Jha, Lecturer in Political Science, Patna University, Patna (Bihar).
4. Dr. R. Dwarkadas, Reader in Political Science, University of Delhi, Delhi-8.
5. Dr. P.D. Gupta, Principal, N.R.E.C. College, Khurja, U.P.
6. Dr. B.N. Jha, I.C.S., Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
7. Shri R.K. Khadilkar, Member of Parliament.
8. Shri Manohar Lal, Assistant Secretary, New Delhi Municipal Committee, New Delhi.
9. Prof. M. V. Mathur, Head of the Department of Economics, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.
10. Dr. R.N. Mathur, Head of the Department of Political Science, Khalsa College, New Delhi.
11. Shri M.B. Matto.
12. Shri Parimal Mehta, Branch Manager, Life Insurance Corporation, Bombay.
13. Shri Menon.
14. Prof. V.K.N. Menon, Director, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.
15. Shri N.V. Modak, Special Engineer, Bombay Municipal Corporation, Bombay.
16. Shri P.R. Nayak, I.C.S., Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Delhi.
17. Shri K.N. Nayyar.
18. Shri Oberoi.

19. Dr. H.K. Paranjape, Assistant Professor, Indian School of Public Administration, New Delhi.
20. Shri R.K. Rangan, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, Government of India, New Delhi.
21. Shri G.N. Sadhu, Income Tax Officer, Nadiad.
22. Dr. K.N.V. Sastri, Retired Professor of History, Mysore University, Bangalore.
23. Shri G.M. Sinha, Secretary, All India Local Bodies Officers' Association, Moradabad.
24. Shri Subramanyan.
25. Shri A.R. Tyagi, Department of Political Science, Punjab University, Chandigarh.
26. Shri Tejbir Khanna, Assistant Director, Traffic, Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi.
27. Mrs. Usha Dar, Lecturer in Economic Administration, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, Delhi.

DISCUSSIONS AT THE CONFERENCE

First Session

(April 26, 1959 : 9.30 a.m.)

I

"MORALE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES"

The Chairman (*Shri V.T. Krishnamachari*, Chairman of the Institute's Executive Council, and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission) opening the discussion on the Report of the Conference on "Morale in the Public Services" held on January 3 and 4, 1959, pointed out that the subject was a comprehensive one and was divided into four major topics : (1) Recruitment, Training, Terms of Employment and Working Conditions; (2) Human Relations and Internal Communications; (3) Public Servants, Legislators and Ministers; and (4) Public Servants and the Public.

He did not think it necessary to emphasise how important this subject was in India, especially at the present juncture. India had become an independent political democracy; at the same time, it had been decided that she should be a Welfare State. These two steps, he said, were separated by several decades in many countries—for instance, in England democracy came about hundred years ago in the present form. But, what was called the Welfare State was a comparatively recent conception. Similarly, it happened in the U.S.A. In India, owing to the compulsion of events, both these steps had to be taken at the same time. Political democracy meant social justice or reduction of inequalities. They were inter-connected conceptions. Throughout the long struggle for independence, the necessity for large-scale social and economic development was kept in the forefront. It followed from this that when the Indian Constitution was discussed, two decisions were taken : it was inevitable that India should have a Cabinet system of Government based on the British model, on a

system of political democracy. Secondly, at the same time, India should become a Welfare State. Reminding the audience of the number of weeks during which the Constituent Assembly discussed the Chapter on the Directive Principles of State Policy, the Chairman observed that the Constituent Assembly gave a broad picture of the pattern of society which the nation should create for itself. So, these two conceptions of a political democracy and a Welfare State were integral parts of the Indian Constitution and at the same time, in the shape of Five Year Plans, steps were being taken to give concrete effect to these two conceptions.

Administration, therefore, was of great importance in India at present. There was no use in having the best Plans, unless it could be seen that they were given effect to with the utmost economy and efficiency. This was a truism. The problem of morale in the public services could not be separated from other inter-connected problems. One of the things that was happening today in countries adjoining India was an openly expressed disbelief in the efficiency of what was called the British system of Cabinet responsibility. Now, the question had to be considered whether this was not important from Indian point of view. The Chairman made it clear that he was a convinced believer in the Indian people being able to work this form of democracy in a satisfactory manner. There should be no doubt about that.

He, however, emphasised that if this political democracy and the Welfare State had to be worked in a proper way, in an efficient way, there were certain broad essentials which should be developed. First of all, respect for established Government had to be developed. In other words, a consensus of fundamental principles had to be evolved. There should be agreement on certain fundamental national policies. If there was no agreement on fundamentals, political democracy of the British type was not likely to be successful. Now, there were certain fundamentals in Indian life and culture which had been evolved over many centuries and had been embodied in the Indian Constitution. It would

be noticed in the Preamble to the Constitution that India reaffirmed her faith in the dignity and worth of the human being. That, of course, was the basic fundamental principle of a democracy. Secondly, throughout all these centuries India had evolved tolerance to other people's ideas, which constituted Indian contribution to the whole world, to the culture of the whole world. Now India had to see that those ideas of tolerance—the art of living together that she knew in old days—were translated into her new life. This was a process of education, the process of building up a consensus, a stock of common fundamental ideals on which democracy should rest. That was one direction in which all the people of India should work together. In that, the broad principles embodied in the Indian Constitution gave them the guidance.

Thirdly, the Chairman thought that there must be strong political leadership. There should be a firm policy which was well understood and which had the backing of all the political parties in power. Fourthly, there must be an efficient administration which would be emotionally integrated to the public policies. Every member of that administration should have complete faith in the policies which were embodied in the Constitution and should be prepared to carry them out with objectivity and integrity. Lastly, there must be a strong and impartial judiciary. It should be the aim, if the foundations for working Indian political democracy and Welfare State had to be laid properly, to see that India went on striving to achieve these objectives. This meant that all those who had got the responsibility for giving leadership should agree on this and work steadily and continuously for this.

The task of building up political democracy and Welfare State was an enormously difficult one. There had been no precedent in the world's history for a nation of about 400 million people, in the conditions of India, undertaking large-scale social and economic development on a democratic basis. This had to be realised. It was the most difficult task that India was engaged in that ever faced any nation in the world's history. In carrying out this, India

had to build up her own experience. There must, however, be agreement on fundamentals. It had to be agreed that there should be no room—there could not be any room—in the country for policies and programmes which were not based on the dignity of the individual, which were based on methods which affected this dignity. That was a fundamental conception. From this it followed that the aim of India's policies should be to enable the people of the country to assume responsibilities steadily, increasing responsibilities, for the government of the country, that India should build up intelligent citizenship, at every level. All these things followed from this conception of the dignity and worth of the human individual. Also, in all India's policies, there should be tolerance, there should be the widest possible latitude given to people to express themselves, to assist in the framing of policies. The Chairman concluded his remarks by saying that no plan for improvement in this country—and the Indian plan was a plan for both social and economic development—could have any chance of success unless everybody felt that he had a part in the making of it and everybody accepted it as his own and was prepared to make the necessary sacrifices for it. The people of India had to produce such an atmosphere in the country. Otherwise, democratic planning for 400 million people in a country in which the population growth was enormous and in which the resources available were limited could not be successful.

Shri N.H. Athreya's contribution related to "human communications and internal communication". He thought that there was a lot of prejudice about the objectivity of the so-called private enterprise. There was a feeling that they were not agreed on fundamentals. At least in modern management the objective was framed. As a matter of fact, the management was raised so as to be adequate in the art of framing at least common objectives. The means were also common, namely, administrative skill. Where they seemed to differ was the environment and the limitation. In industry they learnt that morale was intangible but it was very tangible in its results. Another thing they

learnt was that morale was largely a matter of attitudes, for particular attitudes were compatible with specific positions. *Shri Athreya* was told by a sales manager of 30 years' experience: "If you wanted to know the nature of the Managing Director of a company, speak to the telephone operator or to the receptionist and on that basis you can determine as to what type of management he may be having." Whatever objectives the man at the top took, people in the line would take the same. If he did not have scruples, then the people below him would not have scruples. But he was convinced that however high one might go up, one had to strengthen one's morale and quality. They were intangible, but very much tangible in result.

He had three suggestions to make on the question: 'What measures are needed to develop administrative leadership in a public agency? He thought that fairly good emphasis should be laid on the morale of the individual. He would also lay emphasis on educational qualification, possibly of social connections and also their appearance.

Dr. K.N.V. Sastri expressed his regret for two matters in the present system of administration. First, Indian universities had not been the seats of morale. He personally felt that they were the best contributory agencies of morale amongst public. Morale in the public services was apparently a reflection of the morale of the students in the universities. Secondly, the way in which the higher services had been adulterated. He had no doubt that competitive examinations for higher branches of public service were conducted with a view to recruiting the best available talents and training them for specific duties. He had been told by many young officers that after they entered service on the basis of open competitive examinations, they were made to mix with the persons who had got in by some other means. He did not know how far this helped in preserving the total morale of the service.

