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# Development Administration and the Alliance for Progress

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# Development Administration and the Alliance for Progress \*

by

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Twenty countries of the Western Hemisphere embarked on a major program of social and economic development for Latin America at Punta del Este, Uruguay, in August 1961. In the Charter of Punta del Este (1), nineteen Latin American countries (2) pledged themselves to major, tangible, programs of social and economic reform. These programs are built around the principles of self-help, establishment of national development plans, tax reform, and agrarian reform. They include such specific hemisphere targets as a 2.5 per cent annual increase in the rate of economic growth, and provision, by 1970, of an opportunity for a sixth-grade education for all children of Latin America. For its part in this massive, cooperative effort the Government of the United States pledged its technical resources and financial support, from public and private sources, to provide the « major share » of some \$20 thousand million in external needs over the next ten years. Latin America itself may provide \$80 thousand million or more. This, in essence, is the Alliance for Progress — a massive inter-American effort for social and economic reform in the Western Hemisphere.

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\* The views expressed in this article represent the personal opinions of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Agency for International Development of the U.S. Department of State.

(1) See *Alliance for Progress*. Official documents emanating from the special meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council at the Ministerial level - Pan American Union, Washington, D.C., 1961.

(2) Cuba abstained.

As the countries of Latin America begin the process of planning and start to put new programs into operation, there is a growing awareness that traditional methods of administration cannot serve the needs of dynamic social and economic change. There is a growing recognition of the need for administrative reform to go hand in hand with economic and social reform. These emerging needs are leading to new fields of cooperative effort and to substantial changes in concept and technique on the part of agencies providing technical assistance in Development Administration.

The term Development Administration is used in this article rather than the traditional term Public Administration to indicate the need for a dynamic administrative process designed particularly to meet the requirements of social and economic change. Because of this emphasis, it is closely related to, and draws heavily on the fields of, Business Administration and Economics, as well as the other social sciences.

## II. EARLIER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In the common pattern of technical cooperation between 1951 and 1961, young local technicians, usually with education or training abroad, recognized the need for some type of administrative improvement. They would win support, often nominal, from superiors who would request technical assistance. In due course, a foreign technician would arrive. By this time, all too often, the Minister who had made the formal request

had departed and the government had little interest in the project. It then became the job of the foreign technician to stimulate interest and action. Sometimes he succeeded; sometimes he failed. These successes and failures were due, in the main, to the extent of interest on the part of the local government, the strength of one or two key local officials or technicians; the « climate » for reform, and the personal, professional, and technical skills and ingenuity of the foreign advisors. This process of technical assistance was essentially individualistic — one foreign technician attempted to transfer his knowledge and skills to a very few local technicians who could then win support of their government for the desired changes.

Training abroad played an important role in this process of technical assistance. Able individuals were selected for training in the United States or other more developed countries. Although some of these former participants have left the public service or have not been able to contribute from their training, a number have moved into positions of responsibility and are now playing important roles in the push toward administrative reform. The training was almost always conducted in English, and the language requirement ruled out many able men and women; or when standards were relaxed, severely handicapped the participants in the learning process. Over the past nine years about 150 Latin Americans were trained each year in Public Administration under AID and its predecessors; the United Nations trained a somewhat smaller number.

And so the Alliance for Progress started with perhaps a thousand men in the Public Service who had had some training abroad in all fields of administration — generalists, records management specialists, personnel technicians, O & M analysts, budget examiners, etc., or perhaps 20-25 per country. There were also a few hundred more who had received some types of training in local training facilities.

The foregoing discussion is not a criticism of the earlier technical assistance programs in Latin America. They produced most of the trained men; they helped create the local institutions; they created much of the « climate » for reform. Without these earlier efforts, current programs could not have been developed. Without these earlier efforts, the administrative problems facing Latin America would be even greater than they are today. Nevertheless it is recognized that these methods are no longer adequate for a

period of rapid social and economic development.

### III. CURRENT PROBLEMS AND RESOURCES

The Alliance is gradually evolving a new approach to the problem of administrative reform and related technical assistance. In this new approach administrative improvement is recognized, not as an end itself; but as a critical factor in country plans and programs for social and economic progress. Thus the « Committee of Nine » (3) designated at Punta del Este to appraise Country Development Plans look, as one factor, to the capacity of the country to implement the Plan.

The AID Missions and other external agencies, too, are continuously cooperating in developing and refining country programs designed to reinforce the government's self-help plans for economic and social development. High priority is given in most of these programs to efforts to increase the administrative capacity of the country to develop and carry out its Plans.

The new approach recognizes, too, that major, rapid administrative reforms are not likely solely through the efforts of technicians, but that the push for progress must come from the countries' own leadership. To this end a variety of inter-American resources help to gain support from the public and political leaders. In the tax field, for example, the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America sponsored two conferences designed to stimulate interest and action in improvement of tax administration and tax policy. In another development, the recent meeting in Mexico of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council established a series of six committees to appraise the progress of the countries in developing and implementing their country plans; one of these committees is concerned with Administration and Finance. Working from a different approach, the USAID Mission in each country uses its influence, and the resources it has available for support of social and economic progress, to encourage needed administrative improvements.

