

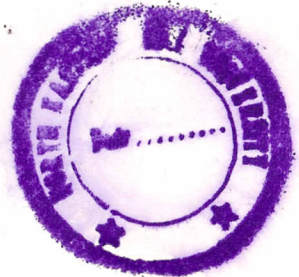
HIGHER BUREAUCRACY IN MEGHALAYA  
AND  
ITS ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

BY

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I

INTRODUCTION

The developing countries are committed to the twin goals of nation-building and socio-economic development. This commitment to the goals of nation-building and socio-economic development involves a rapid and sustained change both on social and economic fronts. Changes in the developing countries are basic and large-scale and are sought to be brought about within a short period of time. This underlines the imensity of the task that the developing countries are facing. They have to come out of their traditional social and cultural moorings and have to accommodate their traditional values, attitudes and institutions to the demands of social and economic change. They have to widen the people's participation in political process and developmental programmes. They have also to create new opportunities and to enlarge the range of distribution of economic benefits so as to satisfy the people's aspirations for upward mobility. As S.J. Elderevald, A.P. Barnabas and V. Jagannadham observe, the problem confronting the developing countries "is to accommodate the past with the modern present, to economize resources in the face of mounting and cumulating crises, and to elicit intelligent and meaningful co-operation from a public thus far ignorant and indifferent in

its orientations towards the distant government".<sup>1</sup> All these problems need to be grappled with and solved simultaneously to bring about desired changes for the development of the country.

In this task, the government has to play a crucial role in planning, initiating and executing developmental programmes and activities. It has to function not only as the 'prime energizer' of development efforts but also as an agent of change. In acting as an agent of change what the government needs more is the public co-operation without which a well-conceived plan of development is likely to become ineffective. The public co-operation in the nation-building activities depends upon three factors: (1) "the degree of value-congruence between the modernising elites and the mass of citizens; (2) effectiveness of the political sector in problem-solving; and (3) the extent of structural shift in the distribution of political power".<sup>2</sup>

The above mentioned three factors are the conditions necessary for

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1. S.J. Eldereveld, A.P. Barnabas, and V. Jayannadhan, The Citizen and the Administrator in a Developing Democracy: An Empirical Study in Delhi State, (New-Delhi: The Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1968), p.2.
  2. Shanti Kothari and Ramashray Roy, Relations between Politicians and Administrators at the District Level (New-Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration and the Centre of Applied Politics, 1969), p.5.

getting support for a political system. But, what are the structures which can effectively mobilise such support ? There are two structures for mobilising support, i.e., the "administrative system" and "political leadership".<sup>3</sup>

Between the two structures, the bureaucratic structure is more important than the political structure because it has firm roots in developing countries.

"While political leadership, party organisation, the electoral system, and elected legislatures all are in a state of flux, bureaucracy continues to provide permanent leadership in the administration of developing societies".<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to the political structures, the bureaucratic structures of government are well institutionalised and show stability and continuity.

Consequently, developmental efforts have to rely heavily on bureaucratic structure.

Bureaucracy in India

Before we formulate any specific issue for discussion, it will be worthwhile to provide a historical perspective of administration in India which will help us in understanding the impact of historical forces on the present bureaucratic system.

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3. Ibid, p.6.

4. C.P.Shembri, Administrators in a Changing Society (First ed., Delhi: National Publishing House, 1972), p.17.

Bureaucracy, as we understand to-day, did not exist in India before the advent of the British rule. It was the British who laid the foundation of modern bureaucracy in India, a bureaucracy based on rules, well defined authority, integrated hierarchical structure, and merit and open competition. The British period is characterised by unification of the sub-continent and the establishment of a single political rule which became possible through an elaborate and integrated administrative system. Based on the district pattern of the Moghuls, a hierarchical structure of administration was established from the centre downward with the provinces and districts acting as the subordinate agencies.<sup>5</sup> The basic Moghul structure of district administration was retained but was strengthened by converting it into modern bureaucratic organisation.