The Chairman, intervening in the discussions, said that he had a feeling that the emergency recruitment about which the earlier speaker had referred to had been very

limited to number and also great care was taken at the stage of selection. One of the members of the Public Service Commission told him that out of about 800 to 900 candidates who applied, they finally selected about 30 to 40.

Shri Bodh Raj Sharma pointed out that there was a general feeling that after the departure of the British people, public servants, especially those at the lower rungs of the ladder, did not consider it necessary to do their work honestly and efficiently as before. One reason very likely was that the relationship between the Secretary at the top and the lower employees at the bottom were not satisfactory. The Secretary never cared to find out the difficulties faced by the lower civil servants. It was absolutely necessary that there should be some meetings between the administrative head of the Department and the employees below him so that they might feel that all of them belonged to one team, one group, and thereby create a healthy atmosphere. With regard to the relationship between the employees on the one hand and the legislators and the Ministers on the other, he narrated from his own experience that civil servants were put to all kinds of pressure in their day-to-day work. As a matter of fact, this interference in day-to-day administration by the Ministers and legislators made it practically impossible for any public servant to discharge his duties without bias. This produced a damaging effect on the morale. To avoid such interference, he felt that a code of conduct for the legislators as well as for the Ministers should be evolved.

Shri Parimal Mehta regretted that it was perhaps the interference in the texture of administration at various levels from men who should have no say in any matters except policy-making that irritated, exasperated and upset the balance of public or semi-public institutions. Not only should top management be free from these irritations, but if the initiative and boldness in top administration was valued, they must be granted the right to commit a genuine, *bona fide* mistake—inherent in all great human endeavours—unless their integrity was genuinely called in question. Which government, for that matter, in any part of the world,

was free from genuine mistakes? As long as the top administrator had the ability to own up the institution as his own, he must be given a reasonable right to commit an error and correct it without affecting his basic morale on the sound principle that progress could not emerge out of rigidity and without taking reasonable risks, honestly contemplated.

Once the top was on the bed-rock of high morale, there was always a good chance that morale in lower services would percolate through lines and reach the bottom, which should be looked upon not really as the bottom but as the base. But it was important that the specific gravity of morale at the top should run through the centre-line and keep the organization alive and pulsating with new life. Any serious break in their chain of command did more harm than good. There were instances when in the name of the so-called open-tower policy, the negotiations ran between the lowest and the highest, as it happened where a multitude of associations dealt directly with the Board. The break in the chain of command could not but have serious repercussions on the morale of the middle management. In fact, the function of the middle management—to which not much thought appeared to have been paid—was of utmost importance, particularly as sound morale-builder. Their's was the difficult role of absorbing what they observed from the lower levels, refining it and passing it on to the upper levels of management and conversely understanding the top decisions, assimilating them and conveying them in acceptable and easily understandable form to the lower levels, whom they controlled. Highest care was needed in nursing the middle management, in training them for higher responsibilities and building out a sound line of defence from the outstanding ones amongst them, not only from the viewpoint of their immediate output but from the more important viewpoint of their long-term utility, their general calibre to fill up much higher posts. An administration that did not provide out-of-routine opportunities to ambitious and deserving middle management personnel for prize-posts was not worth the name and could never hope to build a really high morale in its men.

Shri Mehta next dealt with the importance of a clear-cut promotional policy. Efficiency and morale were like the Siamese twins. One could not have one without recognising the other. In this context, he was amazed at the prevalent long-drawn controversies between promotion by merit *versus* promotion by seniority. In his humble but firm opinion, seniority was a meaningless word except in conjunction with merit. Every sane administration must throw open the gate of promotion to merit, and merit alone, which should include seniority as a part and parcel of the dynamic concept of merit.

Morale amongst the lowest level of service—Class III and Class IV, as they were commonly known in public service—must form an interesting subject by itself. If the management could always look four steps ahead of their staff and conceded two points before they raised one, instead of allowing the initiative to pass on to the other side, and then came out with a shield of righteousness in the left hand and a concession of two out of ten unreasonable demands in the right hand, it would build far greater morale—which was nothing but confidence of the staff in the management capacity for a fair deal made in time. What he was pleading for was a preventive rather than curative approach to the problems of staff, and a reasonable degree of showmanship, which should include not only the ability to be and look generous but the ability to be and look strong, firm and just.

Dr. P.D. Gupta presumed that the proper working of democracy and the maintenance of proper morale depended upon the level of public character that was sought to be maintained and developed in a country and he was afraid, if looked at from this point of view, there was no reason to be proud of India's achievements. The average person when he was placed in position of power and authority put to himself the question not 'what he could put into it' but 'what he could get out of it' and that affected both the efficiency and the integrity of the public services. Another point which he raised was the influence exerted by legislators, specially at the State level, upon its day-to-day administration.

It was the experience of most people that the morale of the public services, specially at the district and the local levels, was very seriously and adversely affected by the interferences of M.L.Cs., M.L.As., etc. All sorts of requests were made and these requests could only be ignored at personal cost. Giving an instance from the place from which he came, he pointed out that a few years ago a District Inspector of Schools happened to have the misfortune of turning down a most unreasonable request made by one of the local influential M.L.As. The M.L.A. was extremely annoyed. He took the next train to the capital city and within three days the District Inspector of Schools received a transfer order to a rather unhealthy place in the State. He thought that there should be a code of conduct, there should be a positive legislation to stop such things. He did not know whether this suggestion was practicable, but he believed something concrete had to be done to prevent this interference in the day-to-day administration.

There was also another evil closely connected with this. He felt that public servants in India had lost the courage of their convictions. It was the duty of the civil servants to implement the policies once they were made but it was also their duty and their business to put forward their views and opinions without fear and without favour. An average public servant did not come out with what he held to be a right and correct thing but what would please those under whom he served.

Referring to the point raised earlier about efficiency and not seniority being the criterion of promotion, he thought that theoretically and academically nothing definite could be said against this point of view but he wondered whether in practice this would not lead to all sorts of nepotism and favouritism. After all, there was not a very infallible objective test of efficiency and all sorts of things could be done and had been done in the name of efficiency.

Agreeing with the introductory remarks of the Chairman that on the base of democracy lay an intense conviction in regard to the dignity of the human person, he pointed out that the Indian Constitution had also placed it as that

but it was not what the Constitution put down that really mattered; it was the spirit which actuated those who worked the Constitution and what was seen all around was not really the dignity of the human person but the dignity of those who sat in the seats of power. He had known Ministers and high officials allowing their feet to be touched by those who had the misfortune to work under them and if it was said that they did so, because they wanted to show respect to sacrifice and age, he thought, they discovered the respect at the time the former were in authority.

He believed that if India had to rise and if the morale of her services had to be maintained at a high level, then the dignity of the human person was to be demonstrated not in copies of big magazines and in copies of the Constitution, but in work, in daily life and in personal contacts with those who had the reigns of power.

Shri R.K. Rangan stressed the need for providing better emoluments, salaries and adequate retirement benefits to all Government employees including employees in public enterprises. A matter which had held constantly engaging the attention of the Pay Commission and other bodies was the question of retirement benefits. At present, retirement benefits were so coded that it was rather disadvantageous to the Government servants to opt for retirement benefits. Due to persistent appeals of associations of railway employees, it was agreed by the Government to extend the retirement benefits to all the railway employees. Surprisingly enough, only 30,000 of them offered to avail of the retirement benefits. This would indicate that there was a serious lacuna in the pension benefits which were allowed to the Government servants. The chief lacuna was that when the Government servant died in harness, after putting 23 years of service, practically nothing was done to protect his benefits which had accrued to him because family pension was allowed only after 25 years of service. This, he thought, could only be traced to the attitude that pension was being allowed as *ex gratia* and not as something earned by the official concerned. The attitude should change to the extent that for each year of service which a person put in he should get

a proportionate amount of retirement benefit. These proportionate amounts of retirement benefits, if they accrued to the Government servant at any time, had an effect on morale. Pension rights, something like provident fund, should accrue to the Government official irrespective of good conduct after retirement or any such thing. All these conditions were attached to the grant of pension simply because it was thought that it was something given *ex gratia*. But it was a right earned during service by the official and as such retirement benefits grew so unpopular with the railway officials that less than 30,000 agreed to opt.

There was another factor if it was contributory provident fund. Contributory provident fund in railways was, for example, based on the amount of pay an employee drew including certain allowances. Naturally the contribution of the Government towards the contributory provident fund increased and the amount he got after retirement was something more. So, some system should be devised. The retirement pension accruing to a person should, as far as possible, be administered, before he retired, somewhat like a banking operation. There were various complaints about the delay in settling pension cases. Any such cases would not arise if the whole pension system—administration of the pension, grant of the pension and the actual benefits accruing to a person—were put through like banking operations. This would have a good effect on the morale of the Government servants.

