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THE AMERICAN PUBLIC EXECUTIVE

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THERE are a number of points that I might make for myself standing in this great city of India and in this premier Institute. First of them is that I am not Dr. Paul Appleby. I have fortunately his job only but not his wisdom. I have inherited his desk, but not his knowledge of India.

Woodrow Wilson, when he was Governor of the State of New Jersey was awakened in the middle of the night one night by a politician of his acquaintance for the purpose of informing him that a member of the Governor's Cabinet had died of a heart attack a few moments before; Wilson was not very clear as to what he could do about it and why this sad news could not wait till 7 or 8 a.m. next morning. He found himself saying, "Well, Mr. so and so will be a hard man to replace". The politician was quick to answer. "Well, Sir", he said, "I rather thought I might replace him". Governor Wilson was equally quick with his retort. "Well", he said, "that's all right for me, if it is all right with the undertaker".

Here, I am afraid, I am not a good replacement for Paul Appleby. I do not exactly know what I am doing, discussing the leadership of executives in the presence of so much executive leadership. This *Institute* itself is an extraordinary evidence of the executive leadership of Shri Bapat and Prof. Menon and many others, in and out of the Government, extraordinary evidence of

the interest in this subject of the past, present and prospective members of the Indian public service.

Perhaps the most useful thing that I could do this evening would be to discuss a point of view, a way of looking at the American Public Executive; to try to describe some of the conditions of the jungle, the American bureaucratic jungle, in which he lives and dies; and to raise the question whether any of this experience is relevant to the development of Indian public administration.

II

The political weather in our bureaucratic jungle is set by the condition of the society it represents, and particularly, by two aspects of that society: by the size of our country and the open character of our society. You are familiar with some of the indices of our size and I will not dwell on it. It may seem curious to say, standing here in the capital of a nation internationally famous for its large population, that the United States is actually growing faster than India. Over the last decade our population has increased 16 per cent; we have more old people but also more young people and more Westerners. In the next 20 years, it is estimated that our population will rise by another 50 or 60 millions. Nearly all of this increase will take place in the cities; and this extraordinary growth of population, starting as populations generally do with the children, will create some massive problems even for as relatively well-off a society as ours. What Barbara Ward has called the "thundering herd of pattering feet" is going to turn up in our schools during the next few years, and in our colleges not long thereafter, and in public and private employment after that.

Our productivity increase, another index of size, is also dramatic and is also known to you. It seems curious to reflect that a hundred years ago two-thirds of our motive power was provided by animals and human beings; nowadays, something less than one per cent is provided by anything other than machines. It seems curious to reflect that, in its whole history, mankind has managed to concentrate energy by a factor of ten, yet in the last decade or two, with the development of atomic energy it suddenly has managed to concentrate energy by a factor running into the millions. It seems

curious to reflect that after the long history of starvation on several continents, there can now be a country like ours in which there are hardly any serious food shortages. Indeed, a recent study reports that one quarter of the American population is sufficiently overweight to provide a real health problem – and I know it well because I am part of that quarter.

It is curious to reflect that there is a society, the United States, in which you can get our entire population, inflated though it is in numbers and in per capita avoirdupois, into *the front seats* of the automobiles we now own. We would not of course be able to drive because we would not be able to get through the traffic, and even if we got through, we would not be able to park; but nevertheless, we could all get into the front seats. Here is a society in which, starting not long ago with less than five per cent of the college-age population in colleges; and the estimate now is that within the next couple of decades, more than 50 per cent of the population in the 18 to 22 age-range will be attending college.

The Twentieth Century Fund, in its recent study of America's needs and resources, put it this way: "Our vast productive plant is a flexible man-made resource which, barring atomic devastation will prove equal to any imaginable need." That is quite a claim. But so far the claim is well documented by the facts.

Concurrent with this tremendous growth is, of course, the necessary and inevitable growth of Government. I do not know how many of you have had the opportunity to read the acceptance speeches made by President Eisenhower and Vice-President Nixon, the electoral candidates in 1956 of the Republican Party. On that occasion, at the moment of accepting the nomination for high office of the more "conservative" of our political parties, both officials made a full and an unequivocal commitment to full employment, the kind of commitment that used to be called "socialist". Moreover, the Republican Party, following by some years the Democratic Party's lead, made a vigorous commitment to rising welfare standards at home, and a commitment to international leadership. The last of these commitments reflects not our capacity for leadership, but the responsibility unavoidably thrust on a nation which produces more than 40 per cent of the world's gross product.

