CHAPTER VI

Political Processes and Public Service Ethics
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"When the ruler takes a pinch of salt without payment, his officers loot the country".

Persian Proverb

Political culture represented by values, ideologies, beliefs and attitudes of political leaders and parties influence, ethical behaviour of administrators. In fact, accountability is, in a sense, a product of effective and inspiring leadership (Prasad : 1995). This is more true at the higher levels, where administrators interaction with the political leaders is very high. This chapter examines the influence of political culture on administrative ethics.

The main issues discussed here are whether the political culture has any influence on the ethical behaviour of administrators? What changes have taken place in Indian political scene since independence? And how the developments in Indian Politics have affected public service ethics? For the purpose of clarity political history of independent India is divided into three phases. They are First Phase (early independence phase), Second Phase (late 1960's), and Third phase (mid 1980 onwards).
6.2 The First Phase of Indian Politics and Administration

(early independence period)

In the immediate post-independent era, idealism, sacrifice, loyalty and public service were the dominant trends which influenced the political process. Political leaders under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership worked to establish an independent, strong and prosperous India. There was a "strong sense of patriotism and loyalty to secular ideals" (Jayal: 1995). In other words, political leadership personified selfless public service, efforts for nation-building and social transformation and Gandhian values. "... they (political leaders) carried the sort of legitimacy they did, primarily because they echoed, in their persons, something of the saintly renouncer, the Gandhian ascetic, disinterested in political power, and utterly detached from the loaves and fishes of office" (Garde: 1995).

This political culture could be obtained as the people entering politics were socialised in social service, dedication to ideal goals and public service and that there was nothing to gain or lose. On the contrary it meant sacrificing of good career opportunities and risking jails. "It meant pursuing goals that transcended self-interest and personal benefit" (Weiner: 1989). At the same time, unethical behaviour in public life was dealt with seriously. This is evident from the appointment of various inquiry committees and penalisation of people found guilty of misuse of official power and authority. J.B. Kriplani committee (1956), Santhanam committee (1964) and S.R. Das Commission of enquiry, and Chagla commission of enquiry can be mentioned.
in this regard. Ministers, Kairon (Chief Minister of Punjab) and T.T. Krishnamachari (Finance Minister, Government of India), were asked to resign from their public offices.

Political leaders expected the same standards from the administrators also. A number of steps were initiated to ensure independent and impartial functioning of the administrators. Provisions were made in the constitution for the establishment of independent institutions - Union Public Service Commission and State Public Service Commissions - to recruit administrators on the basis of merit. Likewise articles 310 and 311 of the constitution provided protection and security to their service conditions. During this period, civil service neutrality was not only encouraged but also honest and hard working officers were protected and dishonest and incompetent superior officers were penalised (Jayal: 1995).

6.2 (a) Politician and Administrator Relationship

The political leaders not only encouraged the administrators to work for the larger interest but also supported them to experiment new ideas and technologies for the overall development of the nation during this phase (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987). Honest and integral officers were recognised and rewarded by the political system which enhanced accountability. This, however, was confined only to this period. In the subsequent periods this was found missing. "Accountability is, in a sense, a product of effective and inspiring leadership.... After the Nehru era the leadership structure hardly
reflects the reward for the righteous conduct” (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987).

The political interference was minimal. The top political leadership discouraged lower level political leaders from interfering in the affairs of administration. On the other hand, the political leaders supported the civil servants to take bold, impartial and just decisions based on facts and figures. Officers continued for fixed tenures without frequent transfers. Sardar Patel addressing civil servants once remarked that, "if you do not give your honest opinion for the fear that it will displease your minister, please then you had better go. I will bring another secretary” (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987). This could also be observed at the state level. Powerful and reputed chief ministers, like B. C. Roy of West Bengal, G.B. Pant of Uttar Pradesh, Y.B. Chavan of Maharashtra, Sanjeeva Reddy of Andhra Pradesh, S. Nijalingappa of Karnataka, Mahtab and Biju Patnaik of Orissa, Kamaraja Nadar and Bhaktavatshalam of Tamilnadu etc., with strong mass base not only refrained themselves from interfering in administration but also protected administration from political interference at all levels. The same was corroborated by an Indian Civil Service officer of Orissa cadre. To quote him...