Regarding the question as to how far the present methods of recruitment in the different aspects were satisfactory, he was of the opinion that, after all, any method of recruitment was devised by human agency. So, many factors came into the recruitment method. Apart from personal prejudices or likes and dislikes, even unconscious factors came to the methods of recruitment. The recruitment method should embrace not only those who were within 25 years of age but should also embrace those who had passed that age. For example, even if a person of 45 years got the junior scale of the I.A.S., he would work as efficiently as a younger officer. Maybe, he might not be able to take

up higher responsibilities of a secretaryship or any such post because he was given the position late but the 10 years' experience would not stagnate and he could make real contribution to administration. His point was that any system of recruitment devised by human beings could not claim perfection to itself and it should constantly be under review and examination.

With regard to seniority as the basis for promotion, he understood that the Rajasthan administrative officers submitted a memorandum to the Home Minister. They had some hard things to say about confidential reports. The confidential reports were written once a year and the assessment recorded in them depended upon the writer as well as the man concerned. Confidential reports were also documents written by men. He thought it would be revealing if the Indian Institute of Public Administration took up a pilot study of a cross-section of a thousand confidential reports. These were all observations. These forms should be subject to continuous experiments. Each year a cross-section of 1,000 confidential reports should be taken. They should be examined as to how far they bore the test of reality and whether the claims made on behalf of the confidential reports, which were said to be the test of efficiency, could at all be borne out.

Shri R.K. Khadilkar agreed with the observation of the chairman of the Conference that after independence democracy to a large extent depended on the performance of services in this country. He also felt, as he happened to know what was happening in the other part of public life, he meant the political life as well as in legislatures, that the best talent in the country was absorbed in the services.

Before independence, at least out of some idealism, many people used to come to public life but after independence the position had changed altogether—that was the major change and that was the experience of our political parties and the ruling party as well as the party in opposition—that formerly as they used to attract talent with idealism, now they were finding it extremely difficult. If this change was borne in mind, the question was who was to

implement the ideal of a Welfare State by building up a socialist pattern of society in this country. In his opinion, India was waging a social battle and the morale, though it depended on the service conditions and other things, ultimately depended to a great extent on a certain conviction and preparedness to work and die for that conviction. Whether the services in the new set-up were guided by that spirit, that was the main question and whether they were really discharging that responsibility which, in a given situation, perhaps was thrust on them. He thought the shift had come rather too suddenly and in this country when all round the so-called democratic superstructures were disappearing even in form and in such a situation if services were not prepared to face the big task of reconstructing the Indian society with a sense of devotion and conviction, the future of democracy was not very bright. The legislators were there but in the Indian democracy most of them were politically or economically illiterate, though they had good social roots. They tried to represent their constituency, their caste—he was using that word because they looked at the situation from their own experience. It was very difficult for them to take an all-India outlook and naturally there was a certain amount of eagerness to get at power. With all these shortcomings of the political parties and political life in this country in general, the ultimate responsibility, the major share of responsibility came to the services or the administrative services as they put it and the services in a Welfare State, where they were not only entrusted with the task of law and order but they were to manage big production concerns, industrial concerns, commercial concerns and whereas formerly they used to be in district just in charge of the district as Revenue Collectors, they were now supposed to implement social service programmes. He thought that the situation would be discussed from this angle.

He realised that the promotion and pension benefits were important. There was a genuine grievance; perhaps it was partly true that there was a lot of ministerial interference or interference from legislators at the lower level

and which was certainly wrong. But, at the same time, he pointed out—that he had some contacts with the service people—there was more service politics in services than social idealism or conviction. He urged that this should be clearly understood. He said that he tried to understand the mind of the services in the present context and he had discovered from the academic life, the public services as well as the industrial undertakings—wherever he had an opportunity to meet people and discuss this problem—that a major issue before them was how to get ahead and improve their lot. They did not consider that there were certain tasks to be performed. Explaining the importance of this he said that India was trying to bring about by a democratic method a social change and an academician who had devoted a lot of time to the study of the subject had pointed out that the major drawback in this effort was the lack of driving power, or a driving force. The urges of the people had to be met and to make them feel that their lot day-to-day was being improved. There was a certain amount of urgency on the one side and a certain amount of lack of urgency—certain amount of apathy and indifference—whatever one might call it—on the other side and here one was very likely to be faced with a comparison. Though not in favour of the method followed in the Soviet Union or China, he pointed out that in those countries the political party and the services put together were the instruments who were devoted, self-sacrificing and were prepared to reach certain targets within a certain time and if they failed they were punished. Here, however, he did not know where to fix the responsibility, and in a backward or under-developed country like India—if at all the democratic method of planning and social change was to survive or to succeed—and he earnestly desired that it should succeed—the major responsibility had to be shouldered by the services in whatever sector it might be. Whenever there was an occasion in Parliament, reference had been made to a certain amount of hostility, a certain amount of distrust between the people and the services. That had got to be overcome by a change of approach. Concluding, he regretted that he did not find it at district level, State level or Central level—

that change of approach anywhere in the performance. He admitted that he was generalising too much but unless this was done he did not think the real issue of morale in the public services would be faced.

Prof. M.V. Mathur welcomed the introductory remarks of the Chairman that the responsibility of a civil servant was very great in building up a democratic Welfare State. The change-over in this country had been very rapid, unequalled in the history of any other country in the world, but this change-over had been compelled by the circumstances. In Great Britain, whose parliamentary democracy was admired and respected, they had built up their democracy over a period of seven hundred years from the date of Magna Carta right up to 1901 in the times of Queen Victoria. Although the rule of parliamentary democracy of Great Britain was also a 20th century product, it had come over a period of seven hundred years. Because India had hastened the process so much, she had not been able to build up traditions. That, to his mind, was one of the crucial factors.

He urged the necessity for an institutional change that was required. He referred to the speech of the Prime Minister at the Annual General Body Meeting on the previous day in which he had mentioned that the Institute should be considerably concerned with the institutional changes that were necessary to face the new task. Now, it appeared to him that in the legislature there were persons who might not be politically or economically literate as the previous speaker had put it. They had their social roots and that one of the fundamental changes required to build up these things was a basic institutional change in the Indian parliamentary set-up. That was required because the Indian set-up was very much in tune with the type of tasks which were assigned to a democratic State in the 19th century. In the 20th century, a democratic State had taken up a new role and that new role with reference to this country was to build up the socialist pattern of society. The socialist pattern of society envisaged, besides many other things, one very important thing, namely, the extension of the public sector. Now, when the public sector got extended, he

asked as to how could the system of parliamentary control be maintained. He believed that a type of institution would have to be developed where the people who knew something about the working of these things got their representation in a functional fashion though in the last analysis they should be subservient to the will of the people.

With regard to recruitment and training of public servants, he referred to the remark that the Public Service Commissions were not as well manned as they should be. While in full agreement with the Chairman that the importance of the judiciary was great, he believed that when the socialist pattern of society was built up, when the public sector got extended, when the role of civil servants became very vital, the role of the Public Service Commissions also became very crucial.

Next, he dealt with the system of recruitment in the States. He found that so far as the recruitment to services at provincial or State level was concerned, there were several States which had put a ban against recruitment of persons to services from other States while there were others who had kept recruitment open to all the citizens of India. For example, to the Rajasthan Administrative Service any citizen of India could come and compete there but that was not true of all States. He cited the example of the neighbouring State of U.P. In Rajasthan, people from outside could come and man the services, but Rajasthanis could not man the services in the State of U.P. That was something which had got to be looked into and rectified.

Another point was that it was not merely the question of recruiting the right type of person but that he should be socially orientated to the new task that India had in hand. He thought the previous speaker had rightly emphasised this point. He personally believed that this task could be performed only if one could catch the people a little younger and the type of training programmes that one arranged for them should be of a longer duration and it was during that period that it would be possible to orientate them properly. He wanted to draw a lesson from what was done in the Defence Services in connection with the recruitment to the

National Defence Academy where the rate of recruitment was a little more than the number of candidates that they actually selected. The persons who were rejected at a later stage, if they finished three years' training, as was done in the U.K., they got a degree. If these people were not selected they could go to the other services or public life. Unless that thing was done, they could not be reorientated in new social objectives.

He then came to the next topic about human relations and inter-communications, *i.e.*, the relationship between the general administrator and the technical head. The general administrator, he took it, might be a Secretary to the Government, and the technical head might be the Chief Engineer or persons like that. As he looked to the future, he found that this problem might get accentuated. There would be more and more technical people and the relationship between the general administrator, as the Secretary, and the technical person, as the Head of the Department, had got to be looked into very carefully and he did not know if there was some room for experimentation. He suggested that the technical head might be given the status of *ex officio* Secretary, while a general administrator might be put as next in command because very often the criticism came that the difficulty of the general administrator as also of the technical man was that he was not able to look to many things which were happening elsewhere. He realised that considerable amount of difficulties were created where the general administrator failed to appreciate fully the technical problems of a job.

