

# Men for the Second Plan

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*"Is it possible to prepare a Plan which would enable unemployment being liquidated in 10 years and which would also provide for a satisfactory increase in national income at the same time"?*

*This was the problem set for the Draft Plan Frame. But in the Second Five Year Plan, the target of 10 to 12 million jobs has been whittled down to a mere 8 million. If it is difficult to provide jobs for men who have none, it is even more difficult to get the right men for the jobs that are there.*

AT a time when Government powers to regulate the economic life of the country are being increased enormously, the need for Initiative, quick decisions and effective leadership by public administrators becomes imperative. It is doubtful whether a majority of civil servants accustomed to work according to the rigid rules and red tapism of Government office manuals can shake off their habits and make decisions to meet rapidly changing economic situations. The Organisation and Methods section can recommend measures for rapid disposal of files but it can do little to force the bureaucrats to show initiative and take decisions. On the contrary such mechanical controls on administrative efficiency encourage the technique of passing the buck on a large scale.

Since expenditure on training is considered a waste, private enterprise has with few exceptions, shown little interest in apprentice training programmes. Government should take the initiative and arrange such training schemes at private workshops with centralised theoretical training. The adaptation of secondary schools as sources of skilled labour also deserves active attention.

## Formidable Task

The problem of administration, that is, provision of leadership, guidance and control, is formidable not only in terms of magnitude but; also because the overwhelming proportion of the 8 million men whom the Plan seeks to employ will be educationally and culturally ill-equipped for the tasks to be assigned to them. The Administration which could not plan, organise and assemble resources to spend Rs 2400 crores in the First Plan will be required to gear up and spend Rs 4800 crores in the next five years. At the same time the emphasis on such varied tasks as basic industries and rejuvenation of cottage industries makes the administrative problem more complex and varied than in the past.

According to the Planning Com-

mission the administrative tasks of the Plan involve (1) ensuring efficiency and integrity in administration. (2) building up administrative and technical cadres, (3) getting work done economically and efficiently, (4) training on large scale for meeting the requirements of industry, health, education etc. programmes and (5) organising rural economy agriculture, co-operatives, cottage industries on a more efficient basis. The Commission has described in the Plan the action taken by Government to end corruption, to improve administrative efficiency through the Organisation and Methods Division, to build up the strength of the IAS through special recruitment and to institute an industrial cadre. It has also described the proposals for training engineers and skilled labour and has emphasised the need for securing public co-operation in the successful implementation of the Plan.

The Commission has taken a narrow view of the administrative problem by confining attention only to the public sector. Besides, its discussion of the measures for meeting these tasks is vague and superficial dealing only with the decisions of Government on various aspects of public administration. There is no reference to the problem of management in the private sector at all although the Plan seeks to achieve an integrated economic and social development of the whole country. This omission is particularly surprising in view of the critical references to poor management of private enterprises in the recent Parliamentary debates on the Companies and Insurance Nationalisation Acts.

The execution of the Second Plan will require men suitable for four principal categories of tasks: (1) managerial, (2) technical and supervisory, (3) skilled labour and (4) unskilled labour. To train and adopt the 8 million men for these purposes is a formidable task. Unskilled labour may not require training, but it will certainly require cultural adjustment to submit to rigorous disciplined work in facto-

ries and other organized activities like construction. The high rates of absenteeism in organised industries which both India and the Soviet Union experienced in the Thirties indicate that unemployment and poverty do not automatically ensure this adjustment.

Low standard of education and lack of training facilities will make the supply of administrative and technical personnel a more difficult task. Compulsory universal primary education and expansion of secondary education with multi-purpose schools and other modifications to meet the future needs of the country must remain distant goals as resources are limited. The large body of educated unemployed does not make the problem of training managerial, supervisory and skilled personnel much easier as concepts of social status make for a preference for white collar jobs. The tragedy of it is that many of them are, by education or by aptitudes, entirely unsuitable for managerial and other administrative functions.

## The Failure of Education

Education is for imparting information and developing creative ability, for training in problem-solution or application of principles to concrete situations and for transmitting culture or attitudes for responsible citizenship, appreciation of fine arts, etc. It is widely accepted that education in India fails to perform any function other than imparting information. The mode of examinations and the publication of guides on all subjects have made even book learning easy and less brain-taxing for students. Is it any wonder that India has a relatively poor record in inventions, innovations and original works in science and arts or that entrepreneurs and administrators in the public and private sectors prefer to tread the beaten path rather than show initiative, resourcefulness and adventurous spirit?

The present form of education served the purpose of the foreign rulers of India when the primary

requirement was to obtain a large number of clerical and subordinate administrative staff. The few able administrators required at the top levels could be obtained easily by selecting a few highly intelligent young men and training them through experience at various jobs. This method of recruiting public administrators is grossly inadequate when the activities of Government increase at a very rapid rate or when Government undertakes industrial and other economic activities which entail some special knowledge. Attempts are being made at present to mitigate the shortage of public administrators by special recruitment to the Indian Administrative Service and instituting an industrial cadre. These are only short term measures which do not increase the size of the pool of administrators but only rob the private enterprises of their experienced men for the benefit of the public sector.

The Scientific Management movement has proved that managers are made not born. To meet the enormous needs for managers it is not enough to start diploma courses in Business Management, at four universities and an Administrative

Staff College in Hyderabad. For the development of a scientific approach to management by the existing administrators there should be a regular systematic programme of conferences on the subject in all important towns where there are a sufficient number of public and business administrators. Again occasional visits of a Galbraith or Urwick are not enough, nor a few conferences at the Hyderabad Staff College once in a life time. To meet the long term needs of the country, it is evident that the system of education at the high school and university level will have to change. More attention should be paid to the development of students' creative ability and attitudes than to imparting Information.

#### The Role of Universities

It is a pity that our universities pay so little attention to the performance of their role in the success of the Five Year Plans. At the instance of the All-India Technical Education Council, the universities in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras started courses in Business Management. But there are yet no proposals to convert the existing commercial colleges into institutions which can supply the future

industrial managers on a large scale. Commercial education in India at present with its emphasis on theory and lack of contact with the practical needs of the industry is insufficient for the purpose.

The universities can also show initiative in meeting the shortage of engineers and other technical personnel, which is likely to be as acute in the next five years as the shortage of steel and cement. To meet this shortage the universities can expedite teaching in the engineering institutions by having 3 terms of 16 weeks a year instead of only 2 terms. This will only reduce vacation periods and help students to finish the course, in 2 instead of 3 years. Such techniques of increasing output of engineers were successfully used in the USA during World War II. Other steps such as permitting a student who fails in one subject to proceed further and to repeat only the subject in which he failed, may also be tried.

One thing is clear. The programme of rapid industrialisation will succeed only if long term measures are taken to adapt our human resources to the needs of an industrial society.

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