"... Infact, on one occasion, when I asked the minister what line he wanted to take before I put up my views on an important policy matter, he (the then Chief Minister of Orissa, Mahtab) firmly told me that he did not believe in prior consultation because it limited the scope of the officer in giving fair advise to the minister. I always gave my advise to him, thereafter, to the best of ability, without any interference from him". Another All India Service officer, recollects with pride his tenure as transport commissioner and
Chairman of the state transport authority, where successive Chief Ministers encouraged him to dispense of cases according to law without fear or favour. Attempts by political groups to bring in "permit raj" could be resisted by him only because of the value attached by the top political bosses to integrity and impartiality in the bureaucracy" (Ramakrishnayya: 1992).

To concise the discussion, high quality political culture and participation had positive impact on the administrative culture. The public interest motive of political leaders assisted them to encourage administrators to be innovative, creative and to support their ethical actions by recognising and rewarding them. Whatever interaction existed between politicians and administrators it was for furthering public interest and any political interference for personal, party or partisan purposes was curtailed by top political leadership. This encouraged autonomy and independence of administrators who provided objective analysis of matters brought before them without fear or favour.

These conditions could prevail as India inherited "an exceptionally high level of political morality bequeathed by the national movement led by Mahatma Gandhi and an equally sound administrative morality inherited from the Raj" (Prasad: 1995), making Appleby term Indian administration as one of the best and most envious in the world. Expressing similar views Rudolph and Rudolph (1987) opine that "At a time when many Third World States were struggling to build qualified and effective career services, the
standing of India's senior bureaucracy was exceptional. It gave the state after independence an autonomy and continuity that has persisted in times of uncertainty and unsteady political control at the national and state levels.

6.3 Developments in the Second Phase of Indian Politics and Administration (Late 1960s)

Public interest, nation-building, national re-construction and social transformation as ideologies were replaced by populism, party, partisan and community/caste interests as values. People with narrow vision and greater interest in power rather than national unity emerged as leaders representing second generation political leadership. Most of them are people without roots who neither participated in the national movement nor did they have social service experience at the grassroots. In fact, this phase, coincides with Indira Gandhi's leadership, is considered as the starting point of deterioration of values in public life, criminalisation of politics and politicisation of administration. "Nationalist politicians were succeeded by preferential politicians and they in turn by a generation of political condottieri" (Sivaraman: 1991). In fact, party candidature in elections and subsequent occupation of important positions were largely decided on the basis of loyalty to party high command particularly Mrs Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay Gandhi rather than principles, performance and mass base of the people. In this regard, the selection of politicians like A R Antulay in Maharashtra, Jagannath Pahadia in Rajasthan, Jagannath Mishra in Bihar, J B
Patnaik in Orissa and R Gundu Rao in Karnataka can be mentioned (Weiner: 1989).

Populism (where many popular schemes were chalked out to attract the attention of the masses), communalism (where popular leaders started using caste and community planks to fulfil their wish) and 'assistance' from criminal world¹ (see Appendix 1 also) were sought in the absence of mass base and service qualifications to secure power. Patronage and delivery of services over-shadowed service and transformation as means to reach the aim (Ramkrishnaiyya: 1992).

Ethics did not receive high priority among the political leaders. Although many enquiry commissions were set-up, they were considered more as “witch-hunting” committees to embarass and harass 'inconvenient' leaders and opposition political leaders. For example, between 1971-77 the central government appointed six enquiry commissions against ministers of various states and the centre. It was observed most of these committees were appointed to prosecute political opponents and that their purpose was not to ensure high ethical standards in public life.

6.3(a) Politician and Administrator Relationship

These political developments influenced the administrative culture. Loyalty to party programmes, policies and political leaders rather than commitment to constitution and public interest became the main
philosophy of the administrator in this phase. It was not only increasingly recognised but also acquired great significance. It has been brought out effectively by scholars like Rudolph and Rudolph and Weiner. According to Rudolph and Rudolph, one of the most noticeable changes was the increasing importance of 'political loyalty'. So, here we see that the bureaucracy is highly politicised, thus being an administrative aberration and exemplifies deviant behaviour. The civil servants are usually involved in political party activities (e.g. canvassing for a party in an election) and bending the laws, rules and regulations for the promotion of narrow party interests. Such partisan activities of the civil servant are considered unethical and are not suitable in law, as these are violations of the civil service conduct rules. Thus, a politicised civil servant, by contrast, covertly serves the interest of the political party. His style is marked by undue secrecy and breach of established rules and procedures, and the objective he serves tends to be narrow, private interest, as distinguished from general public interest.

