VII

CONCLUSION

The higher bureaucracy plays an important role in the formulation and implementation of governmental policy both in the developed and developing nations. With the assumption of new tasks and activities in the sphere of development and welfare, governmental functions have multiplied, underscoring the role and importance of bureaucracy. This is more so in a developing country like India which is committed to the goal of rapid socio-economic development.

The Preamble of the Indian Constitution proclaims liberty, equality, secularism, socialism and democracy as the objectives of the state. The Preamble guarantees social, economic and political justice; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; and equality of status and opportunity for all members of society. This implies that India is to follow the ideals of Welfare State where there would be equality of status and opportunity for all its citizens.

The Directive Principles of State Policy further enjoin upon the State the responsibility to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting a social order in which social, economic and political justice shall inform all institutions of national life. The Directive Principles
visualize an economic and social order based on equality of opportunity, full employment, provision of adequate means of livelihood and social security benefits for all its citizens.

The realization of all these ideals and objectives call for a rapid development in social, economic and political spheres. For achieving rapid social and economic development, it is the government which has to initiate, plan, undertake and execute development programmes. The state and government thus become the principal instrument of change. Prof. Joseph LaPalombara brings this out succinctly in the following words:

It scarcely requires exhaustive documentation to demonstrate that major changes in both the developed and the developing nations are inconceivable today without the massive intervention of government. The time is evidently past when public officials are expected to sit on the developmental sidelines, limiting their roles to the fixing of general rules and to providing certain basic services and incentives for those private entrepreneurs who are major players in the complicated and exciting game of fashioning profound changes in economic and social systems. Whether it is the encouragement of electronic industries in the industrialized West, or the improvement of rice production in Pakistan or Vietnam, or an increase in medical care in the United States, or the exploitation of petroleum resources in Latin America or the Middle East, the direct participation of government is immediate and intimate, if not to say exclusive, when our focus shifts from the economic to other areas of activity, the presence of government is
revealed in even sharper relief. Systematic campaigns to eradicate illiteracy, create or revitalize village-level government, remove ancient social barriers, or to replace atomistic parochialism with a sense of nationhood are unthinkable without the participation of government. The same may be said for any effort to forge major transformations in the political institutions that characterize any particular society.¹

The public bureaucracy is the only instrument of action available to governments for realizing their programmes of socio-economic change because "... the bureaucracy husband the vast majority of whatever necessary professional, technical and entrepreneurial resources may be available to a society committed to change".²

But, what role does the higher bureaucracy in Meghalaya play in the socio-economic transformation of the state? Critics of Indian bureaucracy (of which the Meghalaya-bureaucracy is a part) are of the view that there exists a dichotomy between bureaucratic disposition and the needs of development. Writing about the role of bureaucracy in economic development, Prof. S.C.

Data pointed out:


2. Ibid., p.5.
Its structure and ethos suited it more for maintenance of law and order than for massive nation-building: its adaptation to the emerging milieu has been beset with organisational incompatibilities, psychological resistance and value conflicts. In consequence, it suffers from certain lags and finds itself unable to grapple with the new challenges with ease and confidence. There is some evidence of adaptation, adjustment, and accommodation, but on the whole the situation is still largely fluid.  

Similarly, Joseph LaPalombara advances the view that in the context of political and economic development:

...public administrators steeped in the tradition of Indian Civil Service may be less useful as developmental entrepreneurs than those who are not so rigidly tied to notions of bureaucratic status, hierarchy and impartiality. The economic development of a society, particularly if it is to be implemented by massive intervention of the public sector, requires a breed of bureaucrats different (e.g., more free-wheeling, less adhering to administrative forms, less attached to the importance of hierarchy and seniority) from the type of men who is useful when the primary concern of bureaucracy is the maintenance of law and order.

The above general evaluation of Indian bureaucracy by social scientists stresses the point that the existing values and attitudes of the Indian

bureaucrats are not suited to the tasks and demands of nation-building and socio-economic development and that the main cause of this is the colonial administrative legacy and failure of political leadership to develop the needed orientations among the bureaucrats in keeping with the new tasks and challenges.