Initially, the Britishers came to India for trading purpose. But gradually, the company began to acquire territorial jurisdiction and political power, culminating in the building up of the British Empire in India. At the initial stage of empire-building, the mercantile employees of the company became the administrators and the term 'Civil Service' acquired its present meaning.<sup>6</sup>

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5. Rajni Kothari, Politics in India, (New-Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd., 1972), p.38.

6. Biswanath Prasad, The Indian Administrative Service, (New-Delhi: S.Chand & Co., 1968), p.11.

A youngman was recruited first as an 'Apprentices', the other superior grades were those of 'Writers', 'Factors', 'Junior Merchants', and 'Senior Merchants'. In the beginning, the candidates were selected by the Court of Directors on their request or petition. But by an order of 1731 that "in future all petitions for employment in the Company's service, either at home or abroad, be presented by some gentlemen in the Direction",<sup>7</sup> there emerged the patronage of the Directors and the covenanted civil service virtually became the monopoly of certain families. To a considerable extent, recruitment to the Civil Service under East India Company was made from the governing classes and wealthy professional classes at home. They were paid poorly but they augmented their income by private initiative such as private dealings, maintenance of monopoly of control of new products, and collection of grafts on taxes and receipt of gifts.<sup>8</sup>

But as the company grew and its responsibility increased, interest of the Civil Servants ran counter to the interest of the company. In some cases, exaction on the local population led to war as well as serious financial deficit for the company. As a result of this, attempts were made to place limits

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7. Quoted by Biswanath Prasad, Ibid.

8. P.L. Bansal, Administrative Development in India, (New-Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1974), p.2.

on the rapacity of the Company's servants, so that by serving the company well they could also serve themselves. This was done by the Regulating Act of 1773 which made a distinction between the Civil and the Commercial functions of the company and abolished the right of private trading and acceptance of gifts by those personnel who were engaged in the civil administration of the company.<sup>9</sup> In 1776, salaries were raised for the first time and it was argued that mere legislation could not remove corruption unless the officials were placed above temptation which was possible only through payment of good salaries.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Lord Wellesley's accession to the office of the Governor-General marked the beginning of a new phase in India. His arrival ushered in the dawn of imperialism in all its dimensions. Administratively, it gave rise to the need for a strong and trained bureaucracy, an executive administration based on a combination of powers. Thus, for the purpose of making an institutional arrangement for the regular training and education of the Civil Servants, the Fort William College was established in Calcutta in 1800, which was later on replaced by the Haileybury College in England in 1805.<sup>10</sup> Though the opinion is divided as regards the objectives and

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9. B.S.Misra, Bureaucracy in India: A Historical Analysis of Development upto 1947, (First ed., Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 46-47.

10. Banerji, Loc.cit.

performance of Haileybury College, its common training programme did help the Civil Servants to be efficient, honest and upright, on the one hand, and make them believe in social exclusivity, on the other. The Civil Servants "became in themselves a social class, class of aristocracy of talent, race and even of colour".<sup>11</sup>

The growth of imperialism and free trade also made it necessary to replace the patronage of the company through public examination. The Act of 1833 proposed the introduction of limited competition but it did not materialise.<sup>12</sup>

The Macaulay Committee which was appointed in 1853 to report on the subject, strongly recommended an examination that was to be on subjects of liberal education rather than on those especially more useful to Indian Civil Servants; no premium was to be held out for knowledge, wide surface and small depth.<sup>13</sup>

On the basis of the Macaulay Committee's report, the first examination was held in 1855 and the service came to be known as the Indian Civil Service which represented the best elite from the best families of England.<sup>14</sup>

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11. Ibid., p.4.

12. Misra, op.cit., p.65.

13. Prasad, op.cit., p.14.

14. N.K. Singhi, Bureaucracy: Positions and Persons, (First ed., New-Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1974), p.16.