As a consequence of these several commitments, the United

States Government finds itself intervening in the United States economy on a massive scale – and on a time-schedule so sudden that the depth and character of this intervention is not yet understood in the rest of the world. Indeed, it is not very well understood at home.

The Government has intervened to lay the basis for production with a large programme of public power, with a 13 million dollar programme of public highways has approved. It has intervened to conserve resources and protect people through the development of river-valley projects with which you are very much familiar here. It has intervened to improve living standards: At the beginning of the New Deal, 10 per cent of our farmers had electricity in their homes; by the end of the War, 90 per cent of our farmers were working and living with electricity.

Government has intervened to prop up prices – especially farm prices, because the farmers appear to be a little more effective in making their desires known to the national and state legislatures than are the people who are interested in higher prices in other sectors of the economy. The Government has intervened to establish a general floor on welfare through the social security programme, through a programme of unemployment compensation and also through a programme of special welfare benefits for veterans. In our society, by the way veterans will soon constitute 50% of the nation's family units – a development which will raise in an acute form the question as to whether there should be a special welfare programme for veterans that is not applicable across the board to the whole population. Government has intervened to defend the nation, and spends one-half to two-thirds of the so-called "peacetime" national budget for defense purposes. Government has intervened, if a trifle reluctantly, to provide education for all, and it has intervened to promote the effective use of leisure. Our national parks are visited each year by a number of visitors which exceeds our total population.

And finally, our Government has intervened in the economy to promote more Government. Under the guise of "urban renewal", for example, it is financing studies of the newly inflated condition of our metropolitan cities, in order to begin the process of inventing a new level of Government, the metropolitan government – the

first structural renovation that we have needed since the adoption of the United States' Constitution. Government's use of resources for these purposes now add up to something like 1/5th to 1/4th of our Gross National Product, and is spent through the staggering total of 117,000 different governmental units. Americans are much governed; whether adequately governed is another question.

This is, very briefly, the story of the *size* of the American society, over which our Government has to rule. But our society has another characteristic too which is even more directly relevant to the nature of Government. It is an *open* society, which requires the Government to act as a Government of free men, a Government *by* the people.

These are old words, but in the second half of the twentieth century their content is sufficiently new to be widely misunderstood. For some of the old ways of looking at American Government are quite obsolete today.

For example, we all have read many times that in the United States, Government is divided into three parts. A student cannot get through the third year of high school without learning this particular point a doctrine. I am not at all sure that in *the most meaningful sense* it is true any more. I am not at all sure "the separation of powers", the phrase which has been so much identified with the study of American Government, should not now be retranslated as "the diffusion of power". It so happens I myself had an early lesson on this subject.

It happened when I was an "intern" – that is, an uncompensated learner – in the American Government before the Second World War. My internship was rather special, it was not in the Executive Branch of Government; it was in the Washington office of Senator "Young Bob" LaFollette of Wisconsin. I found myself on one occasion representing the Senator at a claims hearing before the Veterans Administration. I did not have very much to do; I was just supposed to stand there to look large and representative, to dramatize by my presence the fact that the Senator was interested and that if the Claims Board did not give this veteran from Wisconsin what he wanted, undoubtedly the Veterans Administrator would hear from the Capitol. So I stood there, with plenty of time to think, and I asked myself, "Where is this separation of powers that I hear

so much about? Here I am, a legislative bureaucrat, trying to intervene in the efforts of an executive bureaucracy to perform a judicial function”.