For understanding the role of bureaucracy in development due attention needs to be given to the bureaucratic organizational structure as well as to the bureaucratic behaviour because developmental administration refers to the organizational structure and values and attitudes which are necessary for the implementation of schemes and programmes of socio-economic and political change undertaken by the government. Thus, here, the study will be divided into two parts: in the first part, we shall deal with the organizational structure of bureaucracy in Meghalaya while, in the second part, we shall deal with the values and attitudes of the bureaucrats in Meghalaya towards developmental goals.

A study of the role of bureaucratic organizational structure in the

development of the state gives rise to the following questions: who are the bureaucrats and how are they organised? What was the motivation of the bureaucrats in joining public service? Are they satisfied with their jobs? What is the relations of the bureaucrats amongst themselves as well as with their political masters? How far are they honest and efficient? Although these questions cannot be claimed to be exhaustive, they are some of the basic questions related to the goal-achievement of the system having an important bearing on the role of bureaucracy in development. We examine these questions in the following section in the light of our findings in the preceding chapters.

In answering the question—who are the bureaucrats?—as our study of the social and economic composition of the bureaucrats in an earlier chapter has shown, we may generalise that a great majority of the bureaucrats in the sample were from the urbanised middle-class families. 75-35 percent of the bureaucrats in our sample have had an urban background while 25-45 percent of the people in the state live in rural areas. Again, 60-65 percent of the bureaucrats have had an annual parental income of Rs.1,000/- and above. This urban middle-class orientation of the higher bureaucrats poses a dilemma; being predominantly a rural state, Meghalaya has emphasized rural programmes in
ite developmental plan.\textsuperscript{6} Although the correlation between the socio-economic background of the bureaucrats and the nature of their functioning yet remains to be established, Richard Taub in his study of Shubaneswar has noted the ignorance of the urbanised bureaucrats about the problems of rural India.\textsuperscript{7} While speaking in a Conference (Morale in the Public Service, organised by the IIPA), one participant raised a question in regard to the attitudes of the public servant to the work that he does and observed:

\textit{... I have a feeling that public services in our country are aimed primarily by the urban sections of the population, while the plan we are trying to put through and the series of which will follow, are directed primarily to asking an impact on the rural life of the community. I do not know whether the kind of faith we would like to see in the public services would be generated among the people who are not really as much at one with the interests of the bulk of the population. It is true, of course, that as education advances there will be greater and greater degree of urbanisation and since in the public services you get educated sections, they have to be perhaps, more urban in their ideal and outlook than the rest of the countrymen. But I always feel that there is the sort of initial hiatus between the public services and the major section of the population. I do not know how this gap could be reduced, whether the method of recruitment could be suitably altered in order to see that there is not such emphasis on urbanisation, so that there is greater realisation of the needs...}

\textsuperscript{6} For details about the state's plan, see \textit{Draft Annual Plan, 1978-79}, Planning Department, Government of Meghalaya.

\textsuperscript{7} Taub, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.122-125.
of the rural population among the services. 8

The other structural elements of the organisation in Meghalaya are also not suitable for effective bureaucratic performance. As at the centre and in other states, in Meghalaya also there exist parallel services, each with its own service conditions, giving birth to jealousies and animosities and a feeling of class and status consciousness among the bureaucrats. The class and status consciousness are a barrier to co-operative functioning among the bureaucrats, and thus, anti-developmental. A thinly veiled authoritarian hierarchy with an elite class of service to boss over other services has caused low morale and frustration amongst public servants. Besides, the positions at the upper level of the hierarchy are very few and far between and this results in the congestion of work at the upper level causing unmanageability and delay. The outdated rules, regulations and procedures of the colonial period instead of being revamped are continued only to cause exasperating delay in developmental and administrative work, dilution of responsibility almost to the point of irresponsibility and morbid preoccupation with rules, regulations and precedents.

rather than the achievement of programmatic objectives and performance of tasks. Further, cumbersome and complex procedures result in cross-references between a number of departments without any co-ordinating machinery. And the lack of co-ordination between different departments acts as a deterrent to the realisation of planned objectives. Commenting on the non-utilisation of monetary grant by some departments, the Public Accounts Committee in its report for the year 1972-73 regretted "...to note that due to lack of co-ordination... huge amounts of both plan and non-plan[sic] money were surrendered and the objectives of budgeting were not achieved." 9