This change began to be noticed from 1969-70 when Indira Gandhi and other Congress party leaders called for more 'commitment' from civil service. Their argument was that the neutrality was not suitable for conditions prevailing in independent India (Ramkrishnniyya: 1992). Although Indira Gandhi denied this criticism, it was practiced in the form of rewarding structure of all 'loyal' civil servants (Maheshwari:1990). For her (Indira Gandhi) commitment was beyond active support for Congress programmes to belief in the party leader's mandate from the people. She
wanted a style of commitment more suited to a bureaucracy serving a single party and its leader than to one serving alternating party governments”.

This view of commitment fed and grew first on prudence, then on opportunism and, under the emergency, as fear. “Better to show loyalty even to the extent of bending or breaking the law than to risk disfavour or punishment by too principled conduct” (Weiner: 1989). The ‘favourite’ administrators were asked to implement party programmes. Many programmes and policies of the ruling party were implemented with over enthusiasm irrespective of their consequences on population, democracy and nation. It was criticised by the political analysts as the consequence of setting aside self-conscience and independent critical thinking of the administrators. The Shah Commission (set up to inquire into the excesses committed during emergency) report brought out many instances of administrators involvement in “forging of records, fabrication of grounds of detention, ante-dating of detention orders and callous disregard of the rights of detainees as regards revocation, parole, etc.,” (Sadasiv: 1990).

Officers ‘loyal’ to programmes and policies of the party were encouraged, patronised and rewarded with plump jobs (Rao and Ali: 1990) during their tenure and they were bestowed with high offices like of those of governors, vigilance commissioners, election commissioners, ambassadors, diplomats and so on after retirement. For instance Indira Gandhi “appointed an experienced former civil service man, B D Pande, as Governor, and picked
up one of her close favourites, P S Bhinder, as the Police Chief of Punjab (Bhinder's wife was a congress party member of parliament)" (Potter :1994). In the following years of 1977 elections the Janata Party government rewarded administrators whose commitment was to its own people and measures. However, when Indira Gandhi came back to power once again, the IAS officers loyal to her during the time of emergency (and who were sidelined by the Janata Party) were reinstated. Similarly, there were frequent transfers of top level administrators due to political interference (Potter 1996). Potter’s study shows that 80 per cent or more of them “actually held their posts for less than two years before moving on”. In the process of encouraging ‘like-minded’ and ‘cooperative’ administrators, competent and integral officers were superseded breaking down the civil service morale. In other words, this phase introduced the practice of ‘helping cooperative and like-minded administrators with powerful departments, convenient postings and other privileges’ on the one hand and sidelining ‘non-cooperative’ administrators on the other producing certain distortions particularly in the form of breaking down of administrative culture and administrative ethics. The undesirable effects are unsettled bureaucracy and waning of neutrality in its original sense of the term. "Indira Gandhi’s tendency to identify and reward her bureaucratic ‘favourites’ unsettled the bureaucracy by enhancing factional splits and intra-bureaucratic disputes” (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987). Many civil servants started acting to the tune of political leaders. There were many cases where officers ‘curried favours’ with politicians ‘by doing what they thought the people in authority desired (Weiner:1989).
Many such instances occurred at the state level also. In fact, the present practice of mass transfers and getting 'convenient' officers with change in each ministry or even leadership had its origin in this phase. The relationship moved from autonomy and independence to dependence. "Loyalty and commitment became willingness on part of civil servants to accommodate themselves to ministerial manipulations of this kind" (Rudolph and Rudolph:1987).

As a consequence Civil service neutrality respected and maintained hitherto started waning. Association and identification of some civil servants with ruling political party became common place. "The rise of personal loyalty as the test of commitment threatened the viability of career services and a government of law" (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987). These developments killed the initiative and enthusiasm of honest administrators who were working for longer goals and larger public interest.

This phase may be summarized as the originator of decline in public service ethics. Within two decades of independence, the political leadership grew dimunitive in stature to vindicate its abnegation of intellectual values and deflection from social morals. When self-aggrandisement and self-improvement achieved the status of highest virtues power became an instrument for personal gain (Sadasivan :1995). These developments on the political front negatively affected the administration. Many senior
bureaucrats started identifying themselves with political parties in power ignoring the neutrality for personal benefits. Some of them even quit their profession to opt for positions in political life giving way to the third phase.