The more you look at the actual process of Government in Washington, the more you see that every subject is participated in by all the three Branches in one way or another. Every part of the Government has been involved in the school de-segregation issue – though nobody has quite settled it yet. I spent thirteen years in the American Government (with a couple of years off to work in an international agency), and I cannot recall any piece of legislation under which I operated which was written by Congress or Congressional staff; each law was written in the Executive Branch of the Government. By the same token, the legislation – the Congress – participates with appalling vigour in the executive processes of the Government. Senator McCarthy, though he was rather dramatic and interesting for other reasons as well, provided us the clearest recent example of trampling on the prerogatives of the executive with (at first) the executive’s full consent. In many other ways the Congress applies pressure on individual matters of administration. Civil service reform has made too much progress in the 75 years since the passage of the first civil service legislation to make it possible for Congress to intervene effectively in most personnel matters. In many agencies, in fact, an appointment which has political push behind it is in danger of dying of neglect. But on matters of policy and on matters of administration, on the issues about what the personal, one hired, are going to do, and how much money they will have with which to do it, the power of Congress, particularly the investigating power of Congress, has been skillfully and importantly used to participate in the executive process of Government. I am not passing judgment on this trend; I am just stating what is a fact. Power is not so much divided as diffused.

Another canard we hear about American Government is that we have a two-party system. It is not clear to me that we have a two-party system. For the limited purpose of electing people to office, there are indeed two party labels, labels which mean different things in different parts of the country. But for the purpose of deciding issues of public policy, we do not have a two-party system; we have a coalition government that is almost as chaotic as that of

contemporary France. We have just as many splinter parties in the Congress as the French Assembly has. The primary advantage of our system is that when you reach an impasse in the Congress, it does not prevent you from having a Cabinet.

When, as the member of the Executive Branch of the Government, I found myself responsible for Congressional relations on a particular programme – in my case the economic side of the Mutual Security Programme, I found that my job was to help build a coalition within the Congress. And I found that my little lists of Senators and Congressmen, as to who was for our programme and who was against it, who might be influenced one way or the other and by what considerations, were entirely different from other coalitions that were being built by my colleagues in other departments of the Government. All of them were promoting something called “the President’s programme,” at that time the programme of President Truman. But each of them was helping build a different coalition – there was a Health coalition, an Education coalition, a Defence coalition, a Mutual Security coalition. There were, at that time, at least 17 or 18 different major coalitions in the Congress; all of which were being used to promote something called the President’s Programmes or the Executive Budget.

So, we have Coalition Government. You will find it so if you go through one of our Congresses, select all of the major issues that come up at one session and see whether any of those issues could have been passed with the unaided vote of either Republicans or Democrats present and voting. (Perhaps this would be a good research project for a student at your Institute’s School of Public Administration when it gets started). I do not think in the last Congress you will find any major issues on which President Eisenhower was supported by the unaided vote of the Republicans that voted with him; each time the question was *which* Democrats and *which* Republicans would support the President, on what issue and with what sectional interest involved. He always had plenty of Republicans against him and plenty of Democrats for him.

III

Does this discussion of American politics seem a digression

from my topic of "executive leadership"? It is, in fact, directly germane to the main point. In our system, the American public executive cannot concentrate only (or at top levels, even primarily) on internal administration; he must equally concern himself with the building of consent for the programme he is administering. To put it another way, he must be interested in "politics", as well as in "administration". I am not referring here to party politics. The parties are not important for the purpose of deciding *what* is going to be done; they are only important for deciding as to *who* is going to do it. The process of deciding what is going to be done is much more complex and as I have just indicated it has very little to do with the party labels of individual Congressmen, Senators and Presidents. In international relations we speak of "open covenants openly arrived at". In our kind of Government, you can describe the process of decision-making as "close decisions openly arrived at".

This confusion of parties and of the branches of Government is closely related to two other kinds of confusion, both of which affect conditions under which the American public executive has to work. There is, to begin with, a confusion in the levels of Government. Most important domestic subjects are handled not at one but at all levels of Government. It is no longer true to say that if you study local government, you will primarily be studying problems like public order and social welfare, problems that touch the life of the people in the local community. The problems that touch the life of the people are now the direct concern of Government at all levels, local, state and national. A housing programme may be largely, in theory, in the hands of a housing authority in a local municipality, but it must follow on standards that are set for it by the Federal Government through a State Housing Department, as a condition attached to the Federal and State funds the housing authority is using. The health welfare programme is handled partly by a local government but partly also by local offices of the State Departments concerned and of Federal agencies such as the Social Security System, the Veterans Administration and the U.S. Public Health Service. In Syracuse, New York, there are 49 different Federal agencies of Government with enough business to handle in the Syracuse area to justify a special office there; and there are some 60 State agencies with an impact on the citizens of

the city. For any individual citizen, this maze is getting considerably more complicated than any of the famous mazes of history, like Hampton Maze.