He did not like to say anything on the problem of casteism, but he thought that there was another malady which had not been mentioned in the Working Paper and which had become clearly rampant. He would like to call it by the name of regionalism. He did not like to assign any motives, but he thought that this could exist in any big State like Bombay where people came from various regions. Now he did not know if there was any influential Minister, who might try to harm a particular public servant, or persons who came from particular regions, and that affected the morale

of the services a very great deal. He urged something to be done to check that type of difficulty.

Next he referred to the question of the interference of Ministers in cases relating to promotions and transfers of employees. In theory, he pointed out, so many things were known but he did not know what else could be done than build up the standards of the Ministers and those who were in power.

Finally, as he came from a university, he liked to make a passing observation about what the universities could do in building up the right type of student-teacher relationship. He said that he had been a college or university teacher for over 22 years and he could say that he had not come across a single student who did not respond to the right type of advice. The difficulties that had been created in colleges and universities were of a different order. First, he regretted that the university did not get the right type of teachers in their younger categories. Now, in recruitment, Government was their greatest competitor. He realised that formerly there were people who did not want to become a part of the steel frame—the British steel frame. Some of them, of course, decided to go in. But, at present, he felt that the administration should draw from within their own fold. He asked the question as to what was the remedy to retain the best type of persons so that the universities could have the best staff and produce the best students. Otherwise, if the universities were manned by second-rate men, the next generation was going to be second-rate or third-rate.

The Chairman, referring to the point made by the earlier speaker regarding employment in State services, pointed out that nine States—Assam, Bombay, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Mysore, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh—had amended their service rules permitting all Indian citizens of whatever State to sit for the competitive examination for State Services.

Shri Chetkar Jha found that in India civil servants suffered from the same malady which afflicted the Indian society. It was the sense of extreme individualism drained

of all social meaning. That was a very important sociological defect to be reckoned with. It stood in the way of co-operative endeavour which was a very important element in the building up of morale. And in this context, he found there was too much of emphasis being placed on security of public servants. Security and independence made them much more arrogant and much more irresponsible. They were trying to fix a price first before they would do good work. They would have the security; nobody would touch them provided they enjoyed the confidence of the people.

Again he found, so far as the recruitment problem was concerned, Public Service Commissions had been losing respect because a number of their recommendations were fantastic. Therefore, the idea that it was Public Service Commission's recommendation and as such it was bound to be very independent was not correct. He would not grudge giving the Commissions independence in their work provided they acquitted themselves well.

Shri Menon thought that the immediate task was to see the Five Year Plans were implemented successfully and for that an efficient administration was needed. This required that public servants should have a high sense of duty, integrity and should be able to sacrifice their personal interests.

The greatest disappointment which he had got on going through the Constitution of India was that he did not find a chapter on fundamental duties. He found fundamental rights. Everybody talked in terms of rights only. Nobody thought in terms of duty. Everybody said the State was interfering with the rights. This feeling had crept in the services as well. They thought much in terms of rights only—enhancement of pay scales, betterment of conditions of service, etc. Nobody thought in terms of his duty to the country he belonged.

Shri Subramanyan regretted that except for one or two speakers others did not touch on the problem of how the morale was to be maintained within the service. The services had been talked about as a whole, as a distinct entity from the rest of the society.

The first thing that one was told after one entered the public service was to keep aloof as far as possible from the local politics and local jealousies and at the same time try to maintain cordial relations with everybody. When they went (civil servants) back to the district, they tried to implement and put this into practice. Now, when they started talking to people and moved closely with anybody, there would be a whisper around that so and so was in the pocket of so and so. He narrated from his own experience that he happened to serve in a district in which some decades back the Chairman of the District Board was the Collector himself. There a particular M.L.A. was unseated. That M.L.A. happened to be a man of a wider outlook as well as great culture. He used to come to see him. Now this man stood for re-election and there was an objection petition filed against him and there was a campaign both in the newspapers and outside that the Sub-Divisional Officer would not reject this man's application. It so happened that he did reject this man's application and no less a person than the Chief Minister of the State told him that he never expected that he (Shri Subramanyan) would reject his application. Because of this thing, after one or two years of service, a serviceman withdrew himself into an ivory tower. He would not then, in order not to lay himself open to this charge of partiality, mix with other people. All that he did was that he led a very lonely life. He did not meet people except when he had official dealings with them.

The second problem which a civil servant had to face was this. How exactly was the balance to be maintained in mixing with people and at the same time maintain discipline? For instance, after all, higher civil servants were recruited from the same class as most of the clerks were recruited. Most clerks had been with them in the college. The difficulty arose if he moved with any one of these people closely. There was a feeling that these subordinate people might take undue advantage of him. He did not know how the problem was to be solved. In respect of morale in the public services, it was not the question of service conditions alone; it was not the question of any interference which might be

there in a few cases by X, Y or this party or that party, or any maladjustment within the services themselves. For instance, the Indian Army fought with a glorious record. It had no ideals, but the men knew why they fought. They had, first, *esprit de corps*; secondly, a pride in their profession. The main difficulty that was faced in the lower subordinate services and, to some extent, in the higher services at present was that there was no pride in the profession. The civil servant while he was being given undue publicity, because the Collector of a district lived in a glare of publicity which was not there before, at the same time he was being looked upon with suspicion. Now, the civil servant had lost all his sense of pride, of belonging to a particular service and of having a particular job to do, which was an essential ingredient and which made the army an effective instrument.

He touched upon another point. The present Welfare State was, of course, an ideal for all but at the same time the numerous pressures that were being built up, all tended to shape people's attitude more and more as to what they were going to get from others and not what they were to do to discharge their duty. For instance, his office clerk was insistent on his own rights being attended to promptly, but he was not prompt in attending to complaints which he received from outside. Now that was an attitude which had also got to be changed.

Therefore, the main problem—rather the main direction in which this problem had to be tackled—was very much different from the lines in which it had so far been discussed in this body.

Dr. Dwarkadas stressed that the concept of morale was rather complex and intangible. What did the problem involve? It involved moral relationship, right kind of relationship between the top executive, the middle management and the lower services and in its turn administrative relationship between the top and those lower down relationship with administrative personnel and personnel outside, relationship with the politicians. The problem of building up and promoting morale was complex. To build up morale it would be worthwhile to try to develop better communication

between the public servant and the public at large so that there might be a better understanding of each other's points of view.

Shri A. R. Tyagi emphasised one point with regard to the economic conditions of the employees and that was the relation between the salary of the officer in charge of an office or an administrative agency and the employees working under him. The preliminary question was that every employee must be paid adequately to sustain himself and lead a reasonably respectable life. Taking that for granted, the essential problem was that there must be some relation between the salary of an officer who was in charge of maintaining and fostering the morale of the employees working under him and the salaries of the employees who had to work in a team. Therefore, while emphasising the various factors in building up morale in public services, this factor should also be considered so that there was some relation between the economic conditions, between the salary grades of the directing officers and the lower employees.

Shri G. M. Sinha observed that there were two persons who were yoked together in the administration—one was the representative of the people and the other was the civil servant. Whatever be the improvement in the set-up, in the rules and regulations, scales of pay and training programmes for civil servants, unless a complete harmony and concord between the two parties was obtained like the two wheels of the chariot, the cart would not reach its destination. So, he thought it very essential that there should be concord, there should be a harmony developed between the representatives of the people and the servants of the people.

Shri K. N. Nayyar referred to the Working Paper which mentioned, "when fair play and merit are the guiding principles in the recruitment of staff, employees will have confidence in the management and this will be conducive to their morale. In India, where recruitment to the public services is made by the Public Service Commissions through the media of open competitive examinations, there is a general confidence in recruitment". This gave the impression that morale

was satisfactory at the time of recruitment wherefrom it originated. It was not the recruitment, but the subsequent years in the public servant's career and throughout that length of service that the problem existed and it could not be solved only by adopting correct recruitment procedure. He pleaded that one should not play very loose with the conditions of service of employees of Government and should allow some breathing space between one decision and the following decision. There should be some stability in the conditions of service and oscillation and too much change did not also do any good.

Shri Manohar Lal held that he did not find any defect in the present recruitment procedure or with the set-up of the U.P.S.C., but the defect lay mostly at the stage when policies were implemented. Any change or amendment of a policy for the so-called 'special reasons' had at the implementation stage a damaging effect on the total morale. For example, too much had been talked about the O & M. He did not say that there was anything wrong in the O & M. As a matter of fact the introduction of O & M techniques in the Central Government had actually done a lot for obviating delay, for simplifying the Secretariat methods and procedures. The idea of O & M was not bad but the way it had been implemented was bad. It was supposed to produce valuable data, but actually speaking, it had to be seen whether those responsible for giving the data were giving the correct data. The Assistant concerned of the O & M was only to see that the number of receipts pending were the lowest possible; the Section Officers were afraid of their O & M Officers and wanted to give a statement showing that there were no arrears.

Staff Councils had been set up in the Central Secretariat. This was undoubtedly a very good idea. But, recommendations made by the various Staff Councils were hardly implemented. So much time was spent in discussing various problems in the meetings of Staff Councils, but finally nothing came out. He urged that officers in charge of administration should themselves set an example of integrity and devotion to duty.