(3) The group of experts known as the « Nine Wise Men » under the Organization of American States who appraise the Country Development Plans.

When a country is prepared to modernize some aspect of administration, the USAID Mission uses its best efforts to assure that the host governments' resources and the Missions' resources are adequate for the job. To this end the Missions' Senior Advisors on Administration are moving out of the role of technician. They are increasingly concerned with the planning and development of programs and projects that will bring about the administrative changes suitable to the country's cultural and political patterns and economic aspirations. As specific projects are planned, increasing efforts are made to assure that they have support of the government, not just of individuals, and that the government will put in enough men and money to give a reasonable chance of success. AID provides the advisory services, with increasing frequency through contracts with consulting firms or Universities, which can supply a large enough professional staff and technical supporting services to help bring about the desired changes within a time period agreed to by the host government, AID, and the Contractor. Thus, currently AID is using the services of some 20 contractors (individuals, firms, universities) in 14 countries to assist in strengthening development administration.

This discussion is not intended to suggest that AID is, or should be, the sole source of stimulation of administrative reform or the exclusive purveyor of technical assistance. On the contrary, AID works closely with the Foundations in their efforts to assist in strengthening Latin American educational institutions. Cooperative efforts have been undertaken for collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America's Planning Institute in Santiago, Chile. Explorations are in process for increased cooperation with ESAPAC, the United Nations' Advanced School of Public Administration for Central America. Furthermore, some \$6 million has been made available to the Organization of American States for specialized studies. A substantial part of this sum is used in the field of Public Finance and Administration. This is in addition to the regular Technical Assistance Program of OAS, for which the United States has been supplying up to \$1.5 million annually.

What then are some of the common administrative problems and how are they being met?

#### 1. *Fiscal Reforms*

The improvement of tax administration has

emerged as one of the areas of greatest activity as the countries begin to recognize their obligations under the Charter of Punta del Este. AID, alone, has provided long-term or short-term advisory assistance in 11 countries during the past year. In addition, the Organization of American States, the United Nations and the Foundations have been making studies and providing technical training and advisory services. Some of these efforts have been immediately productive. Panama's revenues from direct taxes for the first 9 months of 1962 were nearly 50 per cent ahead of the same period in 1961, in a large measure, as a result of improved administration and minor changes in legislation, such as the elimination of the need for the Government to prove « intent » to defraud. In El Salvador receipts in 1962 from direct taxes were running some \$3.2 million ahead of 1961. In Paraguay tighter controls have contributed to a 34 per cent increase in Customs receipts in 1962 and total ordinary revenue collections were running about 20 per cent ahead of 1961. Customs receipts in Bolivia have more than doubled since 1959.

Argentina and Chile are among the very few countries to date to mount comprehensive programs aimed at basic over-all improvement in tax administration. Argentina began its program with a survey, financed by the Ford Foundation, by Stanley S. Surrey (4) and Oliver Oldman of the Harvard Law School's International Program in Taxation. The survey was followed by a training visit under the sponsorship of the United Nations, to the United States and Canada for the new Tax Director and key staff. Rapid and tangible results were achieved by tackling first the problems of arrearage and delinquencies, moving quickly to decentralize some operations, opening of branch offices and other measures aimed at streamlining operations and making it easier for the tax payer to pay his taxes. As part of this program, some 200,000 names have been added to the tax rolls.

In Chile, with the assistance of AID, training and advisory service were key factors in the improvement of tax administration, a program that had the personal support of the President of the Republic. First the Chilean Tax Director and his Deputy came to the United States to observe tax administration and plan a training program for their key staff. They were followed by three

(4) Now Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

teams of 10 each for 3 months of training in Spanish. Upon their return to Chile most of them became members of Task forces developing improved methods and training materials for the new Tax Training School that had just been established in the Tax Office in Chile with the assistance of technicians from AID and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. By now some 360 inspectors have completed the 6 months technical course and 40 supervisors have finished the 2-month course in management, branch training schools are in operation, new methods are in use, some reorganization is under way and a whole set of operational manuals are in preparation. One of the notable achievements of this program has been the establishment of a Tax Fraud Unit and the first prosecutions of tax fraud cases in the history of Chile. Work on this project is still progressing and efforts are now under way to strengthen the tax audit and intelligence work, personnel administration, and space and facilities, and to develop a public relations program which will influence public attitudes toward the tax program.

Work in the tax field is illustrative of part of the new approach of the Alliance; when a country embarks on a significant reform program as a part of its self-help effort, AID will support their local efforts with enough resources to give the program a good chance for success.

Two other areas in the tax field are worthy of mention: First, AID has developed a cooperative relationship with the Internal Revenue Service under which IRS makes some of its best talent available to assist the countries of Latin America in improvement of tax administration. In the last year Internal Revenue Service men have served AID as tax advisors or consultants in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela.

The second development is the increasing attention to property taxation as an important element of the program for Central American Economic Integration. In several countries cadastral surveys and plans for tax mapping programs are well advanced and hold promise for significant increases in revenues.

