CHAPTER IX
CONCLUSION

Democracy is a political arrangement by which the people may realize the goals of the state and, out of conflicting and divergent views, select the programmes to achieve them. A democratic government is expected to know the economic system or doctrine of state function. Decisions regarding the relation of the government to the economy and social welfare are worked out through the democratic political process. 1

Finding that the economic stability of the government is rooted in its social objectives, the democratic governments of the world have increasingly turned towards economically viable policies which seek to serve the social objectives as well as the poor. These viable economic policies have taken the institutional framework of public enterprises in modern times. The democratic compulsion on the part of the government has been to feed, clothe and accommodate the poor. In doing so it has to rearrange its resources and experience in a new angle vis-à-vis Development Administration.

Combining the economic viability of the immediate social objectives with the policies and processes of development administration the governments have come to project several welfare programmes. One important area of this social administration is housing.

In Tamil Nadu, the density of population has been increasing by leaps and bounds ever since 1961.

The area of the city of Madras has remained at 49.59 sq. miles. But the density of the population per square mile has increased from 28,938 in 1951 to 35,339 in 1961. The 1961 census has brought to light the pressure of population increase in the surrounding suburban areas. It has estimated the increase at 27.5% which is high by any standards. Secondly, between 1951 and 1961, employment in manufacturing industries went up by 89% bringing more population into the Madras City and its suburbs. Thirdly, urbanization has resulted in the mushroom growth of slums.

The effect of the growth of population, industries and labour and the slums has been an increase in the problem of housing in the Madras City and its suburbs. According to the 1961 census report, the average number of persons living in one house in the Madras City was 11.7 and two thirds of the total households in the city had only one room to live in. Of the total number 1,47,684 houses for a total population of 17,29,141 as many as 59,973 were slum huts.

Forced to face this grave situation the government of Tamil Nadu was propelled to act immediately wisely and decisively. At the same time, the government was not in a strong financial position to construct economic houses for all. Therefore the
Government of Tamil Nadu decided to improve the existing institutional structure for housing, by converting the City Improvement Trust into the Tamil Nadu Housing Board in 1951. Thereby the government could entrust the housing activity to the care of the Board.

The development administration entails a sound organisation, efficient personnel, effective utilisation of finances, autonomy and accountability, careful selection of policies in implementing the housing projects, inducing public participation in administration and so on.

With a view to finding out the relationship between development administration and planned change on the one hand and that between social administration and its ecology on the other, this thesis "Tamil Nadu Housing Board": A study in Development Administration" has attempted to probe into the organisational features, management personnel, finances, autonomy, accountability, schemes and operations and citizen participation of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board. In this enquiry, observational and empirical methods have been employed. Primary data from records, files, reports and personal interviews were gathered. Secondary data were collected from books and articles. An important feature of this enquiry is that a schedule of enquiry was used to study the clientele participation in the administration of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board. The results of this enquiry have been explained analytically.
In the light of the detailed study made on the structure and functioning of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board and its policies, programmes and functions, certain issues which require immediate attention are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

I. A suitable organisational framework is essential for the effective functioning of any public enterprise. Statutory deficiencies, inadequate powers and excessive dependence on the state, are the chief defects that can be found in public enterprises. It is unfortunate that all these three defects are found in the Tamil Nadu Housing Board. The Tamil Nadu Housing Board is a policy board consisting of ex-officio and part-time members none of whom is responsible for specialised functions. The functions of the Board are only supervisory in nature with concern for the general policy and not for operational details. If only this statutory lacuna is overcome, the Board can hope to function successfully.

Secondly, the powers of the Board cannot be said to be adequate. Even in matters of appointment it has to get the prior sanction of the government for posts carrying emoluments which exceed Rs.1,000/- per month. There is overlapping of the powers of the Housing Secretary to the government of Tamil Nadu and the Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board, since, the same person occupies both the offices.

Thirdly, the Board has to depend on the government for several policy decisions, programmes, appointments and finances.
Under such a situation the Board appears to be only one among the several departments of the government.

II. In deciding issues like operational planning, co-ordination, co-operation, span of control centralisation, decentralisation, red-tapism and corruption, the management of an enterprise should steer clear of the pitfalls in the path of organizational goals. In these respects, the Tamil Nadu Housing Board has so far failed.

The lack of perspective operational planning in the Tamil Nadu Housing Board can be seen from the manner in which money is allotted for various schemes both in the Madras Metropolitan Area and the other areas throughout Tamil Nadu. A systematic resource allotment between schemes for economically weaker section, low income group, middle income group and higher income group is found to be wanting. For example, in 1971-72 and 1972-73 for the economically weaker section no allotment was made.