6.4 Developments in The Third Phase of Indian Politics and Administration (mid 1980s onwards)

The distinctive political culture of this phase is capturing power at whatever cost, even exploiting emotionalism, communalism, regionalism, money and muscle power. Mass mobilization is based on emotional issues like caste, community, region, religion and so on. Some parties are also using money and muscle power. Mass mobilization is based on emotional issues like caste, community, region, religion and so on. Some parties are also using money and muscle power and "politics became attractive to those unscrupulous enough to subvert, by corruption and violence the procedures and institutions designed to protect civility and a government of laws (Rudolph and Rudolph :1987). This could also be observed in the lack of seriousness of political leaders in taking action against public men alleged to have involved in unethical activities. Although various committees like Joint Parliamentary Committees were appointed to investigate major scams like Bofors and bank scams, they did not function to the satisfaction of people. This is attributed, by many scholars, to the negative attitude of political leaders. The general perception was that those committees were being 'used' to make political capital rather than finding the guilty to punish and set exemplary behaviour pattern for others in public life.
These trends have encouraged people with self-interest, fundamentalist ideology, and criminals to enter politics in a big way. Commitment to the fulfillment of personal interest by political leaders has relegated national, social development and party purposes to background. This is evident from their increasing membership in legislative bodies and various other public fora. For instance Uttar Pradesh assembly has the highest number of members with criminal records. Their participation in legislation has not only led to frequent disruptions of deliberations including physical violence and pandemonium but also to amendments to various laws curbing anti-criminal and anti-social activities.

It is observed that the changed environment also led to shift in the relationship between politicians and administrators. It has shifted from that of 'outside direction' whenever necessary to regular interference in day to day administration and control of service matters related to transfers, promotion and punishments of members of superior civil services by politicians for mutual gains (Maheshwari: 1995). "Naturally, such an environment influences the conduct and attitudes of public servants who, by and large, see the benefit of adjusting to the situation" (Dwivedi: 1995).

6.4 (a) Relationship Between Political leader and Administrator

Though this phase started with the 'hope' initiated by the national leadership regarding restoration of independence and autonomy of administrative services, it did not appear to yield any results. Rajiv Gandhi
government introduced various measures to address the professional quality of the services and insulate them from inappropriate political pressures” (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987). Majority of them include prevention of frequent transfers, prevention of interference of local politicians in administrators’ work etc. However, they could not be implemented. According to Sengupta, they were not strictly followed by the initiator who is said to have created a ‘coterie’ of ‘his’ bureaucrats on whom he relied excessively, to the extent of being partisan to their interests. This was continued by other leaders also.

The prevailing political environment appears to encourage strong binding between politicians and administrators for mutual benefit. Some of the administrators have shown loyalty to political leaders beyond the call of office. The trend of “keeping politicians in good humor and doing service to some politicians beyond administrative expectations” is on the increase (Shukla, 1990). Some administrators proximity to politicians has come to notice of the public. “They are identified as men of specified politicians” (Shukla, 1990). This has affected their impartial and independent functioning. According to Ramakrishnayya (1992) "...many of its (civil service) members abandoned the conventional neutrality and non-partisanship, some willingly, hoping to benefit financially, others from fear”. Similar conclusions were arrived at by a report of Lalbahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration. It says that, "...many civil servants are deeply involved in partisan politics; they are preoccupied with it, penetrated by it,
and now participate individually and collectively in it” (Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration: 1995).

Two major consequences of these developments are - instability in bureaucracy and frequent political interference in administrative matters. The practice of patronizing 'favourite' civil servants with convenient postings, transfers to good and 'favourable' places etc is further strengthened in this phase. David Potter (1994) also holds similar views. According to him "... his (Rajiv Gandhi's) 'partisan' promotions and transfers of senior bureaucrats were the subjects of regular complaints by such bureaucrats in the press and elsewhere”. In his another study also Potter (1996) writes that top level bureaucrats were “transferred because the minister, or some other powerful politician found the officer’s presence inconvenient”. As a consequence instability in bureaucracy emerged. This practice could be noticed in non-Congress governments also. For instance on assumption of office as the Prime Minister, V P Singh identified 'his' senior administrators and placed them into key positions by resorting to large number of 'political transfers' (Potter: 1994). The same could be noticed in the case of successive prime ministers.

Political interference in administration for political and personal gains is also a contribution of this phase. It was reported that the ministers and political leaders, at all levels, very often influenced even in routine matters and pressurised the administrators to work according to their wish. Its presence was even admitted by the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
Addressing a conference of police personnel on February 10, 1990 at Jaipur, he said that, "in the future, it will be seen that there is no interference" (Noorani: 1990). It reached the extreme when administrators were called upon to obey and not advise" (Subramanian:1990). "... today ministers do not appreciate frank advise. They want only what they like. In fact, ministers are assuming the role of permanent civil servants" (Times of India: 1997).