Shri G. N. Sadhu suggested that the discontentment in the services and the discontentment between the subordinates and the superiors could only be solved by establishing administrative courts like the *Conseil d'Etat* in France. To these courts persons like High Court Judges should be appointed. The Government servant should always be alert to his duty and the Government servant who was aggrieved should be allowed the opportunity to approach the administrative courts for independent and impartial judgment.

Shri Oberoi drawing upon his own experience in the three important districts of U.P. dealt with the question of interference. He declared that he had no complaint to make of interference. Immediately after independence, he continued, there was a clamour for so many rights. Interference did take place in the earlier stages and perhaps continued even at present, but he asked why should not the civil servant have the necessary backbone to withstand interference if he thought it was interference. He had got to hear everybody from the lowest to the highest, from the opposition party to the party in power. Why should he succumb to this interference? *Shri Oberoi* wanted to know if he (civil servant) had satisfied himself that he was hearing the M.L.A. of the party in power just because he was an M.L.A. of the party in power and that it might suit his purpose to do so. If he did so, it was a curious role that he was playing. Members of political parties had come and would come in future, with requests of a civil nature, requests in respect of law and order and requests and prayers in all manner of disputes and other things. Why did he (civil servant) succumb to interference in a particular case? He should have the backbone to resist it. If he could not resist it, then the weakness in him should not in any manner be ignored. He would have to take the responsibility for it. The real trouble was that civil servants were not honest in a sense—he was not talking of money matters at all—honest in their approach. They were playing ducks and drakes with their own conscience. By and large, that was the reason. *Shri Oberoi* quoted one example where interference

was unknown. Nobody ever said that M.L.As. could pester the judicial officers. Had anybody ever suggested that an M.L.A. or a political chief or a political party man went to the Munsif or the Civil Judge? No, never. Why? Because, the Civil Judge and the Munsif had built round themselves a tradition in which nobody could approach them. If that be so, why could not there be a tradition behind the civil servants. Perhaps they tried to be chummy out of self-interest and they went about boozing that there was interference. So, essentially, the problem was that ethical standards and values had changed and they had got to be improved and put up to their former pedestal.

The *Chairman* in his concluding remarks expressed that it had been a most fruitful discussion and he was grateful to all the participants.

Second Session

(April 26, 1959 : 2.30 p.m.)

II

"IMPROVING CITY GOVERNMENT"

Welcoming the member-delegates, *Prof. V.K.N. Menon*, Director, Indian Institute of Public Administration, expressed his pleasure at the fact that the Conference was being presided over by *Shrimati Aruna Asaf Ali*. It was, he added, a tribute to her ability and experience of city government that she should preside when they were discussing the subject 'Improving City Government'. The Director expressed his gratefulness to her for having agreed to preside over the Conference. He also observed that *Shri P. R. Nayak* (Commissioner, Delhi Municipal Corporation), who was the Director of the Seminar held on the same subject at Bangalore, was also available for guiding the discussions.

Opening the discussion, the *Chairman* observed that the word 'Government' always conveyed the sense of domination. To govern meant to dominate, because that was the sort of government the people of India were accustomed to before. But when the country was free, the idea of domination should go. Ultimately, from the humane point of view, one should think of the administration of things rather than of the government of men. Probably, the first step towards that had been taken by the declaration of faith in the socialist pattern of society. She added that it was her constant endeavour to tell her colleagues, both members and officers of the Municipal Corporation, that they were dedicated or rather called upon to administer Delhi rather than govern various sections of the people. The result was not very happy but most of them were able to realise that there was a difference between 'administration of a city' and 'government of a city'. Pointing out to the difficulties in the administration of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, she said that

they were a body of untrained people—85 persons—who had been elected directly or indirectly to see that things were done; that they reflected the point of view of the electorate, their sorrows and their griefs, their happiness and their needs. The needs were so many, but they had to try to meet those needs. They were a body of councillors without knowing any methods of administration, without perhaps a full appreciation of the real nature of things. They had been chosen to safeguard people's interests and to see things done as quickly as possible.

About the occasional conflict between the untrained element and the trained cadre representing the civil service and bureaucracy, she said that it was due to lack of proper understanding. In the villages around Delhi the people needed drinking water very urgently. Nobody could overlook such a demand in modern times. But there were difficulties to which the villagers did not give any thought. Instead, when they were told about the problems involved, they began doubting the *bona fides* of the officers concerned, in the sense that the latter did not want to do what the former had asked for. The villagers would say that the officials were not in sympathy with their needs, since they were rural people. Actually, there were obvious limitations. The means were very limited, and there were other limitations as well.

As regards the quality of councillors, she said, the problem was how to elect the right type of persons. The councillor, who was elected, was often important for other reasons in the normal walks of life. Sometimes his understanding of social, political and economic problems in local administration made him a fit instrument. In the election to the municipal corporation, municipal council, or municipal committee, no one felt that one needed any particular qualifications for offering oneself as a candidate. Somehow, every one felt that what he had got to do was to get elected to it. Once you were elected, you would think that you were the right person for that particular field of work. This, she said, was not good. There were several countries where a great deal of stress was laid on qualifications. If there was a

person who had got certain specialised qualifications, a political party would give him greater preference when selecting candidates as against another person who, for certain extraneous reasons, might be supposed to be more valuable for the party. That was why, she added, she had drawn the attention of the political leaders to the need for having a non-party election. There were doctors, professors, social workers, and so on, who would really be able to solve the problems. They had got the knowledge, and they had a certain status in society, they might not be members of any political party and let these candidates be elected purely on merit and on their capacity to understand. But, unfortunately, owing to political considerations, the suggestion was not taken note of and a certain kind of political chaos followed over which nobody was happy. No political party by itself was in majority in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, and this landed them in a dilemma. So, the quality of men or women who were to be elected must be considered. This meant that thought must be given to the problem of how to educate our voters to select the right men for the right job.

The next point she dealt with related to the suspicion of the civil servants. She thought it was a hang-over from the British past; the civil servant in the old days was a man who carried out the policies of the British Government. Somehow, it had stuck in the minds of the people that a civil servant, especially an I.C.S. or an I.A.S. officer, was highly paid, was able and efficient, but lacked human sympathy. The councillors began with an initial suspicion that their views were just neglected. They complained that the officers concerned were impervious to their times and therefore it was 'bureaucracy raj' which had to be combated in free India. Such thoughts should not be allowed to crystallise. Such barriers should be broken down; they must go.

With respect to the role of the Mayor in the municipal corporation, she remarked that it was a very new idea that a Mayor should function as more or less a Speaker. The Mayor was to conduct the debates in the council and had nothing to do with the administration. The Mayor had to see that questions that were asked and the resolutions that

were tabled were properly framed according to the rules and procedures laid down in the Act and other regulations. But the people won't accept this. In the minds of the people, there was a feeling that the Mayor should deliver the goods. If the tap water failed one could ring her up, and so on. The slogan that the Mayor be elected for 3-4 years, for the whole term of the Corporation, was because the people expected the Mayor to almost fulfil the functions of the President of the old municipality.

The Chairman's speech was followed by *Shri P. R. Nayak's* observation in course of which he summarised the discussions of the Bangalore Seminar. The basic point he stated was that it was important that city government should improve. Cities were for both political and economic reasons extremely important to our economy. The conditions in cities were far from satisfactory and if political and economic stability were to be promoted, it was urgently necessary to give thought to the question of improving city governments and thereby improving living conditions in cities. Starting from this postulate, the Bangalore Seminar discussed the subject in four aspects. The first dealt with Relations between Deliberative and Executive Agencies. The agencies were not, of course, uniform in all city governments. There were different kinds of executive agencies. There were deliberative or elected bodies with varying degrees of power and authority vested in them. In that manner, should these two agencies dovetail into each other to the best advantage of the administration? This subject had been discussed at great length with reference to the nature of executive agencies in different contexts—the small town, the bigger town and the large city. One of the viewpoints thrown up at the Bangalore Seminar was that the appropriate agencies would depend on the nature and complexity of the problems that confront a city; because these would determine the extent to which administration became something more than a routine exercise. Similarly, in different contexts with the different agencies at the executive level, the role of the deliberative agency, the city council, its various statutory and other bodies, had been discussed. By and large, he

thought, the conclusions reached were that first and foremost, there had to be a better understanding of the respective roles of the two agencies not as separate entities but as parts of one integrated scheme of administration. Secondly, reference had been made to developments in other countries in this same sphere.