The Indian Civil Service was a generalist service and the I.C.S. officers could be placed in any job and was considered fit for it. "There was no department-police, forest, opium, salt, education, health- where he could not be posted".<sup>15</sup> The I.C.S. was the sole repository of power in Indian Society.<sup>16</sup> It provided good income, power and high prestige and status. The status of the I.C.S. was evident from the large amount of dowry which they could command on marriage.<sup>17</sup>

The I.C.S. officers occupied superior positions in the administration and were always at the top of the administrative hierarchy. The superior positions of the I.C.S. in administrative hierarchy were jealously guarded by the British, and as a group, the I.C.S. became exclusive.<sup>18</sup> The main function of the I.C.S. was the maintenance of law and order and the collection of revenue. It was a service eminently suited for governing a colonial empire. The I.C.S. officers did not need to share their authority with any local body or assembly. Their function was to govern from above and they were neither

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15. Ibid., p.19.  
 16. W.H. Morris-Jones, The Government and Politics of India, (Bombay: S.I. Publications, 1974), p.23.  
 17. Richard P. Yamb, Bureaucrats under Stress, (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1969), p.11.  
 18. C.P. Bhanbhri, Bureaucracy and Politics in India, (First ed., Delhi: Vikas Publications, 1971), p.59.

responsible nor responsive to the people. Describing the function of the

I.C.S., N.C. Roy observes:

From the very start they (members of the I.C.S.) chose some functions as the essential duties of the government. They concentrated all their efforts upon their performance and they performed them with as much efficiency as their general education, natural ability and special training might allow. They showed their genius in particularly building up the administrative structure which had collapsed in the great anarchy. They had great achievement to their credit in making law and order and in dealing with revenue problems. Beyond these functions they were loath to look. This narrow outlook was engendered in them partly by the fact that in the nineteenth century Britain, Laissez-faire was the principle which had struck root. Secondly, being mostly Britishers, the Civil Servants were interested in the maintenance of British supremacy and not with those other functions which might administer to the welfare of the people but might also have sown seeds of dissolution of the British Empire in India.<sup>19</sup>

#### Post-Independence Period

In August, 1947, the British left the country but the administrative system they built up during their colonial period remained intact not only in its form but also in its characteristics.<sup>20</sup> Writing about the inadequacies of Indian bureaucracy, Taylor, Ensminger and their associates point out that

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19. Quoted by Bansal, op.cit., p.7.

20. Morris-Jones, op.cit., p.25.

"... the inadequacies of Indian bureaucracy are not due to the fact that it is a bureaucracy but due, to a considerable extent, to the fact that it carries too much baggage from the past".<sup>21</sup> In fact, there has not been any significant break with the past. Of course, after independence, it was difficult for the national leaders to bring about a wholesale change in the administrative system, a system which was credited with establishing political unification of the country. The nation after independence, was confronted with many complex problems like those of the integration of the country, communal riots and the influx of a large number of refugees from both the Eastern and Western sectors of Pakistan. The law and order situation at that time was also under threat. The combination of all these factors left very little choice before the national leaders but to continue with the administrative system that was pre-eminently suited for a colonial country.

After independence, the I.A.S. occupied the place of the I.C.S. and provided top administrative personnel to the Central as well as to the State Governments. The recruitment pattern has almost remained the same following Macaulay's principles of liberal education, generalist and not specialised

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21. Quoted by Kuldeep Mathur, Bureaucratic Response to Development, (First ed., Delhi: National Publishing House, 1972), pp.2-3.

competitive examination, and early age recruitment. The Union Public Service Commission conducts competitive examinations every year for recruitment to Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Foreign Service and other Central services while the State Public Service Commissions hold competitive examinations for recruitment to the respective State services.

The conditions of eligibility and the courses for I.A.S., etc. examinations are shown in table 1:1. Any Indian citizen between the age of twenty-one and twenty-six years holding a degree from a recognised College or University is eligible for the competitive examination. For the I.P.S., however, the age limit is twenty to twenty-six years. The upper age limit is relaxable by five years in case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates and eight years in special cases.

