PREFACE

"Nobody knows the age of the human race, but all agree that it is old enough to know better," so goes a quotation in "Guide Words—An Anthology of Information and Humour". Perhaps as a footnote to this comes the saying of the 16th century English Poet, Alexander Pope: "The proper study of mankind is man".

Management as a science might have appeared only in the recent past on the horizon of knowledge. But one must admit that man-management has been there, may be in its cruder forms, since time immemorial. Managers of yesteryear years might have used more of sticks than carrots. Personnel Management has only been through an evolution from the day when the first leader of the first group was born, to the days when men were treated like "beasts of burden" and "hired hands", to the present day where we find the factor of labour accepted as the most important factor, where we hear a cry asking for their inclusion as partners in the business and not as workers. "Those who are last will be first, and those who are first will be last." (Matthew, 20:16)

Froude wrote once: "Even after my deep research into the feminine soul, I do not know what a woman really wants". This is true of men also. The realisation that a high salary paid to an employee need not necessarily end in better job performance, took me by surprise when a senior officer in a company (must I say a Public Limited Company?) said: I am in this company only because the company pays me a very high salary. (I have never seen this officer doing anything except complaining.) How then shall we generalise and say: Pay more only to reap more? How true is Professor Jewkes when he says: "Predicted man
is less than human and predicting man in more than human". This field of Personnel Management, since it involves the study of man, the more we go into it the more enigmatic it becomes. It is because of this limitation that Personnel Management, in spite of its rapid growth in recent years, is still in a state of development and much more knowledge remains to be acquired on the subject. The present study: "Personnel Management in Public Sector Industries: A Case Study of Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Industry, Bhadravati, in Karnataka", is a modest attempt in the direction of investigating some of the unexamined areas in the field of Personnel Management in Public Sector Industries in India. In the process of my study, I have mainly depended on the study of the published materials, personal interviews and personal observations. Personal interviews were held with: Workers, worker-loaders, Supervisors, and management-personnel. Selection of the samples was done on a random basis, since the number of those sections was quite large. There are about 11,500 workers and 600 officers in VISL. About 10 per cent of the officers and 2 per cent of the workers were interviewed. Besides, interviews were had with the Labour Commissioner, Bangalore, Labour Secretary, Bangalore, and the local police officers.

Coming to some of the specific limitations of the present study: The thesis had to suffer from lack of secondary data in different aspects of personnel administration. Misplaced files, and sections sans files looked like a common feature of VISL. After all, one cannot invent secondary data about an organization! When some of the instances of mismanagement of personnel were pinpointed to the officers concerned requests were made to ignore them while writing the thesis!
The objective of the study in brief: VISL is the only steel industry in the State of Karnataka and is one of the major industrial units of the State. But today, more often than not, it has been referred to as "the sinking ship of the state". Of the three factors of production: Money, materials and man, when the first two are adequately provided and if a concern is still failing the defect obviously lies in the management of the third factor, viz., MAN. The present study is aimed at testing the veracity of this belief, and if found true suggest some methods to "salvage this sinking ship and other similar ships" of the public sector.

The thesis comprises three parts:

Part One has one chapter which deals in detail about the Public Sector enterprises, coming under Central, State (Karnataka) and Steel Sectors.

Part Two has five chapters:

1. A Proem on Personnel Management: This is a short introduction to Personnel Management.

2. Personnel Structure: This chapter deals with the personnel structure in Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Industry and other Public Enterprises.

3. Selection to Succession: This chapter explains in detail the recruitment policies, selection, induction, training, performance appraisal, promotion, etc., in Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Industry and other Public Enterprises.

4. Remunerating the Personnel: This chapter tells about the efforts of man to earn his livelihood and the intricacies involved in having a scientific remuneration pattern in the
Public Sector.

5. Industrial Relations: It tells about the union activities, labour participation and such other allied matters in Public Enterprises.

Part Three has a concluding Chapter which has suggestions on each of the topics dealt with and their policy implications.

This thesis and I owe debts of gratitude to those who have come before and held their lanterns to help the late-comers see through the field of Personnel Management—from Robert Owen to Andrew Ure, to F W Taylor to Maslow, to Peter Drucker to... the list runs into several pages! (It is not merely an escapism but a truism. A review of literature on personnel management and industrial relations would be so exhaustive that one may think whether it is worthwhile to read/write again such a review, as it has been already made available by institutions like ICSSR, Indian Institute of Management, in their regular abstracts (brought out in the form of a quarterly journal – VIKALPA), etc. Recently (1932/1933) a relevant review of literature was covered at a seminar of Senior Researchers in Public Enterprises held at the Institute of Public Enterprises, Hyderabad, the proceedings of which were brought out in the form of a book by T L Shankar (Chief editor), R K Murra and Davi Shankar (Co-editors):"Public Enterprises in India", Himalaya Publishers, Bombay, 1933. In view of these facts, a separate chapter on review of literature has been dispensed with.)

Besides, my thanks are: to the University Grants Commission for granting me the fellowship: Junior Research Fellowship (29.7.1902 to 20.7.1904), and Senior Research Fellowship (29.7.1904 ...), to the Karnataka University for the administrative and other services given to
and to the staff members of the libraries of the Karnataka University, Xavier's Institute of Social Service, Ranchi, and Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

Also, my thanks are to the management of Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Industry, Dhadharavi, and the Union Leaders at the plant and at some other leading public enterprises, who generously agreed to be interviewed during the course of my field investigations and also supplied useful data on the subject. In particular, I am thankful to Mr. Indraya, Mr. S.S. Shetty, Mr. Puttarachappa, Mr. J. Husain and Mrs. Rajamma (of the VISH), Mr. Michael Dogaert (of the XISS), Dr. Naresh Shal (of the MECON, Ranchi), Mr. J. K. Jha (of the TISCO, Jamshedpur), Mr. Kumar (of the Labour Bureau, Simla) and Mr. H. Jayakumar (of the Karnataka State Bureau of Public Enterprises, Bangalore), without whose help and cooperation this work would not have been completed.

I owe a long-standing debt of gratitude to Dr. K.R. Mallikarjunappa, Head, Department of Commerce, Karnataka University, Dharwad, under whose guidance this work has been completed.

I am grateful also to Dr. A. E. Punit, Dr. Venugopal, Prof. Daniel... who encouraged and performed many other functions that helped usher this work into its present state of being.

December 25, 1984

Anthony Lobo
Department of Commerce
Karnataka University
Dharwad - 3