The second topic discussed at the Bangalore Seminar, he added, was Functions and Finances. The question was as to what were the appropriate functions of a city government and whether there was a tendency today to encroach on these functions, to transfer important functions to other independent authorities. This had been happening or was alleged to be happening in the context of executing the Second Five Year Plan. There had been a tendency on the part of the State Governments to encroach on the sphere of the activity of city governments; first, to the detriment of local initiative and local responsibility; and, secondly, in the absence of local initiative and local responsibility, the quality of success suffered. Further, it was examined, he said, whether it was desirable that the scope should be as broad and as wide as possible or that specialised agencies should be created and the responsibility thereby should be diffused. And if the scope of the city government was sought to be enlarged or liberalised with a view to associating the local public more actively, the problem of the finance of the city governments would naturally arise. The finances had always been chronically short. So, the Bangalore Seminar discussed as to what arrangements were necessary to augment the functions and finances of the city governments in order to enable to function over a wider field.

The third subject discussed in that Seminar was the Development & Re-development of cities in the context of growing population. It was discussed whether in the absence of forward planning, it was desirable that some attempts should be made to control the growth of cities in an orderly manner so as not to detract from the quality of the already deficient services. The following connected problems were also discussed: What could be called the blighted areas of many of the cities? Most of the cities that had

grown in the industrial era had very extensive blighted areas, where conditions of living were appalling and there was an urgent necessity of re-development. Slum clearance was one aspect of re-development. How should these two requirements, *i.e.*, development on planned lines in virgin areas and re-development of slum and other blighted areas be taken up? What sort of planning agency was necessary? Should that planning agency be a body separate from the local authority? A good deal of interesting discussion had taken place on that, particularly in the light of the situation that had prevailed in Delhi during the previous one year. A very useful discussion, he informed, took place on the point of separating the planning agency from the agency which must execute plans for development and re-development.

Shri Nayak concluded his speech by mentioning the last question discussed at the Bangalore Seminar which related to the problem of Citizen Participation. This problem, he said, was discussed in two parts: (1) in what manner the citizens should be associated more actively in the scheme of government or administration, in the formulation of policy; and (2) how the people could be encouraged to discharge certain duties on a voluntary basis and in what manner they should be induced to render their duty to the community.

The discussion which followed centred round the problems mentioned by Shri Nayak.

Prof. B. R. Sharma started the discussion by saying that the teachers in the universities also felt that elections, so far as cities were concerned, should be run on a non-party basis. At least there was one sphere in which all people whether they belonged to Jan Sangh, to the Congress or to the Communist Party could come together and that one sphere was the sphere of local self-government. He believed that so far as local self-government was concerned there were no problems of foreign policy or home policy or policies with regard to taxation. There they had certain common policies. Certain amenities had to be provided and thus it was very likely that a lot was common on which the Jan Sangh

and the Congress and others could come together and make the life of the people happy and prosperous. And, therefore, it was very necessary that the elections to the city councils should be on a non-party basis. Otherwise, there was a danger that partisanship might also percolate to the employees in the municipal corporation or in the municipality; and that would be an evil day, indeed, when the employees worked according to the dictates of the various pressure groups.

With regard to the relationship between the policy-makers and the executive officials, he continued, unfortunately, so far as the smaller cities were concerned, the policy-makers had a very active interest in the recruitment, promotion, demotion, etc. of the employees. The result was that the work was not done satisfactorily and the citizens of that small city or of that big city were the worst sufferers. It was very necessary, therefore, as it had been brought out in the paper by Shri S.K. Gupta, I.C.S., Chairman of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, that the work of the administration must be left to an executive officer in a small city, to a commissioner in a big corporation, and the policy-makers, *i.e.*, the members of the corporation or the members of the council should have a say in his removal by a simple majority. If the commissioner or the executive officer was trying to become too much of a party boss he should be removed immediately if he was not carrying out the policy of the party. But so far as the executive work was concerned this should entirely be left to him and he should be responsible for the proper collection of taxes and for the services that were to be provided to the people in the municipalities. One thing which he felt and the people who came to big cities like Delhi also felt was that there was a lack of integration.

The next point Prof. Sharma touched was the extent of independence given to the policy-makers of the smaller cities. In 1882, Lord Ripon wanted that the members of the municipalities and others should be given a free hand but unfortunately that 'free hand' had not yet come. Even the other day the Prime Minister was saying here that there should be

freedom given to the people to make mistakes but that freedom was not given. Either the Collector or the Commissioner of a Division was always going against the wishes of the municipalities and the result was that the people were not able to stand on their own legs. Many municipalities were removed from the list of the local bodies. They were considered unfit for carrying on their work, because very likely they were not efficient according to the likes of the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner. He believed that more freedom should be given to the municipalities, particularly smaller municipalities, so that they might formulate and implement their own policy and if they made mistakes, they would only learn by such mistakes.

Shri Tejbir Khanna observed that urban areas were creating new problems of new dimensions in every known way. The greatest problem that the urban areas were creating was the traffic problem. In the U.S.A., some of the cities had been growing in the past for a longer time at a more rapid pace. The urban areas had a tendency to grow so vast and so much out of control that right from Boston to Alexandria in the State of Virginia, it was going to turn into one city before the turn of the century. This city would be 645 miles long. The breadth of this city would vary from place to place. As the city started growing, it might be controlled by a good administration and the city government could hold together very well in all its aspects but when the metropolitan area started bursting into each other, even the boundaries were difficult to define. It was happening in Belgium. It was happening in Norway. And it was happening in India too.

Commenting upon the traffic problem of India, he said that in some of the urban areas like Bombay, Calcutta, and Delhi, the problem was already acute. And something would have to be done about it. While gains to the public from motor vehicles were immeasurable, losses due to traffic jams and accidents were already showing signs of outweighing them. About 35,000 motor vehicles, 2,00,000 bullock carts and one million cycles were being added on roads every year in India.

In the U.S.A. there were about 40,000 people dying on roads every year due to road accidents. In the U.K., it was 5,000 to 6,000. In India it was more than 4,000 though correct figures were not available. It appeared that they were the lowest in that respect but when looked at the accident rate, there were 70 deaths per 10,000 motor vehicles in India against 16 and 8 in the U.K. and the U.S.A. respectively. India was having only a glimpse of the shape of things to come. The traffic problem itself was not new but what was new was its growing magnitude and significance. The problem was growing fast but what was not growing fast was an awareness of the problem both on the part of the public and of the Government. Improvement of traffic conditions meant better living conditions and continued economic growth of cities which otherwise was not possible. The traffic problem affected everyone in the city. It was no more the individual's problem; it was the problem of the community and the city administration. Very often the problem extended beyond unrealistic political boundaries and was regional in scope.

With particular reference to Delhi, he remarked that anybody who had travelled on Delhi roads was very familiar with the conditions there. It seemed something strange, something out of "Alice in Wonderland", but not nearly half as funny. Road traffic was killing people: it had become a weapon of murder. The accident rate had been going high, much faster than it should, even when compared to the number of vehicles added. Now the rate was such that almost every other day there was one person dying in a road accident.

One of its main causes was that Delhi was also growing beyond control. In the past, it had grown very fast. There was no control and there had been some lack of town planning. Traffic functions in Delhi cut across the established duties of various concerned departments like the Central Public Works Department, Municipal Corporation, New Delhi Municipal Committee, Horticulture Department, Traffic Police, Roads Wing of the Union Transport Ministry, State Motor Transport Controller's Department and

several others. This divided responsibility created confusion and delay, and as a matter of fact, when the decisions were taken, they could hardly be implemented. When a new problem arose, an effort was often made to fit the governmental organisation by enlargement of staff and responsibility to make it possible to meet the immediate need. But in case of the traffic problem, any answer of this type would be extremely inadequate.

As the problem started swelling, study groups, experts and study commissions were called upon for aid, suggestions and efforts. In response, changes and innovations were brought about but the pattern of such changes was usually stop-gap, short-term and far from comprehensive in scope. Various study groups, studying different segments of the traffic problem, seeking to secure partial remedies, could not bring salvation even though they might do their job well. There were several aspects of the problem like road users, road vehicles, traffic laws, traffic police and many others. Taking the example of road users, he continued that they were the people who used the roads and by whom the problem was created. In the main, it was the people, the driver, the pedestrian, the cyclist, the animal-drawn vehicles driver, and other types of road users—officials and the citizens—each one having his own interest and viewpoint, which constituted the problem. Basically, and in long range view, much of the progress must come through changing and improving the people by influencing their habits. What was primarily needed was greater and more sensitive public consciousness of the significance of the ponderable and yet important part which traffic conditions played in the life of the citizens. This was the social aspect of the problem and the solution of it was not so simple, nor so obvious as one tended to think.

Concluding, he advocated the setting up of a new organisation to handle traffic problems in an integrated and well-planned manner. That organisation, that is, the traffic administration, should be adequately financed and made responsible for all traffic problems in Greater Delhi. The centralisation of responsibility in the hands of the persons

specially trained for the job and who made traffic and transport their career could bring about considerable improvement in the traffic conditions and prevent many future traffic problems.