The intrusion of communal and familial factors also need to be noted in a study of the organisation of public bureaucracy in Meghalaya. Although the classification is not exhaustive, the bureaucracy in Meghalaya is divided into two camps i.e., "insiders" and "outsiders" which retards the team work and co-operative functioning of the bureaucrats. Even if such considerations did not in fact influence decision, the suspicion that they do, proves more

harmful than what is done by actual decisions. Every promotion or transfer, however, justly done or based on impersonal grounds, is deemed capricious and based on clique animosities. There are tensions and suspicion between the 'insiders' and 'outsiders' which sometimes come into the open and give rise to a feeling of vindictiveness. As a protection against individual helplessness in the face of such vindictiveness, the individual depends on his faction and factional alliances. But the existence of factions among the bureaucracy is detrimental to effective bureaucratic performance as it diverts their energy from performance of tasks to factional or group politics. Writing about particularistic orientations as obstacles to economic development in underdeveloped countries, Koslitz aptly observes:

The demands of economic development in all these countries require the elimination or effective reduction of particularist loyalties and action based upon them. For if the human and non-human resources of a country are to be allocated optimally, strict principles of efficiency, rather than familiarity or other forms of personal and local preference, must rule in the assignment of economic and occupational roles and similar contractual relations pertaining to allocation of resources. But local, tribal, and linguistic particularisms stand in the way of this process of generalisation of interpersonal economic relations in a developing country and hence the pressure for economic
development tend to support the struggle against them. 10

Another factor which impedes effective role-performance by the bureaucracy in Meghalaya is the compartmentalisation of bureaucrats into the 'generalists' and the 'specialists' and the 'I.A.S.' and the 'non-I.A.S.' As already pointed out in a preceding chapter, the generalist domination of the administration is resented by the specialists in Meghalaya. It is considered to be inimical to the tasks of modernisation and development. In this connection, Prof. LaPalombara rightly observes:

It seems clear that one serious impediment to economic development in the newer states is the domination of public administration by the administrative generalist. In so far as developmental goals imply highly specialised administrative roles in either the public or the private sector, the persistence of administrative generalists will constitute an impediment to economic change. 11

Further, the division of bureaucrats into the 'I.A.S.' and the 'non-
I.A.S.' groups gives rise to a feeling of mutual hatred and jealousy which hinder co-operation among the bureaucrats, and thus, prevent them from


functioning as a team for the realisation of systemic goals.

Another problem the higher bureaucracy faces in Meghalaya is the wide-spread dissatisfaction of its members with different aspects of the job. The prevalence of such wide-spread dissatisfaction and frustration among the Civil Servants in Meghalaya is a major impediment to the realisation of development goals because, as Prof. V.A. Pai Panandiker says "... activation and job-satisfaction of the Civil Servants are the most crucial factors that impinge directly on their efficiency, morale and further development; that no amount of institutional sophistication would be as important to the administrative performance of the governmental machinery as activation and job satisfaction of its personnel." 12

The administrative scene also witnesses increasing violations of bureaucratic organisational norms such as those relating to security, tenure of posts, assignments, transfers and promotions. The bureaucracy, especially its higher echelon, has become a scapegoat for a bewildered public and power-hungry politicians. The confidence and security of the higher bureaucrats have been

shaken to an extent hitherto unparalleled. This is due to devious and revengeful methods adopted by the politicians and political leaders in dealing with 'un-co-operative' officials. One of these ways is to transfer an officer for offending a minister or politician. Transfers could be made to less desirable places or posts or they could be so frequent as to completely ruin the personal finances of an officer. A ubiquitous misuse of the power of posting and transfer by political leaders has created an atmosphere in which equivocation, delay and avoidance of courageous and imaginative decisions become the safest course of action but which are not conducive to developmental work.

Our study also shows that the politicians tend to condemn and denounce the bureaucrats, and sometimes, publicly, whenever the members of the public register complaints against them.

We have seen in chapter five how the politicians pressure the bureaucrats with various types of demands. Various group and organisations of society make all kinds of demands on the politicians. Although some amount of political pressure is inevitable in a democratic set up, excessive political pressures and influences not only paralyse the administration but also prove
disadvantageous to people who do not have access to political leaders. Further, political pressures on appointment, promotion and transfer bring down the morale of the public servants and lead to frustration among them.

Political pressures put the bureaucracy on the horns of a dilemma, i.e., to choose between victimization and sacrificing the values of impartiality, independence and integrity. The best way the bureaucrats find to avoid victimization for non-compliance with political demands is either not to take any action or to push the matter upward in the hierarchy. Faced with political pressures, the bureaucrats also tend to take refuge in precedents and procedures. Thus, under political pressure, indecision and inaction form the safest course for a peaceful, if not, a successful career to a bureaucrat.