So, you find that American public executive not only has a consent-building function *vis-à-vis* the legislature. He also has a function of consent-building, of politics, as between his agency and other public agencies. If he is a Federal official, that means he may have problems of "external relations" with other Federal agencies, state agencies, local agencies, school districts, soil conservation districts and any number of other administrative units of local government.

Let us take two illustrations of this which are worth mentioning. One is the plight of the city planner. Now it used to be that the city planner had a certain amount of control over his own destiny and the destiny of the city in which he was employed. He could draw plan of how his city ought to look; then the power of local political authorities, if they agreed with the plan, could be applied to put it into effect through zoning regulations and other uses of public authority. It didn't always work this way, but the point is that local authority was substantially sufficient to carry out the plan if those who wielded the authority wanted to use it.

But nowadays, most of the things that happen to a place like Syracuse are not decided anywhere near Syracuse. Some are crucial private decisions, determinations of the supply of automobiles that are made in Detroit, industrial location decisions which are made by business executives in the skyscrapers of New York. There are public decisions, decisions about the location of highways, about building standards, about the cost of money and many, many other things which are all made in Washington and Albany and other places far removed from the Mayor's office in Syracuse. Indeed it now turns out that the city planner may or may not have a background in physical design or architecture, but he absolutely must have the understanding of governmental process necessary to know who is deciding what within this maze of federal and local bureaucracies, the ability to predict what outside authorities are going to do what to his precious community, and an unusual skill in lobbying for his own city with the public agencies of the State and Federal Governments. These functions are certainly a far cry from

what used to be called "planning".

Consider, again, the plight of the United States Ambassador today. It used to be that the ambassador's function was to represent his country and supervise a small staff of reporters and negotiators who aided him in this limited task. But in 1957, in a place like the Island of Taiwan, the American Ambassador finds himself more or less responsible for the activities of 10,000 Americans there. Even here in India, he finds himself worrying about the activities of several hundreds of families who are there not only for the traditional diplomatic reasons, but to administer a large programme of technical and economic aid and to manage a sizeable information programme. Thus in many parts of the world, the job of being an ambassador has become a major executive post. It is no longer so clear as it used to be that Foreign Service training, training in diplomacy, is the best training for the performance by the ambassador of his primary executive functions. These are only two of many possible examples of the same fact: that American public executives, the top Americans in many kinds of Government posts, face a rapidly growing range of activities over which they have to spread their necessarily limited skill and understanding.

Beyond the diffusion of power among the traditionally "separate" branches of our government, and the confusion among the several levels of government in the United States, there is also another kind of confusion – that between "public" and "private" functions. We have seen the extraordinary depth of Government intervention in the American economy. I won't go so far as to say that the U.S.A. is the most socialistic country in the world, although if you were to define socialism as egalitarianism plus vigorous Government commitment to full employment and prosperity, I am not at all sure whether the phrase would not come surprisingly close to the mark. In any event, the functions of Government must grow rapidly; yet it is a fundamental tenet of American politics that such growth should be restrained from growing further. It is this chronic dilemma which over the last decade especially has tended to blur the line between what is called public and what is called private.

It works this way: Our individual functions of Government continue to grow. The Government has to have a foreign aid

programme, the Government has to have a housing programme, the Government has to have an atomic energy programme. But each increase in function is confronted with our rooted American prejudice against having the Government "get into business". To resolve this dilemma, we try to fool ourselves by allocating public functions to private organizations, usually by the use of the Government's contracting power. And so one of the largest divisions of the General Electric Company, an institution famous around the work as an example of successful private enterprise, is, in fact, a socialized industry – an Atomic Energy Division made possible largely by contracts, guarantees and indemnities which represent various forms of public subsidy to private enterprise. In somewhat the same way, and for similar reasons, we find every university heavily dependent these days on Government-financed research projects, especially in engineering and scientific fields but to some extent in the social-science field as well. We now find that in the housing programme, although houses are actually built by individual private contractors, the crucial margin of financial risk is largely absorbed by the Government. We find, with the defense programme running at something like one-twelfth of our Gross National Product, whole industries have grown up which are utterly dependent on bureaucratic decisions about the financing of war contracts – the aircraft industry and the units that produce missiles are notable examples. In the foreign aid programme an increasing number of private contractors are working for the Federal Government overseas, while maintaining their standing in the popular mind as "private enterprise". As a private citizen I happen to be a member of the Board of Directors of one such enterprise, a company specializing in international economic development which (like some of its gigantic brothers and sisters in the airframe and electronics fields) does 100% of its business with a single Government agency.