Dr. R. Dwarkadas emphasised that in view of the correlation between areas and functions in the city administration, the question of a real and functional re-organisation was of great importance. As the population grew, there would be need for specialised authorities because the institutions tackling matters like transportation, housing, slum clearance, etc. would be felt rather inadequate to cope up with the problems of varying complexities. It was always possible to think of a technically feasible area, an area which could, for example, adequately meet the needs of transportation or of housing. This would be based on population but it was possible to arrive at some kind of assessment in regard to those factors and arrive at the technically feasible area. On the other hand, there are already demarcated areas. The difficulty with the compactness of an area was that there must be a straight jacket area within which the growing complexity of a problem would arise. In the U.K., there were a series of specialised authorities coming into existence. There was a boundary commission which went into the question of contentions that developed in the straight jacket contiguous areas. They had to do some fundamental thinking in regard to the need of the area and the fundamental functions.

Related to this was also the problem of town and country planning which did involve all aspects of the problem. As a matter of fact, the Bombay Municipal Corporation had done a good job in integrating and merging quite a number of municipalities and giving them the shape of Greater Bombay. They were also keenly interested in the development of satellite towns.

There was, he added, the need to think and work in terms of organisation as specialised authorities grew. Later, there might be need for development of regions and re-organisation of structures of State Governments.

Dr. Jha, dwelling upon the nature of city governments or local authorities, pointed out that they had to examine whether they were to be looked upon merely as administrative institutions to cater to certain needs of the community or something more. They have always been regarded as democratic institutions, whose primary importance lay in the fact that they were institutions for popular political education.

Local council could not be compared to the legislature. It was an administrative body. It was an executive body. It had powers of the same nature which were also vested in the commissioner; for example, the power of appointment. Some bigger appointments had to be made by the municipal corporation, by the Standing Committee and the smaller appointments by the commissioner. The power of appointment was one broad continuous power which had been divided in all these Municipal Acts amongst different authorities, some part of it was vested in a salaried executive officer more or less independent of the control of the elected element; some part of it in a group of the councillors exercising that power independent of the control of the body which elected them and some portion of the same broad power vested in the council itself. Similarly, in the case of contracts and many other things, the provisions of those acts suggested that the distribution of power had not been made on any principle which could justify the use of the terms like deliberative or executive or administrative. That was why some professor said that it was not a deliberative body in the true sense and that it was only an administrative body. The broad policies were laid down by a superior legislature. The job of the council was to formulate administrative policies; and administrative policies of lesser importance, perhaps, were to be formulated by the salaried officers and employees.

On the basis of his knowledge of the inside working of the British local authorities, he said, he had become convinced that even though there was no differentiation between the powers of the salaried officers, and the members of the council and of the committees, by mutual understanding,

they had developed a relationship in which certain administrative matters were taken and decided upon by the salaried officers such as the Engineer, the Architect, etc. This relationship which had developed there had been due to the fact that there was no legislative differentiation between the powers of either party.

To him, the existence of multiple independent agencies within the same broad framework was certainly bad for co-ordination purposes. The United States had suffered from it during the last century and local authorities there were very incompetent. Members of the municipal councils were corrupt and irresponsible. There was a cry for administrative efficiency. Separate independent boards were created and ultimately they realised that that was not the right thing. He added that the same undesirable tendency was growing in India. Right up to 1950, in Bombay, there was only one committee, the Standing Committee, with some independent powers and thereafter the number multiplied. In Delhi, they found some other differences were there. Officers, with greater powers vested in them, were there and this was done by legislation. Perhaps, the powers which were given to these officers were right. He thought it was right that they got these powers but if those powers were given to them by law and not by, say, standing rules of the corporation, they felt that they did not draw them from the corporation and that did stand in the way of development of harmonious relationship between the two wings. He felt that no such distinction should be made. The officers should have powers but let it be the municipal corporation or the council that delegates those powers under certain conditions to the officers. The members of the municipal corporation perhaps would know it in the course of time and they would also learn that it would be profitable for them to delegate certain powers to these officers and that would develop mutual trust between the two.

Now, if there was a decision, for instance, that unhealthy houses should be demolished and if the commissioner had to choose these houses at his discretion, he might leave out some or he might include some others and that would cause

resentment among the people. These officers were not accountable to the people for this resentment. Those were the municipal councillors who were elected, who were representatives of the people, and who would have to face the people. This system was not only wrong in principle, but it had also dangerous political consequences. It was not right that the people had been taking it for granted that they must have powers vested in them by law and not by understanding, not by mutual trust but by a superior body like the legislature of a State. That was something which would never help the members of the council to develop proper attitude towards officers and employees of the municipal corporation.

Further, disagreeing with the view that in local government there was no place for political parties, Dr. Jha went on to say that the same was advocated by Tory spokesmen when the Tories' strongholds were invaded by the Labour in Great Britain. He had read the speeches which were delivered by the Whigs and Tories at the time of the first election to municipalities in Great Britain in 1835. The controversies were much bitter in those days, the arguments used were much more bitter in those days; the arguments used were much more weighty, too. If local authorities were democratic institutions, one could not think of those institutions as democratic without political parties. If they were irresponsible and do not function properly, we had also to offer solutions to political parties to improve the state of affairs in the city government. Political parties had done a lot of good in local government. It was with the improvement in the morality of political parties that things had improved in the United States and it was with morality, again, that things had improved in Great Britain. All the development and eradication of slums in London, since the Labour Party came into power, was due to that. It had done a lot of good and then to say that there were no differences was not true. Political parties need not always be based on differences of fundamentals, e.g., whether they believed in the institution of private property or not. There could be differences of policies, in local governments, on

questions of economy and expenditure. These two had been the basis for the differences of various national political parties in different countries, as also in local governments. Even in respect of certain minor services, *e.g.*, whether water supply should be sold on cost rate or on less than cost rate, there could be a very good point of difference between two political parties. If they realised the need of political parties in national government and the state governments, I do not see, how logical they were when they asserted that there was no place for political parties in local government.

Political parties, he concluded, had done good things in every democratic country. It was very highly misleading to say that there was no future for local self-government as democratic institutions, if politics interfered therein. He felt that there was something wrong in that attitude.

Mrs. Usha Dar felt that the study of the financial position had meaning only when it was linked with the functions that the Government had to perform. As far as a city was concerned, the functions as well as the finances were, by and large, determined by the economic base of the town. Therefore, the whole problem might really be looked at from the point of view of synchronising the problems of income and functions. Secondly, there was a wider problem of adjusting the economics of a town. That, however, was a problem which had to be considered in the wider context of economic planning, but they might consider the problem of synchronising the income of the Government with the functions which the Government had to perform. Given the economic base of the town, the income of the town as such got determined by that base and that, in turn, determined the income of the city government. But the functions were not flexible or elastic because a majority of the functions had got to be performed in view of the socialist pattern of the society.

The Reports of the All India Local Finance Enquiry Committee and the Taxation Enquiry Commission had all talked of the inability of the local governments to exploit the resources which had been given to them; and they had also suggested delegating certain additional powers to them.

It must, therefore, be seen whether they have the capacity to utilise the powers which had been delegated to them already. The utilisation of these powers really required that one must study the incidence of taxation not at the isolated local government level but the per capita incidence of taxation by the local, State and national governments taken together. That would be a general indicator as to whether it was at all possible to augment the resources by greater taxation. The incidence might be studied in relation to different income groups and this might help also in fixing the rates between different economic or income levels. Again, since they were concerned with the net proceeds of taxation, she thought that one of the ways of augmenting the income was to direct our attention to the cost of collection of taxes. The figures for arrears of taxes were pretty high and something might be done to look into that matter.

Further, she considered the possibilities of introducing progression in local taxation by adopting the block rate principles.

Shri N.H. Athreya made four specific suggestions for improving city government through citizen participation.

The first one was to have a Brains Trust of local citizens who would objectively advise the Chief Executive Officer.

The second suggestion was to take to what was called 'complaints analysis'. Whenever a complaint came the officers took it, analysed it, and got at the basic cause and set things right. He did not know whether the senior men could spend some time on this. If they could devote even an hour in a week to systematic complaints analysis, he thought, it would be quite a contribution.

The third suggestion was that there should be public relations officers. Currently, they were officers all right, but they did not seem to be "public" in that they were not accessible. When somebody went to them, they said "Take an appointment". In other words, they said: "Go to my clerk". When it suited the public relations officer, you would get a letter giving an appointment. In the field

of public relations, a name did not deceive the public. The public meant business, and so should a P.R.O.

Fourthly, in order to educate the public on civic affairs, they could get the active help of the newspapers. Knowledge makes for understanding and co-operation.

Shri M.B. Matto felt that while speaking of improving the city government, there must be drawn a distinction between improving the administrative or organisational efficiency of the city government and improving the scope of activities of the city government.

About the role of political parties, he said that wherever there were elections, political parties were bound to exist. In a democratic set-up, it was impossible for an individual, howsoever important and powerful he might be, to contest the combined might of the political party. So, political parties, in spite of their wishes to the contrary, would remain whether in a permanent form or in a dormant form.