The examination (upto 1979) consists of a written test and a viva-voce. Candidates who qualify in the written test are called for interview. Until 1956, candidates who failed to secure a minimum percentage of marks in the interview were not considered eligible to enter the service, regardless of their performance in the written examination. However, at present, each part of the examination is given a numerical value. Candidates performing well in

the written examination may compensate for poor performance in the interview.<sup>22</sup>

The subjects for written examination include three compulsory papers and two optional papers for I.P.S. and three for the I.A.S. and central services. In addition, the candidates opting for the I.A.S. and I.F.S. are required to offer two advanced papers.

Women, may, however, compete only if they are unmarried. If a woman marries subsequent to entering the service she may be asked to resign, if the maintenance of the efficiency of the service so requires.

However, following the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, the U.P.S.C. introduced certain changes in the scheme of examination since 1979.<sup>23</sup> Now, the commission annually holds an uniform examination called Civil Service Examinations.<sup>24</sup> Any Indian citizen who is a graduate from a recognised university and whose age is between twenty-one and twenty-eight years is eligible for the Civil Service Examinations. The upper age limit is relaxable by three to eight years in different cases.

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22. Taub, op.cit., p.29.

23. For details of the new scheme, see table 1:2.

24. The material regarding the Civil Service Examination is collected from Employment News (Special Supplement) of 20th December, 1980.

The examination comprises two successive stages: Civil Service Preliminary Examination (Objective Type) for the selection of candidates for the main examination; and the Civil Service Main Examination (written and interview) for the selection of candidates for the various services and posts.

The Preliminary Examination consists of two papers of objective type (multiple-choice questions) and carries a maximum of 450 marks. This examination is meant to serve as a screening test only, the marks obtained in the Preliminary Examination by the candidates who are declared qualified for admission to the Main Examination are not counted for determining their final order of merit. The number of candidates admitted to the Main Examination are about ten times the total approximate number of vacancies to be filled in the year in the various services and posts.

The Main Examination consists of a written examination and an interview test. The written examination consists of eight papers of conventional essay type each carrying 300 marks. However, the papers on Indian Languages and English are of qualifying nature and the marks obtained in these papers are not counted for ranking. Candidates who obtain such minimum qualifying marks as fixed by the Commission are summoned for an interview for a Personality Test.

The number of candidates called for interview are generally twice the number of vacancies to be filled in. The interview carries 250 marks with no minimum qualifying marks.

Marks thus obtained by the candidates in the Main Examination (written part as well as interview) determines their final ranking. Candidates are allocated to various services on the basis of their ranks in the examination and the preferences expressed by them for different services.

Although passing the examination is the primary route to enter the I.A.S., there are two other ways in which members can be recruited into the service. The first is the emergency or special recruitment while the second alternative route is by promotion from the state civil services.

After the final selection the candidates are imparted training at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration at Mussorie. There is difference in training programme of I.A.S. and other services, common emphasis being laid on imparting training to equip officers for undertaking programmes of socio-economic development. The training period for an entrant to the I.A.S. both at Mussorie and in the district spans about twenty-eight months before

he is placed in an independent position.<sup>25</sup>

There is no central cadre of the I.A.S. and the new recruits confirmed in the service are permanently placed by the central government in a particular state cadre. The I.A.S. officers come on deputation to the centre. However, the I.A.S. officers are governed by the rules framed by the central government.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, we find that there is a continuity of British administrative tradition in the new setting after independence. The Indian Administrative Service constituted on the model of I.C.S. has maintained its elitist character.<sup>27</sup> Even the recent changes introduced by the U.P.S.C. in the system of recruitment maintain the generalist and liberal orientation of the recruits.

#### New Tasks

After independence, the total environment and ethos of the country underwent a qualitative change and the bureaucracy which has its genesis in the colonial period has now to function in a new context, a context which is

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25. Singhi, op.cit., p.42.