The list could be indefinitely extended. Banking institutions, once the very heartland of the private enterprise system, now do an extraordinary proportion of their business in the form of Government paper, and slavishly follow the government's lead on the fixing of rates of interest. Most of the national taxes now collected in the United States are, in fact, collected not by the Treasury's Internal Revenue Service but by private industry and

other non-government institutions, through withholding schemes and point-of-sale collection devices. In many, many different ways the Government is going into "partnership" with private business, a liaison in which the Government, not the business, is the enterprising, risk-taking partner. The moral is that the American public executive needs to have a much deeper understanding of how this curiously "mixed" economy of ours really works, than used to be necessary in the days when the ruling doctrine was "that government is best which governs least".

The difficulty of deciding where to draw the line between "public" and "private" is compounded by the presence, within the executive bureaucracy, of persons and agencies frankly representative of outside private interests. Within the Federal Government, many employees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are quite openly and naturally regarded by all concerned including themselves, as a kind of farmers', defense league inside the executive branch of government. The Federal Power Commission, which regulates the power business both public and private, is not regarded as a neutral public-service umpire, but as a citadel to be won either by the public-power advocates or the private-power advocates. Similarly the National Labour Relations Board is regarded as a citadel to be won by labour or management; during the 1930's it was captured by the Congress of Industrial Organizations; now it has been captured by people with more of a management tinge to their thinking. More and more we have thus "institutionalized the inside track". By so doing we have confronted our public executives not only with the need for a deep understanding of how the system works, but also with an important obligation. With a legislature composed primarily of representatives of sectional interests and with an executive branch that is composed increasingly of agencies which have what you might almost call incestuous relationships with outside organizations, the concept of public interest tends to get blurred; in American slang, the public interest gets lost in the shuffle.

It therefore becomes more and more important (1) that the ranking public executive – the President, the Governor, the Mayors and chief executives – be an active leader, because they are the men hired by the people as a whole to take into account the situation

as a whole; and (2) that the chief executive has at his command an adequate "generalist" corps of professional administrators, extending far down into the bureaucracy, whose primary dedication is to the public interest and not to sectional or economic or other partial interests.

I do not wish to imply that it is necessarily wrong for private interests to be, in effect, represented inside the government. In an "open" society, where nobody's word is the final law and all decisions are ultimately appealable to a majority of those voting in an election, it is probably inevitable that each group of citizens should undertake to make sure that its vital interests are protected by being trampled by other groups of citizens with other vital interests. Since the major questions affecting each citizen are ultimately adjudicated by governmental action of one sort or another, it is natural that the government decision-making process should become a free-and-easy battleground among those groups who feel their vital interests are at stake in any particular matter of public policy. The American System has amply demonstrated its viability by making possible a fabulous economic growth while maintaining a fabulous degree of personal freedom for the individual. What concerns us here is the question: "What makes it work"? And what I am suggesting is that the crucial element, the balance-wheel in the system if you will, is the personal character, the administrative understanding, and the professional skill of our public executives. The defence of the public interest, the task of making sure that no one private interest gains too much at the expense of the vital interests of other private groups or individuals, is entrusted especially to the top political executive and to the professional administrators on his staff. What makes them *professional* is precisely their live sense of the public interest and their complete independence of any outside interests for tenure in their job.

Perhaps it is misleading for me to speak so often of a "decision-making process". There is a sense in which a man in an important executive post never really makes a decision; what he does is to mediate a decision, finding a workable "next step" that serves the public interest as he sees it, strikes most of the interests involved as fair and reasonable, and does not so outrage any powerful

interest that it can successfully appeal the "decision" to higher authority – whether that authority is an elective administrator or the electorate itself.