Secondly, lack of co-ordination between revenue collection and accounting has resulted in huge amounts as arrears. Till 31st January, 1973, the arrears of rent amounted to well over Rs.2 crores.

Thirdly, the issue of centralization looms large in matters of execution of works. A permanent tussle between the Chief Engineer at the Head Quarters and the Executive Engineers and Administrative Officers with regard to Tenders is a common feature.
Fourthly, the affirmation by 69.69% of the respondents in our survey as to the existence of red-tapism, and the existence of corruption by 47.41% of the respondents is clear pointer for managerial improvements.

III. The development administration depends to a large extent on the careful selection and placement of employees who form the very core of the organisation. Even here, the Tamil Nadu Housing Board has been facing several problems. It is beset with problems of recruitment, training, promotion and labour unions.

With regard to the recruitment of typists and junior assistants, who form the bulk of the personnel, the rules and regulations are very often violated. The non-technical side, especially the audit and accounts wing, does not get any pre-entry or post-entry training. As and when vacancies arise promotion lists are haphazardly drawn and never once regular panels of promotions are prepared. The unwillingness on the part of the government to recognise the labour unions has led to unhappiness among the employees.

IV. Finance is the backbone of a public enterprise. It should strike a balance between scarce resources and limitless demands. To be sound in financial matters, an organic integration of the process of resource mobilisation, budgeting, accounting and auditing is needed. In the Tamil Nadu Housing Board it is
found that resource mobilisation is found to be very meagre. The budgeting is found to be defective with the result that the scarce resources are underutilised. The accounting in the Tamil Nadu Housing Board is improper and far from satisfactory and the same can be known from the fact that the accounts of the period 1964-65 are yet to be submitted. The internal auditing system has not functioned well either.

V. The commercial success that any public enterprises enjoys depends on the extent to which it has autonomy and accountability. The Tamil Nadu Housing Board does not enjoy absolute autonomy. However, the executive restrictions seem to block what little initiative the Board has. The legislative control over the Tamil Nadu Housing Board has been carried through starred and unstarred questions and the Committee on Public Undertakings. At present, the control of the legislature over the Tamil Nadu Housing Board is not adequate.

VI. Proper planning of a project with a definite time schedule, execution of projects, evaluation of projects in various stages of their progress, evaluation of annual production targets and management of completed projects form the basic core of planning, execution and estate management of public enterprises. The project formulation is based on the maintenance of property, perspective planning, feasibility studies and the users' preference. The Tamil Nadu Housing Board has received for its
services, recognition from the various sections of the community. While the schemes at Ashok Nagar and K.K. Nagar have been well appreciated by the community, the project of Kotturpuram has received the utmost criticism of all.

While implementing the projects, information about costs, speedy execution, and scrupulous spending of money are essential. The upward revision of the total cost is a recurring feature in the Tamil Nadu Housing Board and several schemes are never finished within project periods and estimates. The wood-working-unit is an example of how money has been spent irresponsibly.

So the criticism that construction has not been well planned and that the final cost has been revised again and again, an argument from Thiru A. Subbiah, Madras comes handy. He writes in "The Hindu", dated 5.5.1976 as follows:

"I fully agree with the opinion expressed by Mr. M. Ramanathan, under the above caption. An institution intended to help the public is actually harassing them in every possible way. The flats constructed by them for the economically weaker sections at Visalakshi Thottam, Mylapore stand as a clear proof of their "Nobody-can-question-us" attitude. Their advertisement about the scheme has made the public to believe that each flat would contain one living room, one bed room, a kitchen, functional lobby, bath room and w.c. within 275 sq.ft. but the constructed flats have only two rooms (without a door in between the rooms) within 130 sq.ft. and no kitchen at all. The cost fixed for the flat remains the same. They have gone to the extent of forfeiting the earnest money deposit of those who refuse to accept their allotment for the reason that the flats are not securing to their specification mentioned in their advertisement."
I am one among them who is fighting to get the deposit refunded. It is high time the government of Tamil Nadu intervened and took necessary steps to set right the affairs of the Housing Board in order to make the institution really helpful to the public."

With regard to the estate management of completed projects, three things are important: (i) adequate information on co-ordination between accounting, establishment and the citizens; (ii) the proper collection of instalments of rent, and (iii) adequate dealing with defaulters. However, the Tamil Nadu Housing Board has not been very successful in the estate management. There is enough evidence to this fact in our field study as both rent payers and flat owners have expressed displeasure about the quality of maintenance of the housing colonies of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board in various respects.

The tardy way in which the estate management is being carried by the Tamil Nadu Housing Board, has been highlighted in "The Hindu" dated 6.12.1976 by Thiru A. G. Krishnamurthy, Madras in the following letter.