26. Ibid.

27. Ghambhri "Administrators in a changing Society", op.cit., p.24.



fundamentally different from that of the British regime. The first is the changed political context. Democratic elections, political parties, competitive politics, and parliamentary government provided a radically new dimension. The bureaucrats have now to function in a representative and democratic set-up where he is not only responsible to the higher ups in his cadre but also to the elected representatives of the people. The democratic institutions like the cabinets, legislatures, political parties and pressure groups provide the framework of purposes, goals and resources within which the bureaucracy has now to operate. "It has to be sensitive to the policies laid down by the Cabinets and legislatures, the values and purposes of the leadership, and the interests and pressures of political parties and socio-economic groups".<sup>28</sup> Secondly, the ideal of welfare state has been accepted under the Constitution. The government has also emphasized its commitment to the goal of socialism. The goals of nation-building and modernisation have been given first priority by the planners and policy-makers. The execution of all these programmes and activities are dependent upon the effective functioning of administrative machinery. Thirdly, the administrators are no more the rulers. They are the servants of the people. They are required to give up their authoritarian attitude and be dedicated to the

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28. C.N. Shaleroo, "Bureaucracy as an Institution of Modernisation: Some Issues", Administrative Change in India (ed.) Ramash K. Aurora (Jaipur: Aalokh Publishers, n.d.), p.62.

service of the people. They are not to serve the people from above. To develop a society which is largely backward and traditional, the administrators have to go to the villages not only to collect revenue and taxes but also to educate the people, to help them in improving agricultural yields, to conduct election, to build roads and bridges and to help the sick and ailing persons. In other words, they have now to carry on administration with the participation and co-operation of the people. Emphasising the new context, role and responsibilities of the administrators in independent India, late Shri G.B. Pant pointed out:

to serve the villagers, you have to identify yourself with rural life; to find joy in the air you breathe and consciousness [sic] of the fact that you are engaged in the act of building of a new society. You have to train people in the art of life and in the art of living. You have to see that they move, they move onward and they are not pushed onward artificially. Let them learn the art which will enable them to secure for themselves what you want them to possess. Unless you try to influence without imposing something from above, your success will be short-lived".<sup>29</sup>

Finally, with the establishment of democracy after independence, the Indian masses began to be politicised and conscious of their own rights. As a result of government initiative and programmes, the social structure and values also

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29. Quoted by Mathur, op.cit., p.6.

gradually began to undergo changes. The universal adult franchise and agro-industrial development has changed the basic Indian Philosophy, a philosophy under which the people were expected only to obey the government.<sup>30</sup> The concept of 'Me-baap Sarkar' is no more in existence. The bureaucracy has now come to function among the people who are conscious of their rights and who not only obey but also make demands upon the administration. The new administrative system of India emphasizes "a public not parasitic in its relationship to the administrative system, but participant, a public which accepted duties as well as made demands, a public confident in administrative hierarchy and motivated to share in the responsibilities of development".<sup>31</sup>

Thus, under the new set-up, the area of bureaucratic functioning has enlarged both quantitatively and qualitatively. Its function is no longer limited to the maintenance of law and order; it has now to undertake vast and complex tasks of nation-building and socio-economic development. But what role does the bureaucracy actually play in this task of nation-building and socio-economic development? If newspaper accounts, the criticisms voiced in the Parliament, State Legislatures and the public, the findings of research

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30. Bhanbhri, "Administrators in a Changing Society", op.cit., p.19.

31. S.J. Eldereveld, V.Jagannathan and A.P.Sarnabas, op.cit., pp. 7-8.

scholars and the criticisms of the Administrative Reforms Commission and similar Commissions in the States are any indication of bureaucratic performance, a gloomy picture appears as an answer to this question. Almost everyday, there are criticisms that the bureaucracy has failed in its task of nation-building and development. Not only has the Indian bureaucracy failed as an instrument of social change, it is also resistant to change within itself. Over the years, there has been an increase in corruption and inefficiency in the bureaucracy; its independence, integrity and devotion to public interest have also been undermined. It is now widely recognized that such a bureaucracy is ill-equipped for the massive and complex tasks of nation-building and socio-economic development.

But why has the bureaucracy failed in its task of nation-building and socio-economic development? In the present study, we propose to examine this question with particular reference to the higher bureaucracy in Meghalaya. The reason for restricting the scope of our enquiry to the higher echelon of bureaucracy is that, being <sup>the</sup> managerial-group in the bureaucracy, it is more likely to have a direct bearing on economic, political and other kinds of national development. It is the higher bureaucrats who are called upon to provide policy counsel, to assist in the formulation of programmes, and to engage in

the management and direction of administration for translating policy-goals into realities.