Like the bureaucracy in other States and at the Centre, the Meghalayan bureaucracy also suffers from bureaucratic dysfunctions of corruption and inefficiency. Corruption and inefficiency are inter-related, and sometimes the one is found to be the cause of the other. Though a writer like Rigge

\[\text{\cite{13}}\]
considered corruption to be the companion of development, bureaucratic corruption in Meghalaya, as in the other third world countries, poses a challenge to the very viability of the system. The bureaucratic dysfunctions of corruption and inefficiency cause great dissatisfaction and frustration among the people who, in turn, start questioning the very utility of our democratic set-up and administrative machinery. It is also not uncommon among the people to compare the standard of administrative efficiency and integrity during the British Rule with those of today and such comparison leads them to draw a gloomy picture of the present-day administrative scene in India. Bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency affect not only the day-to-day life of the citizen but also the future development of the nation.

After all, the administration is the instrument of economic planning. If the tools are defective, the work is bound to be shoddy. Even if the development plans are well-conceived, a corrupt administration defeats their purpose and even leads them to disruption.15

14. Referring to the widespread corruption in the state, one A.D.A. said: "Corruption exists in our state and that is, the reason why developmental works cannot progress and there is a lack of clean administration ... if we give indulgence to such practice, I think it will take only a few more years that the people will rise against this government to tackle against the corruption which exists in the state of ours today." See Meghalaya Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. 1, No. 2, (Budget Session, 1973), p. 27.
After discussing the role of bureaucracy as an institution in the development of the state, we shall now turn to a study of the role of bureaucrat as reflected in their values and attitudes. V.A. Pai Panendiker rightly observes:

"...the character of all organisations is determined not so much by their structural systems but by the behaviour of their human element. At every stage and every point of the organisational operation, the values and attitudes which its personnel has, support or distort, build or undermine the organisational objectives. They determine the actual content of policy and shape the performance of the organisation. In other words, the behaviour of the administrative personnel can be functional or dysfunctional to the objectives of the organisation."

Here, we shall study the value orientations of the bureaucrat towards the authoritatively-determined developmental goals. Such a study of the value-commitment of the bureaucrat is important because their awareness and commitment determine their behaviour and performance. Each actor in the decision-making process attaches his own meaning to the problems he confronts. It is because of the importance of self-awareness and perception for developmental

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17. Arthur, op. cit., p.11.
goals and values that a number of scholars have identified the development process as a state of mind, a tenancy, a direction. As Kuldip Prasher says:

... development involves certain changes in the older order and some traditional value systems. This change or shift seen to be so is reflected in the reactions of an individual in a developing society to an environment which is rapidly changing and is sometimes difficult to comprehend. But, in any concrete situation, in which an individual participates, he is faced with choices of alternative action. He evaluates these alternatives in his mind according to certain abstract ideas embodied in his past experience, some political ideology or tradition. It is these assumptions that serve to attach meaning to all aspects of his environment. The objective validity of these perceptions is less significant than is the fact that they are believed to be true and present the realities of the situation from which emerges the base of all action and reaction. 19

Thus, the value-commitment of the bureaucracy is one of the most important factors in the development of the state.

For studying the political-economic value orientations of the bureaucracy, we asked these twelve questions. 15 to elicit their views on four

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19. Spender, p. 12. Joseph Spender observes in this connection that, "the state of peoples political-economic development together with its rate and direction, depends largely upon the content of the mind of its elite, which reflect in part, as do civilizations, the assumptions we form of the universe". See Spender, Chapter 12, p. 23.

19. For the questions, see Appendix C.
broad themes of democracy, equality, secularism and economic planning which
together constitute the essence of political modernisation. An analysis of the
responses shows that 61.22 percent of the bureaucrats believe in these four
values and 34.54 percent do not believe, while 4.24 percent are found to be
uncertain. Now, if we break up the responses value-wise, we find that the
value of democracy accounts for the largest number of believers (60.10 percent),
followed by economic planning (65.45 percent), equality (59.09 percent) and
secularism (54.54 percent). In the category of non-believer, the value of
secularism accounts for the largest number of respondents (43.54 percent),
followed by economic planning (34.55 percent), equality (31.02 percent) and
democracy (20.16 percent). The value of equality accounts for the largest number
of respondents in the category of uncertain (9.09 percent), followed by
democracy (3.66 percent) and secularism (1.62 percent). Thus, on an average, the
number of respondents who believe in these values is almost double the number
of those who do not believe in these values.