6.5 Political Interference: Respondents' Experience

Even our respondents also hold that political interference is 'quite frequent' in their functioning. All the respondents but one replied that there is very frequent political meddling in administration impeding administrative work. According to them political interests varies from department to department depending on the nature of work and also from field to secretariat. 'Words' are sent from political bosses for almost everything. If the politicians have some personal interest in the matter they are vigorously pursued and in cases of lesser interest not so great importance is attached. It varies from trivial issues like issuance of ration cards, release of cement, seeds, allotment of official quarters, changes in posts within the departments etc. to bigger issues like transfer to 'wet posts' or sought after geographical areas, land grants, grant of loans, issuance of licenses, not to book cases or charge sheet criminals or to overlook and close the case or sanctioning of huge amounts of loans without the required guarantee or to slow down recovery of loans. "Practically everything under the sun" said a senior officer. Similar views are expressed by another senior officer. She said,
"... now I believe the culture is different. Great political pressure will be there on almost every administrative action, whether acting according to such pressure is approved by the provisions of law or not".

Senior officers, comparing the situation at two points of time, strongly feel that things "ten-fifteen years ago were different" where politicians were to some extent sensitive to public demands and therefore "quite reasonable in 'putting words' to officers". A senior woman administrator viewed that "in last ten years, there is a sea of difference in the behaviour of politicians. The difference between then and now is, genuine public interest has been relegated to background and personal gain has taken the legitimate place of public interest". The first generation respondents opine that during their tenure also there was "some kind of political meddling but if the officer was firm about his/her decision, no politician pursued the matter further". They perceive that today's situation has changed dramatically, where the politicians have become so strong that they get their work done from administrators even under the threat of transfer, impediments in career development, and such other "damaging actions". A senior administrator reflecting on the entire personnel felt that fifty per cent of the administrators are "fence sitters who neither take responsibility nor shirke it off and in the remaining fifty per cent about ten to fifteen per cent are extremely tough, honest and responsible and about thirty to thirty five per cent have strong 'give and take relationships' with the politicians and that their number is growing at a rapid pace".
6.6 Impact of Changed Relationship on Public Service Ethics

The consequence of changed relationship gets itself exhibited in two ways though there may be many dimensions to it. They (administrators) are rewards for 'cooperation' and punishment for 'non-cooperation'.

The emergence of politician as the 'head of permanent executive and controller of administration' have given him extraordinary powers in areas which are essentially protected by civil service rules exposing the civil servants to their whims and fancies. This resulted in the development of nexus between the two in the race to reach self-seeking goals. "...due to excessive politicisation of administration the basic concepts of civil service neutrality and objectivity have been deteriorated. This led to an unholy nexus between politicians and civil servants" (Subramaniam: 1995). In the process of 'helping' each other both reach a position of no return (Subramaniam: 1995). The resultant position is that the politicians, after reaching a particular position, start dictating terms and conditions to the personnel whose survival is controlled by them. "What is more, while the politician may want that he (civil servant) should merely bend, the civil servant is prepared even to crawl. The political boss has been able to make the civil service toe his line because of his triple power of posting and transfer, of promotion and of suspension" (Maheswari: 1995). The concentration of these powers has led to appropriation of partisan and personal ends by politicians. "Frequent transfers, which render the life of a civil servant more difficult by disrupting the schooling of his or her children and the routines of life, have long been
used by politicians to bring to heel or oust inflexible officers that resist inappropriate requests for resource allocation" (Rudolph and Rudolph: 1987).

The administrators 'cooperating' with politicians, in fulfilling their whims, get benefitted in getting convenient postings, smooth career advancement, escape from punishments for the violation of codes of conduct etc. "The politicians break the culture of civil service by helping them in their career matters to make them their tools... also that if a government employee favoured by politicians commit any act of impropriety no proper follow up action is taken, in fact, such actions are stopped, due to political pressures" (Subramaniam: 1995). Many such cases have been brought to the public notice by the media. For example, it was reported that an officer of the state (Karnataka) cadre had escaped punishment for accepting huge amount of bribes as a result of political pressures (Indian Express: 28-6-1995).