I was once responsible for supervising the work of a man hired to be a Divisional Director in Economic Cooperation Administration the agency that managed the Marshall Plan aid to Europe and started technical assistance and economic aid programmes in a number of Asian countries. This man, a Californian, had been used to running a one-man show for 25 years, and he took the title of his new job seriously. He was Director, and he proceeded to direct everybody concerned with economic aid to the countries for which he was responsible. He soon found that most of the tools with which he was supposed to work were not in fact under his control; instead, they were scattered around under the management of commodity directors, directors of contract negotiation, controllers, lawyers, personnel directors, budget directors, and many others who had their own concept of their own responsibilities and certainly didn't regard themselves as subordinates of our new division director. After two or three months, the man came to me in my office and I knew that he would survive the test of survival in the executive branch of the Government. He said "I did not first really understand about my being Director of this Division. I thought that I was to direct the programme. Now I think I understand it better. I am not supposed to make any decisions at all. On the other hand, I am supposed to make sure that the decision gets made. I am really a broker. Is that it?" "Yes", I replied, "that is precisely it". In the Federal establishment, the President, and the other chief executives at other levels of government, is the chief "broker". He needs enough professional "brokers" working for him, dedicated to the public interest, to make sure the whole machine operates "for the greatest good of the greatest number".

IV

To fulfill the obligation thus placed upon him, the American Public Executive means that he has to have certain important qualities. He must, of course, be imbued with public interest. He has to be at ease with this growing complexity. He will be wise to

ask himself E.B. White's question with which we confront students in Public Administration on their very first day at Syracuse: "Have you considered how complicated things can get, what with one thing always leading to another"? Just think about that question for a moment. I would be prepared to say that if one lesson from our experience is transferable to India, it is this: unless a person is really in love with complexity, he will not be a first-rate practitioner of public administration.

The American public executive must also be a leader of men – with what Paul Appleby calls "sense of action". He has to know that it is always "his turn" to act. This is not easy for a professional public administrator to learn in a course of study in Public Administration; from the point of view of the central administration – the man who is using the personnel tool, the budget tool, the O & M tool, the administrative-law tool and the public relations tool to carry out a particular programme – these so-called "how to do it" courses sometimes look like "how not to do it" courses. It is the professional administrator's job to make sure that these potentially negative controls in administration are turned into positive supports for a programme. This is his main charge.

Next, the American public executive must be bright enough to do his own thinking. This may seem obvious. But many people who come into U.S. Government from other levels of activity harbour the illusion that they can delegate the planning and thinking-ahead function. Yet looking-ahead is one function which the top executive in the public service will delegate at his peril. In a private corporation it may work well enough to have a Vice President for research and development who does all the thinking, but in the Government this will not do.

Finally, the American public executive has to be his own public relations man. When a Senate Committee wants to know what your department is doing, it does not want your deputy with a mimeographed statement. It does not even want you with a mimeographed statement. The Senators will be glad to take that statement and put it on the record, but then they will say: "And now what we really want to know is *this*". In that atmosphere of a congressional committee, a department head or a Bureau Chief or a Division Chief – whether he is a civil servant or a political appointee,

it makes no difference – has to be able to think on his feet. He has to handle his own relationships with the people, inside the Government and outside, on whose consent the programme he is administering depends. He cannot delegate this task. He must be his own public-relations man.

When Charles Wilson was originally appointed Secretary of Defence, you may remember that there was an argument about whether he would be forced to sell his General Motors stock in order to avoid a conflict of interests. In the course of this heated controversy on the subject there was a two-day hearing of the Senate Committee involved. After hours of gruelling testimony, the President of the largest private corporation in the world revealed how much he had learned about public relations at the age of sixty-two. "The thing that perhaps I overlooked myself", he mused, "was that not only did I have to operate honestly and fairly without prejudice, but all the people should also think that that was the way I was operating, and that part of it I did not quite appraise." It is a commentary on the difference between the qualities required for success in government and in business that this businessman had reached the top of the industrial pyramid without having "quite appraised" the ancient lesson about evil and the appearance of evil.

