

When beyond the reach of the political



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When appointments are left to the exclusive control of the political executive, it is a prolific source of corruption in public life. This is clear from the experience of every modern State. The notorious spoils system in the United States led to administrative dislocation and a public scandal.

Before the Haileybury experiment, Civil Service in Britain had little to commend itself. Unless the public service is beyond the reach of the political executive, it is inevitable that the mind of the minister should be devoted not only to the problems of his office, but to the need of rewarding his followers. Public servants recruited under these circumstances “ will use the posts they fill not for the importance of their duties, but for lining their own pockets at the public expense.” It will deplete the public service of experience, ability, and expertness which are so essential for the efficient conduct of public administration. Appointment of public servants, therefore, should be made under rules which may reduce to a minimum the chance of personal favouritism.

The principle of open competition for recruitment is the only satisfactory method which can commend itself. This means that for all, except purely technical posts, admission to the Administrative Services must be on the sole basis of being able to satisfy suitable tests for the type of appointment vacant. The Trevelan Committee in Britain recommended that “ as an indispensable means of attracting able young men into the service, admission should be placed on basis of competitive examinations open to all administered by an independent Central Board.” Experience has shown that the competitive examination system has proved the more satisfactory method of selection for the civil service. Another important principle for the

recruitment is that entrance to the public service should normally be at the age, when, in a similar position in ordinary life, a young man or woman expects to earn a living. It means adoption of Civil Service as a permanent career or professionalisation of Civil Service. According to Professor Milton Mandell, it is a system “ predicated on recruiting young men and women with capacity to learning and growth, training them in order to develop and utilise their aptitudes, and offering them opportunities for advancement in responsibility and remuneration.” Willoughby defines the term Government Services Career as “ a system that offers equal opportunities to all citizens to enter the government service, equal pay to all employees doing work requiring the same degree of intelligence and capacity, equal opportunities for advancement, equally favourable conditions and equal participation in retirement allowances, and makes equal demands upon the employees.

” Prospective candidates are recruited in service at an early age, during their formative period, and are, then, systematically trained in the technique of administration with a view also that they should possess the intrinsic qualities which a civil servant should possess. The theory is that civil service has a distinct character of its own. “ It is different,” as Finer says, “ from business, from an art, from teaching, from other professions. Its objectives are individual, its spirit and methods are special.

” The young people, therefore, should enter the government service at an age “ when their minds are open to influence by the individual character of government activity.” By making civil service a career, the government guarantees to its employees permanence of tenure of office, the fullest freedom of advancement and promotion and a comfortable pension on

retirement. It also entails the systematic classification of government jobs. When the employees of a government cover such a large number of people performing diverse jobs and representing almost every vocation, occupation and profession, it is necessary to standardise and classify their positions in order to integrate them into a pyramidal structure.

It should really be the sine qua non and, indeed, the starting point of public employment. Such a classification and standardisation help to settle the questions of pay, line of promotion, requirements of transfer and other day-to-day matters concerning the service.