In another case a senior administrative officer in Karnataka was suspended in 1993 on charges of embezzlement of public funds and acquisition of property beyond known sources of income. But subsequently his suspension was revoked in 1995 pending decision of the trial court (Times of India: 21-2-1997). He was also given a very important position - highest position - in the hierarchy by the then Chief Minister disturbing the officer who refused to 'help' the political boss in his illegal activities. Likewise a forest officer involved in "the multi-crore granite scandal" as he was incharge of issuing permits for transporting forest produce, including
granite blocks from reserved forest areas” was rescued by the political bosses interested in the deal (Matto: 1995).

On the other hand, administrators expressing their wish to work independently and are ‘non-cooperative’ to the political bosses invited their displeasure. Recollecting from his experience said a respondent, ”... because I did not carry-out the ‘request’ of political masters I was transferred from my powerful position to one which had least powers. ...politicians tried all avenues to stop me from taking action against the culprits (the hoarders of food grains in this case), they even framed allegations against me”. Another incident which gathered public attention throughout Karnataka was the feud between the Home Minister and the Police Chief who were at loggerheads on various issues. "...and then came up the issue of transfers of deputy superintendents and circle inspectors of police. Mr Durai (the state police chief) maintained that it was within his powers to transfer them. But the minister claimed it was the prerogative of the government” (Times of India: 16-1-1997). Subsequently the police chief was transferred to a less powerful post within five months of assumption of office.6

Another trend that could be noticed is the mass transfer of senior officers with the change in political parties or even that of political leadership to get ‘convenient’ officers into important position, demoralizing the entire structure of civil service. The Indira Gandhi government laid foundation to this which gained momentum in late 1970s. After the post-emergency
elections Janata Party also resorted to this and it continues till today. "In Gujrat, for instance, as many as 35 IAS officers were transferred by the new Keshubhai Patel Ministry while there was a reshuffle of 30 officers in Madhya Pradesh and 19 in Rajasthan recently" (Indian Express: 20-7-1995). The Mayawati government in Uttar Pradesh also resorted to indiscriminate transfer "of more than 150 IAS and IPS officers since coming to power recently" (Godbole: 1997). The basis of such transfers would hardly be efficiency but, "the main considerations in the eyes of the political bosses being caste or community and pliability" (Indian Express: 20-7-1995).

6.7 Overview

The early independence period (first phase) is essentially dominated by pre-independence leaders who stood for high values such as sacrifice, commitment, public service and so on. Political 'resources' were directed in the interest of the public. This had its favourable effect on the administrative machinery. The administrators were encouraged to be innovative and creative in their work. They were appreciated for their free and fair advise and vice-versa was also true. Whatever relations existed between the political leaders and administrators, it was for furthering public interest as the consequence obtaining ethical administration.

In the second phase (late 1960s) 'populism' occupied the place of performance and high ideology with the emergence of leaders with lack of vision and greater interest in power. They worked for the fulfillment of party
and partisan interests. Changed political environment brought changes in the administrative culture. Administrators so far totally neutral, started taking interest in getting identified with party and its programmes as it would benefit them in career advancement. The relations between them moved from independence to dependence for mutual benefit. Infact, administrative machinery became a tool at the hands of politicians to fulfill their desire of "staying in power".

In the third phase (mid-1980 onwards period) personal interest has grown more powerful with the rise of political leaders without mass base. Money, muscle and communal power (Prasad: 1995) are excessively relied on to secure and retain power. Administrative machinery is 'used' to reach personal goals by the politicians. The transfer of powers of promotion, suspension and punishment of administrators into the hands of politicians has made an increasing number of administrators vulnerable to the whims and fancies of politicians. This phase has also witnessed punishment for 'non-cooperative' behaviour of the administrators. At the same time 'convenient and co-operative' officers are rewarded with all facilities encouraging unethical behaviour in administration.