The contrasting example is that of Paul Hoffman – an unfair choice, perhaps, since Hoffman was once my own boss. Here was a man who handled his own public relations; his training as a salesman of Studebakers carried over into his successful salesmanship of the Marshall Plan while he was its Administrator. I remember his telling us once in staff meeting that we should answer every letter the day it came in, even if all we could say was that we would reply in detail later on. "When I ran a filling station", he went on, "I found that a man wouldn't wait for gas more than two or three minutes if nobody paid any attention to him. But if you gave him a big hello and explained that there were several cars ahead of him, he would sit there quite happily for a quarter of an hour"! This man had some understanding of the problem of building a relationship with the consumer of any Government programme – the people.

If you think of the list of qualities essential for the government

executive in our system – that he must be imbued with public interest, that he must be at ease with complexity, he must be leader of men, he must do his own thinking and be his own public-relations man – you see how fruitless is the attempt to draw a sharp line between something called the "political executive" and something called the senior civil servant. The Second Hoover Commission has tried to draw such a line, with analytically disastrous results. The fact is that in our "open" society, where *all* government officials have both an internal management function and an external consent-building function, the line between "Politician" and "administrator" can be drawn in a Report but cannot be sharply drawn – or, indeed, readily found – in the real world outside. You can say, "This man is in the job because of a political appointment; this other man is a member of the permanent civil service, and got his job by promotion from within under a merit system". But this does not really tell you very much about the relative responsibilities of the two men. For in the American system both of them – the "political executive" and the "civil servant" – share both halves of the public executive's job: they each have to rally political consent for their programme at the same time as they are helping to administer it. Our system does not operate like the British system; an understanding of American government is impeded by assuming that it does.

The features that are unique to American Government are the product of our size, the heterogeneous character of our nation, its many sections and many kinds of people plus the pervasive conviction among nearly all of them that man is free – and that the nature of his self-government should reflect that fact even at the expense of a certain surface orderliness. To go with a society both big and open, we must have a big Government that manages in spite of its size to maintain reasonably free access by all the people to its complex decision-making processes.

V

Now the question I would like to leave with you is the following – and I ask it not because I have an answer but because I do not. Your Government in India is, broadly speaking, built on a British chassis. The model you have copied is the model of a somewhat

aristocratic civil service, screened off from undue contact with the obligation to build political consent for governmental policy and programme. But your society is neither small nor homogeneous; it is so large that you have already established a moderately decentralized system of administration – though to American eyes it still looks remarkably centralized. Nor is your society “closed”. Your own revolutionary drive for independence, your movement toward greater social equality and greater opportunity for the many; and the enthusiasm for rapid economic development which is dramatized in your Second Five-Year Plan – these trends preordain the character of India as a dynamically “open” society. In these circumstances will you not be forced to move away from the British concept of administration – not toward ours, but toward an indigenously Indian system that has some of the features of our large, federal, and mildly chaotic administrative practice?

You here have the challenge, as do we, of creating new institutions. We have our metropolitan-area problems; we suddenly have one per cent of our population overseas; both of these new conditions create for us new tasks of institution-building. You face challenges of equal interest to a student of administration, of even greater difficulty, certainly of equal relevance to the future of mankind.

You have the opportunity – indeed, the obligation to yourselves – not to copy anybody else’s institutions, but to invent some of your own, taking from others only what you need, not what they think you should have. You have the opportunity – not always grasped in your society or in ours – of addressing yourselves to the problems to be solved rather than to the doctrines to be debated. Your problem is not to decide that tired old question, whether you will have a system of socialism or capitalism. You won’t get either one. By the time you get through, your system of administration will look so different from either of those anachronistic doctrines, based as they are on nineteenth-century European models that have long since been swept away by events, that you will have to invent a new name for India’s theory of government. And a good thing, too. The world is perishing for lack of usable new political theory.

As you approach the task of building Indian institutions to solve Indian problems, I will presume to bring you from the Maxwell

School only one scrap of technical advice. Look again at Alexander Pope’s *Essay on Man*, and preserve until you come to the famous couple which can both justify and inspire your new Indian Institute of Public Administration:

*“For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate’er is best administered is best”.*