The hypothesis, which is the subject of the present enquiry, is that the bureaucracy is unable to perform its role effectively in the task of nation-building and development because of the divergence between its structural-behavioural elements and the new demands placed upon it. With its old and worn-out structure, the bureaucracy is called upon to provide leadership in the stupendous task of nation-building and development. This divergence is one of the most important sources of strain upon the bureaucracy and leads to a number of problems which need critical examination.

Guided by the above hypothesis, an attempt is made in this study to identify some of the problems the higher bureaucracy faces in Meghalaya in the performance of its role as an instrument of development. The present study has been divided into seven chapters. Chapter one gives an outline of the present study while chapter two describes the setting and sample of the study. Chapter three deals with the socio-economic background of the bureaucrats, and chapter four, with the structural framework in which they work. In chapter five, we deal with the strains resulting from democratisation and in chapter

six, we analyze bureaucratic dysfunctions. Finally, chapter seven sums up the study dovetailing the preceding discussion along with a study of the value commitment of the bureaucrats.

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## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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

But, what role does the higher bureaucracy in Naghalaya play in the socio-economic transformation of the state? Critics of Indian bureaucracy (of which the Naghalaya 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.

Dube pointed out:

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1. Joseph LaPalombara, "An Overview", Bureaucracy and Political Development, ed. Joseph LaPalombara (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp.4-5.
  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 resistances 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 doubtless is some evidence of adaptation, adjustment, and accommodation, but on the whole the situation is still largely fluid.<sup>3</sup>

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 man who is useful when the primary concern of bureaucracy is the maintenance of law and order.<sup>4</sup>

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

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3. S.C. Dube, "Bureaucracy and Economic Development", The Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. XII, No. 3, (July-September, 1966), p. 304.

4. Joseph LaPalombara, "An Overview", Bureaucracy and Political Development, ed. Joseph LaPalombara, op. cit., p. 12.

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 organisational structure as well as to the bureaucratic behaviour because developmental administration refers to the organisational 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.<sup>5</sup> Thus, here, the study will be divided into two parts: in the first part, we shall deal with the organisational 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 organisational structure in the

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5. V.A. Pai Panandikar, "Developmental Administrations: An Approach", The Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol.X, No.1, (January-March, 1964), pp.35-36.

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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. 76.36 percent of the bureaucrats in our sample have had an urban background while 85.46 percent of the people in the state live in rural areas. Again, 60.89 percent of the bureaucrats have had an annual parental income of Rs.5,000/- and above. This urban middle-class orientation of the higher bureaucrats poses a dilemma; being predominantly a rural state, Meghalaya has emphasised rural programs in

its developmental plan.<sup>6</sup> Although the correlation between the socio-economic background of the bureaucrats and the nature of their functioning yet remains to be established, Richard Tabb in his study of Biharwastha has noted the ignorance of the urbanised bureaucrats about the problems of rural India.<sup>7</sup> 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:

... I have a feeling that public services in our country are manned 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 making 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 so 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 an 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 methods 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

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6. For details about the state's plan, see Draft Annual Plan, 1978-79, Planning Department, Government of Naghalsya.

7. Tabb, op.cit., pp.122-125.

of the rural population among the services.<sup>8</sup>

The other structural elements of the organisation in West Bengal are also not suitable for effective bureaucratic performance. As at the centre and in other states, in West Bengal also there exists 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 outmoded 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.

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8. C.D. Deshmukh, Chairman, Morale in the Public Service (Report of a Conference, January 3-4, 1959), (New-Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration, August, 1959), p.17.

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 [money] were surrendered and the objectives of budgeting were not achieved".<sup>9</sup>

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 decisions, the suspicion that they do, proves more

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9. Public Accounts Committee Report, 1972-73, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, page 24, para, 30.1.