"The Tamil Nadu Government has taken timely action to enquire into the construction of the tenements by the Housing Board in Kotturpuram, in the wake of the crumbling down of some of the apartments. There is a good case for extending the scope of the enquiry to all the Housing Board flats in Madras. It is not wise to confine the enquiry to the solitary instance in the immediately affected area alone.

I had my own experience in Foreshore Estate where the existing one-room tenements constructed some 15 years ago for the fishermen are now being allotted to the Government servants. Most of the apartments are not only leaking but also developing cracks. In such places the housing authorities
have put up a second floor without properly assessing whether the building will be able to withstand such a super structure. It is a careful examination of the building with its present position and condition is made, one may find that there is some risk of similar mishaps in the Foreshore Estate also. The maintenance of the whole estate is unsatisfactory and remains unattended to for the past several years. It is high time that some responsible officer is asked to inspect the apartments in the Foreshore Estate immediately and refer this area also for enquiry for their soundness.

VII. As a general rule, government policies do not materialise unless there is popular response from the public. In housing policy a large segment of the public believes the policy to be wise and hence there is good clientele participation.

Our field study reveals that 49.63% of the respondents desire participation in the affairs of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board. But analysing the community participation by the standards set by Godschalk it may be found that the Tamil Nadu Housing Board has always had a discouraging attitude towards community participation. There is no interaction between the clientele and the planning machinery.

Certain issues relating to the organisation, management etc., of the Board present a dismal picture of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board. At the same time, on the basis of the achievements of the Board, it may be concluded that the housing effort on the part of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board is not bad at all.
In fact, 66.67% of the respondents interviewed are satisfied with the performance of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board.

There can be no denial of the fact that most people are satisfied with the policies and programmes and objectives of the Board, but what is important is that there is need to tune up the administration of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board so that it lives up to its pronounced aims and expectations of the public at large whose interests it seeks to serve. Therefore the following suggestions are made for the authorities to take note of.

The Board, which is merely a policy Board at present suffers from the limitation imposed by its statute, which should be amended to make the Board both advisory and supervisory in its capacity. And more comprehensive powers may be given to the Chairman of the Board. Further, conferring financial autonomy on the Board would be conducive to its efficient functioning. Decentralisation of powers within the department too would be desirable and the Administrative Officers and Executive Engineers who are scattered in the field may be allowed more powers with regard to tenders. This would fix the responsibility on the officials and lead to speedy execution of the programmes. Thus red-tapism might be brought to the minimum and corruption should be given a check with an effective mechanism.

The efficiency of the Board bears a direct correlation to the quality of its staff. Therefore the personnel should be
recruited on the basis of merit and for this purpose a recruitment board may be constituted. This Board should be responsible for recruiting all the personnel with strict adherence to the criterion of merit. And the staff recruited should be given specialised training. Those recruited in the Audit and Accounts department should be given greater importance in matters of training. A seniority list should be prepared so as to avoid anomalies in departmental promotions. This would boost the morale of the employees, and this can be taken to its completion if the government comes forward to recognise the trade unions.

As for finance, the powers should be allowed to the Board to formulate its financial schemes and to execute them. The present Rs.5 lakhs ceiling which specifies prior government approval should be raised to Rs.10 lakhs. This will give more financial autonomy to the Board.

In order to justify the desired autonomy the Board must strive to make the best utilisation of available resources. Unproductive schemes like cellular concrete plant and wood-working unit may be given up or made to work in a profitable line so that they do not siphon into the public purse.

The accounting system should be rationalised by introducing performance audit and by streamlining the internal audit. The executive control in matters of finance, capital expenditure, borrowings and rules and regulations should be relaxed. To
enhance their creditability, the annual report of the Board should be submitted to the legislature, to which they are accountable.

In order to ensure efficiency in estate management, prompt completion of the schemes should be emphasized. The cost finalization of flats and houses must be done within a reasonable period of time. And adequate property management of the completed projects should not be ignored.

The scheme of the Board should show a bias towards the economically weaker sections with special emphasis on the subsidized industrial housing schemes. Above all, the minor problems of the flat/house owners should be alleviated by coordinating the activities of the Board with those of Madras Metropolitan Authority, Tamil Nadu Electricity Board and the Madras City Corporation.

A meaningful participation by the public in such affairs of the Board as planning strategy, planning content and planning method, so as to insculcate the sense of involvement among the clientele. Further, the federation of the clientele should be represented in the Board, and the activities of the Public Relations Officer should be catalysed. The problem of migration of the rural people to the urban areas should be studied in all its objectivity with the co-ordination of such other agencies as Madras Metropolitan Authority and the Madras City Corporation.