From the above discussions it may be summarised that all environmental factors - social, economic, political, cultural, legal and administrative - have caused deterioration in public service ethics. But, of all the factors, the contribution of political factors appear to be significant. Infact,
erosion of ethical base of administration has to be located in the political
system which has lost its ideological directions (Hargopal and Sudarshan:
1995). The chapter may be concluded with Justice Rajagopal Ayyangar's
words "... when abuse starts from the top, demoralization sets in the
permanent services, and even officers by virtue of status and position could
normally be expected to take an objective view of matters coming before
them, succumb to the temptation of becoming subservient and willing tools
for furthering the interests of those under whom they serve".
The increased electoral expenses have thrown the politicians into the lap of the criminals who generate easy money. It was reported in Indian Express that a candidate to assembly had spent an amount between Rs. 15 to 20 lakhs and a contestant to the parliamentary seat had spent anything between Rs 25 lakhs to one crore. This multi-fold increase in electoral expenses - from Rs 10.5 crore in 1952 to Rs 20 crore in 1984 to Rs. 10,000 crore in 1989 (Ganguly and Ganguly:1990) - had to be generated from all possible sources, without scrutinizing the background. A minister in the Central Government said that when somebody offers funds as contributions to elections we do not look into the source i.e. whether the person offering is a blackmarketeer, anti-social element etc. because on the face of it, it is difficult to make it out (Rajesh Pilot, Minister of Forest and Environment, on a television programme broadcast on 29-1-1996 and interviewed by Nalini Singh). It was at this juncture that black money and money earned by criminal activities entered the political mainstream (Singh, Gurumukh, 1995). 

"...underworld lords, smugglers, land grabbers, black marketeers finance political parties (Sangita SN and Vibha
The extension of financial "help" from criminals for electoral activities which stretched to the extent that there came a stage when the criminals realized their political clout that they could exercise in making or breaking governments. They even started negotiating independently with the power elites as share holders in the governance of the country (Riyaz, Punjabi:1994).

A new chapter in the political history of India started in 1980s when political parties started putting up candidates with shady background and allowed them to join the political mainstream. For instance, in 1984 in Bihar assembly elections the following were the equations of political parties - Janata Dal gave tickets to ten criminals, Congress-I - five, BJP and Local Dal (B) - one each. The 1989 elections also exhibited similar trends. In these elections ten charge sheeted criminals and mafia dons were in fray in Uttar Pradesh (in one Lok Sabha and fifteen assembly segments). The Election Commission also accepted the candidature of independents with cases pending. Hari Krishna Tiwari (for assembly) and Virendra Pratap Shahi (for Lok Sabha) had forty cases of murder or attempted murder and were detained under National Security Act in 1984 and 1985 (Bhan:1994). The 1991 elections followed suit when the Uttar Pradesh assembly had 180/425 MLAs had criminal background.
The 1995 assembly elections were no different in this regard. For example, in Uttar Pradesh assembly 1995 elections - D.P. Yadav (Bahujan Samaj Party) with 32 charges of alleged murder and kidnapping, Akhilesh Yadav with 27 cases pending, Madan Bhaiya and Ramakant Yadav (Samajwadi Party) charged with the murder of two police constables, Vinay Katiyar (BJP) accused in rape case, Hitendra Thakur (Congress) was booked under TADA etc. It was also reported that a chief minister had 14 charges of crime including that of murder and the Panchayati Raj Minister of Uttar Pradesh had charges of murder and attempted murder (Singh:1995). There may be many cases all of which cannot be discussed here.

This period was the result of the loss of political ideology, credibility, the consequent political instability and the desire of politicians to cling to power. This desire started getting itself exhibited in the form of interference and 'direction' to administrators in day to day administrative matters from politicians at all levels - zonal, parishad, state and national. The officials have complained about it several times. Recently in a conference arranged by the officials of different departments in Karnataka they complained against constant interference by Zilla Parishad members constraining their duties. The officials of Education Department pleaded that, "if the government is
serious about improving educational standards in village schools, the department's officers should be allowed to function independently without any interference" [Times of India (Bangalore):19-2-1996:5]. The respondents of this study also agreed to the existence of political interference. The following discussion will bring out political interference in Karnataka in detail.

(a) For similar instances refer to Indian Express (Bangalore) dated 25-8-1995 and Times of India (Bangalore), 21-2-1997. The police department, it is said, is the most negatively affected as it comes under the direct control of the state government. Its impact can easily be seen on the society as it acts as the major controller of law and order and ensurer of peaceful life J F Rebeiro, former Punjab Police Chief, expressed that, "at present, every senior officer has been appointed through the good offices of one of the politicians. If he fails to please the politicians, he is shown the door. This ensures that the senior officers permit criminal elements to operate at the behest of politicians" [Times of India (Bangalore) dated: 16-3-1997]. As a consequence many honest and upright officials are refusing to accept important and influential positions. On the basis of experience
Prakash Singh, former Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh said that, "today, a lot of good officers have started refusing postings. For instance, a certain Deputy Inspector General posted to Azamgarh - and I can vouch for his integrity, honesty and competence - refused it. It is not surprising as a posting like that would either mean cooption or total withdrawal on his part" [Times of India (Bangalore):16-3-1997.