The second point was about the separation of deliberative and executive functions in the local body. What had been stated, he said, was that there was no particular distinction between the two. But suppose a party of 4 or 5 men wanted to build a house. They took a decision. That was the deliberative function. When the house was to be constructed, was the executive function. The body of men which performed the deliberative function need not necessarily be competent enough to perform the functions of architect, engineer or town-planner. There were very separate and distinctive functions of a local body, and the main contention in the sphere of city administration arose out of those two things—the merger of the two functions. The problem was a very simple one. One was executive and the other deliberative. City administration was a functional organisation. It had duties, and the most effective way to discharge them must be found out.

For the execution of policies, a large number of people who represented local will and talent, could solve the problem. Their basic need at the present moment was not only the separation of the deliberative and executive functions

of the local bodies but a very clear-cut demarcation line between the two, so that there was no conflict. The main conflicts in these bodies were caused by lack of confidence of the deliberative section in the executive. This was a wrong attitude. This was not consistent with their ways of thought. Executive and deliberative, both belonged to the community and both could take part in the development and there should be no mistrust.

About the financial resources of the local bodies, he said, they had given functions to local bodies without at the same time strengthening their finances. The local bodies were, throughout their history, been fighting for their very existence because of lack of resources. Service conditions of local employees as compared to those of the Central and State Government employees were very poor. This defective differentiation was not conducive to efficiency. A local body's employee always felt insecure. He felt there was no incentive. If he had to perform his duties properly, which every servant and every employee in a Welfare State should perform, he must be given some sort of incentive.

The functions of a local body, on the one hand, created restrictions on the activity of the individual, and, on the other hand, encroached upon the functions of the State Government. So, whatever a local body did today, it would not be possible for it to do except when the State Government delegated a certain function. This conflict would have to be resolved. They would have to decide to what extent the State Governments should delegate their functions to the city governments. It was very difficult to anticipate any rational delegation of power; every legislative institution wanted to control and take over all the functions.

Prof. M.V. Mathur observed that it was not desirable to have a non-party body in the municipal corporation or municipalities. Since there were elections in democracy, political parties did crop up. The persons who would be elected on a democratic basis were the persons who could feel the pulse of the people. They could put the people's desires or sentiments before the executive officers. In order to see that the things were done in a proper manner,

he was inclined to suggest that more and more use should be made of some sort of study groups, especially of retired but experienced persons. He said he knew three or four persons in his own city, who had retired from the I.A.S. They were still in very good health. They were willing to work, but where was the opportunity for them to work. The local bodies could surely utilise their services in making studies. When they presented those studies, it was possible for the representatives of the people to say, 'Yes, according to your study it may be all right, but we feel that it may not be feasible.' He, therefore, suggested that that instrument should be used. That would bridge the gulf between difficulties that were coming up on account of people who did not have experience or the knowledge to administer things and at the same time who had some sort of distrust, to start with, of the regular executives.

The other point which he mentioned was based on two small studies that had been made in his own University about the working of the municipalities of Ajmer and Jaipur during the past five years. They found that there was considerable amount of distrust and dissatisfaction among the employees against the system of recruitment of the municipal employees. They felt that it was not at all above board. There was so much of favouritism and other things. He felt it was very unfortunate and something ought to be done whereby the various municipalities around could be grouped and some sort of independent machinery could be framed whereby this recruitment and promotion could be made.

Dr. R.N. Mathur thought that there was no effective participation of the people in the affairs of a municipal corporation. There was no trust; on the contrary, there was complete mistrust between the people and the authorities there. That was a legacy of the past and now they found that the municipal machinery was not working in active co-operation with the people. The reason was not far to seek. There were no mohalla committees. They were not organised because the elections were contested on party lines. There was generally the belief that because a particular

locality did not support the party in majority, there was discrimination against that locality. He narrated his experience that the people of a particular locality of a town once approached a particular councillor and they brought a representation. At that time, they did not receive a patient hearing from him. They were told that at the time of election they did not actively support him. So, that led to a feeling of frustration in the mind of the people. And because those people were unable to present their case properly regarding heavy assessments, their case went by default. In his own case, in a particular house that had been assessed, he could find that it was four times the previous assessment. Those people who had no support, and who had no backing, suffered badly.

The people and the electorate were to be educated properly about their civic rights and duties and there must be co-operation between the authorities and the people and the spirit of aloofness which existed at the moment must be removed. That could only be done if people had some confidence inspired in them that they would be given the opportunity to participate in their own local affairs. A beginning should be made in that direction. Whatever complaints were lodged with the municipal authorities, replies should be sent to them quickly. Again, he had the experience that whenever a letter was received by the municipal authorities, after a month a printed card was sent stating the matter was receiving attention, but no action was taken. That could only be done if local committees were constituted in every mohalla and some spokesman of the committee got in touch with the municipal authorities. Some action must be taken to explain to the people concerned that there were certain difficulties, and would take some time, and that it could not be done immediately.

Shri N.V. Modak considered that the traffic problem was certainly very important and must be dealt with. He did not, however, agree that at that stage it was necessary to have a separate organisation for that purpose. There were other ways and means by which they in Bombay had tried to solve that problem. For instance, they had the Traffic

Advisory Committee presided over by the Commissioner of Police. Representatives of the municipality and of other institutions were there. They met every month or twice a month and decided what things were required. If roads were required to be widened, the municipality had powers to prescribe set back lines and to acquire the set backs. As regards financial arrangements also, they have an arrangement in Bombay whereby the cost of the land was met by the municipality, the cost of the traffic signals was paid by the police and in that way they had been able to do a lot of good work as far as traffic regulation was concerned. He did not, therefore, think that at that stage in city government a separate organisation was necessary for the purpose of controlling traffic and removing traffic congestion.

As regards his financial powers, the commissioner could not do anything much. If he tried to give a contract, he had to call for tenders. He had also to place them before the Standing Committee and without the approval of the Standing Committee he might not be able to do anything. Somebody, he said, had pointed out that the Municipal Commissioner had power of appointing people to higher posts and he showed partiality. He had no such powers to make higher appointments. Higher appointments were made by the Public Service Commission.

Similarly, somebody complained that the slums were cleared at the discretion of the commissioner. Under the Act, he had to give reasons why a particular building was to be pulled down and he had to ask for objections, if any, from the persons concerned. He had to put it up before the Committee and then he exercised power to demolish the building. He did not think that the commissioner had unfettered powers to do the things, nor that such powers that the commissioner had should be curtailed in any way. If that was done there would be inefficiency in the administration.

For small municipalities, it was desirable to create a sort of municipal service under the State Government. There was a similar service in Madras State, and engineers

from different municipalities were transferred whenever vacancies occurred there.

As regards the public relationship or citizenship, there should be a study group in each and every ward. A councillor should form a study group of people living in the locality and consider the problems.

Dr. H. K. Paranjape felt that improvement in city administration would depend on creating a federal type of hierarchic organisation for all types of functions. It was especially desirable to have some authority which should co-ordinate the programmes and policies of different municipalities and different district boards. Many problems arose that the city government by itself could not tackle; the were too closely connected with the region in which the city was situated. City government could improve only if a limit was placed on the expansion of the city. At the moment, there did not seem to be much power with the municipal corporation to prevent undue growth of the city. The city government had no say in the matter. The Central or State Government by permitting concentration of business or industry in a city could create a problem which a local body had to cope with. It was, therefore, necessary that before any major development was permitted in any particular area, the local body should be consulted. Moreover, it should be accepted as a general rule that no town or city should be permitted to grow beyond a certain size. That alone would keep the task of city improvement within manageable limits. They were growing rapidly and it was high time to decide the matter before the problems like slums, traffic, etc. were faced in a very large number of cities as a result of the expected rapid urbanisation.

Dr. P. D. Gupta observed that nobody should be able to dodge the voters successfully unless he had shown exemplary zeal in social service, unless he had taken part in some form of public activity. The municipal administration suffered, in the main, because of the type of municipal councillors that sought election and got elected. It was an unfortunate thing, but it was a thing of which they might

well take note. It had been said that in elections to municipal councils political parties should not function. It was perhaps not practicable to eliminate the functioning of political parties at the municipal level. But he suggested that political parties, if they were to function on the municipal level, should function in a different way. For instance, every political party that sought to woo the voters should have a programme of city improvement and municipal service and voters should be free to choose between the different political parties in accordance with their policies and programmes. It was possible that many of the items would be common to the various parties that wooed the voters and, if so, after elections had been held, there was no reason why these political parties should not function harmoniously at least in respect of those items on which they agreed.

With regard to another point that was made in respect of State control of municipalities, he did not think that he was saying something which would be very popular but he did feel that the way in which most of the municipal bodies have made use of the autonomy that they possessed did not encourage one in the belief that greater autonomy, if it was given to them, would be in the public benefit. He wished greater control of the State or of the Central Government over municipal corporations and municipal bodies and he suggested a convention to be observed that these municipal bodies which misused their powers should be superseded by other municipal bodies.

The conference concluded after a vote of thanks by *Prof. V.K.N. Menon*, Director of the Institute.



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