20. The responses we received were analysed in the form of a score table. For
obtaining score results, numbers have been assigned to the replies. For
instance, 1 indicates agreement, -1 indicates disagreement and 0 indicates
uncertainty. These questions were asked each on the themes of democracy,
equality, secularism and economic planning and for obtaining score result
the following method was followed: A believer on particular theme should score -2
marks. That is a believer should disagree with two or more statements while, a non-believer should agree with two or more statements. The rest, i.e., those who agree with one question, disagree with other and
is uncertain about a third is ranked in the category of uncertain.

21. For analysis of the responses, see Table 71.
Besides, the realization of these developmental values and objectives, Meghalaya has certain goals of her own in the economic sphere which can be considered unique because of the geo-historical factors. The state being situated in a hilly terrain, bordering with Bangladesh lacks a well-developed transport and communication system which is a pre-condition of economic development. Besides transport and communication, other problem sectors in the state are agriculture, village development, border-areas development and industrialisation which have been given priority in the State's plan since the achievement of statehood. But what do the higher bureaucrats think about these programmes?

To study the attitudes of the higher bureaucrats towards these programmes, we asked them to identify the development programmes which they thought were most urgently required for the socio-economic development of the state and which development programmes they favoured least. An analysis of the responses shows that the bureaucrats have preference for industrialisation and development of transport and communication over agriculture and other rural

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22. For the question, see Appendix E.
23. For the analysis, see Table 7a2.
programmes. Industrialisation has been overwhelmingly sanctioned by the 
bureaucrats as a means for the development of the state (32.47 percent of the 
responses), followed by development of transport and communication (12.99 
percent of the responses). Although 44 bureaucrats in all consider the 
development programmes necessary, they do not favour all the programmes equally. 
This is evident from the table 7-3 which shows that agricultural and rural 
development programmes are favoured least by the bureaucrats followed by the 
programmes of village development and the development of border areas.

The above findings of the present study are in sharp contrast to the 
developmental strategy of the state. This reveals the existence of a great 
hintus between developmental planning and strategy and the priorities considered 
important by the implementing machinery. While top priority is given to 
agriculture and other rural development programmes in each plan, the higher 
bureaucracy does not appear to favour these programmes. This raises the question 
whether the higher bureaucracy has adequate involvement in the developmental 
programmes of the state when its members hold different priority sectors of 
development as important.
Bureaucracy has two elements; one is its structural-institutional element and the other is its behavioural element. In the preceding pages of this chapter we have seen how different structural-institutional elements of bureaucracy frustrate the goal of rapid development. Similarly, there exists a conflict between the behavioural elements of the bureaucracy and developmental programmes of the government. Although a large number of bureaucrats are found to be in favour of the national values of democracy, secularism, equality and economic planning, with regard to the specific programmes of economic development of the state, the bureaucrats do not favour the priorities accorded to various sectors in the developmental programmes of the state.

The broad conclusion of this study is that the bureaucracy in Nagahalaya is passing through a transitional and critical phase when it is not sufficiently equipped to act as a dynamic instrument of socio-economic change in the state. There exists a wide gap between role expectation and actual role performance of the higher bureaucracy. This gap is the result of the stresses and strains to which the bureaucracy is subjected both by its structural and institutional arrangements and behavioural patterns and value-orientations. The problems which the bureaucracy faces in Nagahalaya are not
unique to Meghalaya or India; they are common to all the developing countries. The developing countries are passing through a transitional phase in their development processes in which the traditional and modern structures, values and norms co-exist. Functioning in a predominantly traditional society, the bureaucracy is called upon to undertake massive tasks of modernisation and development. But as the bureaucracy is a sub-system of the social system, it possesses some of the particularistic characteristic of the traditional society. It is not suggested here that tradition and modernity are opposed to each other; in fact, they possess a dialectical relationship and are complementary to each other. However, at the present stage of development, there is a conflict between tradition and modernity and it is this conflict which is at the heart of the problem of the ineffectiveness role of bureaucracy in the developmental processes in Meghalaya.