(b) As a retired Chief Secretary puts it "control over that, (reward-punishment structure), judgments about it, were in the hands of the civil service itself. Now increasingly, these standards for reward and punishments can no longer be identified - lip-service is still paid to old conventions and values but they no longer provide working criteria. New values have entered from outside, and civil servants can no longer define what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is. Newer values emphasize political loyalty, flexibility, and also merit, but merit is only one among them. Uncertainty centres on the reward structure."

(c) In Karnataka M. Shankaranarayanan, the then Chief Secretary, was suspended for refusing to 'cooperate' with the then Chief Minister in his illegal activities. The editorial of a national daily wrote, "the Shankara narayanan episode
once again reinforces the belief that uncompromising civil 
servants who refuse to kowtow to the wishes of their 
political masters will have to pay a high price for their integrity 
[Indian Express (Bangalore), 24-1-1991].

The cases of rewards may be very common but cases of 
punishments for honest work get the public attention. Few 
examples are cited here.

(a) B B Vohra, Secretary, Petroleum, Orissa. "The Secretary 
Petroleum who hounded and humiliated in 1977 because he 
stood fast on his facts and decisions. The entire service knew 
he was incorruptible" (Sivaraman:1991:255).

(b) Srikant Ghose, Inspector General of Police (IGP), West Bengal. 
The officer writing his experiences in the Indian Police Service 
discusses the manner in which he was hounded by the 
coalition government after it took charge. He was removed by 
the government from the Inspector-General of Police post and 
kept him waiting for a posting for three months on trumped 
up charges then posted as IGP and Director Vigilance in the 
anti-corruption department. Further he discusses how 
intrigues were engineered in the police department by 
political parties. A case was lodged against him under the 
Prevention of Corruption Act on an advise to the government
by the advocate-general who thought that as the only solution to get rid of him (1984:182-183).

(c) Arun Kumar, Special Superintendent of Police (SSP), Kanpur was transferred for his campaigns against the lottery lobby [Times of India (Bangalore):16-3-1997].

(d) The SSP, Allahabad, Rajnikant Misra, was also transferred immaturely as he was adament in bringing a very influential member of Legislative Assembly to book for his illegal activities [Times of India (Bangalore), 16.3.1997.

(e) "In Bihar, upright public servants had to pay only a small price for tendering honest advice, strictly abiding by the law and the rules and acting in accordance with the principles of further, equity and good conscience. They simply ran the risk of being transferred or being denied key post. But at the centre and in Haryana during the emergency the price they had to pay was unacceptably high. They ran the risk of even being imprisoned (Appu, P S:1986:67).

Arokiyaswamy Prabhakar Durai, the senior most Indian Police Service officer, took over the highest office of Director-General of Police in October 1996. However, he was shifted from the most powerful post of the state police chief to one of not so important, Chief of Railway Protection Force (a
deputation post to the Centre) for fighting "the politicisation and casteising of the police force" [Times of India (Bangalore): 6-3-1997:1] within five months. This in Durai's view is made possible as "Police officers these days are self-seeking and lack the moral courage to speak up when they are wronged" [Times of India (Bangalore): 7-3-1997:4].

After taking over the highest office, Durai wanted to exercise the powers rightfully given to him (in this particular case was transfer of police personnel up to the level of Deputy Superintendents of Police). This, however, displeased the political bosses who generally have a major say in the transfers as it ensures money as well as their influence in the department. The avoidance of political influence in the transfers of police personnel, in the view of police chief, was absolutely necessary as it "forced to give a definite slant to investigation of crimes. They cannot, for instance, arrest followers of their political sponsors. The common man is forced to use money or political clout to get things done" [Times of India (Bangalore): 4-3-1997, p. 1). On the other hand it not only democratises the police force and dilutes professionalism but also deprives officers of their authority leading to loss of public faith.
Appendix 1

There were instances of the nexus between politicians and criminals earlier to this period also. The only difference was that it was in microscopic minority and therefore went unnoticed. "Dr B C Roy of Bengal, Dr S K Sinha of Bihar, Dr Harekrushna Mehtab of Orissa, S K Patil of Maharashtra, Nijalingappa of Karnataka, and Brahmananda Reddy and even former President Sanjeeva Reddy et al had criminal skeletons in their cupboards. The only difference is that in these days skeletons did not reach the floors of Parliament or Legislatures with putrid smell, rattling bones and skulls" [Bhan, Susheela (1995), Criminalization of Politics, Shipra Publication, New Delhi].