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 bureaucrats 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, Hoselitz aptly observes:

The demands of economic development in all these countries [developing 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 generalization of interpersonal economic relations in a developing country and hence the pressures for economic

development tend to support the struggle against them.<sup>10</sup>

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.<sup>11</sup>

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 hinders co-operation among the bureaucrats, and thus, prevent them from

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10. Another S.F. Henselitz, "Levels of Economic Performance and Bureaucratic Structure", Bureaucracy and Political Development, ed. Joseph LaPalombara, op.cit., p.191.
11. Joseph LaPalombara, "Bureaucracy and Political Development: Notes, Queries and Dilemmas", Bureaucracy and Political Development, ed., Joseph LaPalombara, op.cit., p.54.

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 "... motivation 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 motivation and job satisfaction of its personnel".<sup>12</sup>

The administrative scene also witnesses increasing violation 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-fungry politicians. The confidence and security of the higher bureaucrats have been

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12. V.A. Pai Panandiker, "Values, Attitudes and Motivation of Civil Servants", The Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. XIII, No. 3, (July-September, 1966), p. 552.

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 became 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 pressurise 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 influence not only paralyse the administration but also proves

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 bureaucrats 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 Peshawar 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 Riggs<sup>13</sup>

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13. For details see Fred W. Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries, op.cit.

considers corruption to be the concomitant of development, bureaucratic corruption in Meghalaya, as in the other third world countries, poses a challenge to the very viability of the system.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup>

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- 14. Referring to the wide-spread corruption in the state one M.L.A. said: "...corruption exists in our state and that is, the reason why developmental works cannot progress and there is not sign of clean administration ...if we give indulgence to such practices, 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.29.
  - 15. J.N. Anand, "Foreword" in S. Divedy and G.S. Bhargava's Political Corruption in India, (First ed., New-Delhi: Popular Book Service, 1967), p.VIII.

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 bureaucrats as reflected in their values and attitudes. V.A. Pai Parandikar 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.<sup>16</sup>

Here, we shall study the value orientations of the bureaucrats towards the authoritatively-determined developmental goals. Such a study of the value-commitment of the bureaucrats is important because their awareness and commitment determines their behaviour and performance. Each actor in the decision-making process attaches his own meaning to the problems he confronts.<sup>17</sup> It is because of the importance of self-awareness and perception for developmental

16. V.A. Pai Parandikar, "Values, Attitudes and Motivation of the Civil Servants", op.cit., p.544.

17. Nathur, op.cit., p.11.

goals and values that a number of scholars have identified the development process as a state of mind, a tendency, a direction. As Kulddeep Nathur says:

... development involves a certain changes in the older order and more traditional value system. This change or stubborn to do 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 abstractions 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 emanates the bases of all action and reaction.<sup>18</sup>

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

For studying the politico-economic value orientations of the bureaucrats, we asked them twelve questions,<sup>19</sup> to elicit their views on four

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18. Ibid., p.12. Joseph Spengler observes in this connection that, "the state of peoples politico-economic development together with its rate and direction, depends largely upon the content of the minds of its elites, which reflect in part, as *do civilisations*, the conceptions men form of the universe". See General, op.cit., p.29.

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<sup>20</sup> of the responses<sup>21</sup> shows that 61.82 percent of the bureaucrats believe in these four values and 34.54 percent do not believe, while 3.64 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 (68.18 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 (43.64 percent), followed by economic planning (34.55 percent), equality (31.82 percent) and democracy (28.18 percent). The value of equality accounts for the largest number of respondents in the category of uncertain (9.09 percent), followed by democracy (3.64 percent) and secularism (1.82 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.

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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. Three 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 7:1.

Besides, the <sup>realisation</sup> ~~realisation~~ 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<sup>22</sup> 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<sup>23</sup> 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 C.  
 23. For the analysis, see Table 7:2.

programmes. Industrialisation has been overwhelmingly mentioned 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 hiatus 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 <sup>the</sup> 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 Naghalaya 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 Naghalaya 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 characteristics 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 of bureaucracy in the developmental programmes in Meghalaya.

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