On the other hand, the expenditure side of fiscal administration has not kept pace with the interest in revenue administration. Though a number of countries have good Budget laws on the books, only two or three have modern budget systems in operation.

The shortcomings of the budget systems in some countries could become a critical factor in the success of the Development Plans called for by the Charter of Punta del Este.

As a key element in the allocation of resources, budgeting is one of the main tools for decision making through which the Development Plans are converted into action programs. To cite just one policy area, decisions on the availability of funds will go far toward determining parts of the plan to be developed through the public sector or primarily through private initiative. Within the public sector, it is the principal tool for determining how much money is to be available for schools, for roads, for water supplies, for public salaries, for agrarian reform, etc. The control over the purse-strings is likely to be one of the keys in converting development plans into operational programs. It follows, therefore, that the weaknesses in the budgetary system will handicap the programs for social and economic development. In this regard, a key problem in many countries is the absence of effective budgetary control over autonomous agencies. This subject is developed further in part IV of this paper.

Urgency for budgetary reform arises, also, from the pressing demands for, and costs of, economic and social changes at the same time as some of the countries face financial problems which result in requests for budgetary support and other types of financial assistance. Nevertheless, only some half-dozen countries have sought technical assistance from AID and other agencies on the budgetary problems.

The other phase of fiscal reform, accounting and auditing, has attracted little attention. Governmental accounting systems in most countries are not designed as tools of modern management. The audit systems tend to be highly legalistic and the traditional centralized pre-audit and post-audit allows little room for some of the administrative flexibility required to keep pace with dynamic economic and social development. Chile, one of the few countries moving ahead in this field, has made a formal request for the services of a consulting firm to assist in the modernization of this area.

## 2. Personnel and Training

High on any list are the problems of personnel and training. Costa Rica and Panama are among the very countries which have modern, operational Civil Service systems.

Colombia and Venezuela have systems in earlier stages of development. Others have made varying degrees of advance in acceptance of the concept of merit in public employment. In a number of countries, however, most employees are replaced with a change of government; in some, every employee submits his resignation with each change of minister. Because salaries are low and the Public Service is lacking in prestige there is little to attract enough top talent to the public service. Nevertheless, pressure is mounting for some type of system for selection and retention on the basis of merit in some half-dozen countries.

Expansion of opportunities for training in administration has been the most significant change in recent years. AID, UNTAA, OAS, the Ford Foundation, and ECLA, among others, are assisting in these efforts. Facilities for public service education and training are still far, far short of needs. Nevertheless, ten years ago only Brazil had made much progress in this field; today at least 12 countries have some type of In-Service Training. AID alone is assisting 19 institutions in the fields of In-Service Training, and Higher Education for Public Administration, Business Administration and Economics. Some 7 more cooperative programs are in different stages of development and a number of others are in the discussion stage. In this program, AID is using its efforts and resources to assist American Universities to join in cooperative programs to strengthen their sister Universities in Latin America. In this way, institutions are developed in which hundreds of young men and women can be trained in their own language, by their own professors, in a setting attuned to local problems and local needs.

In another effort to strengthen facilities for training in Spanish, AID has recently collaborated with the University of Puerto Rico in developing a Special Program of Public Service Training at the School of Public Administration. This program provides for special impact training, research and publication, workshops and seminars and an all-Spanish Master's Degree program designed to produce teachers of Public Administration for Latin America. Recognizing the need for immediate administrative improvement for social and economic development, the 16 months' program includes a year of academic work and 3 to 4 months of internship with the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in which the participants acquire prac-

tical skills in a specialized administrative field.

AID recognizes the continuing need for training abroad but is changing its approach to meet the needs of the Alliance. Though still providing training grants for individual work-study programs in English in the United States, increasing emphasis is placed on training that will have an *immediate impact* on the development needs of particular countries. Thus, during the last year, AID brought to the United States and Puerto Rico some 10 *teams* of 7 to 16 participants for 6 to 12 weeks of *specialized* training. The programs were conducted in *Spanish*.

The group training approach cannot be used in all circumstances, of course, but it does make possible the design of programs to meet the particular needs of individual countries and the training of a number of key leaders (without regard to their English) from the same ministry or field of work. Such training leads to the establishment of a nucleus of selected men and women imbued with a desire to bring about change, who have acquired some technical background directly related to their particular problems, and who have learned to think together about ways to solve their own problems. Equally important, it leads to group reinforcement of each other's efforts to achieve administrative improvements. Furthermore, the single report prepared by the group on completion of the training in the United States, in effect, sets up a group target, and in some instances, may lead to political or public support for the proposed program. When the group training and group report is followed by on-the-spot advice and assistance by foreign technicians, significant progress is likely to result.

### 3. Organization and Management

In the third major field, government organization and management, O & M offices have been established and are functioning in some ten countries. For the most part, however, they are concerned, at this stage of development, primarily with surveys to improve organization and procedures within ministries. It is rather unusual, to date, to find them playing a major role, as the Administrative Management Office did in Panama, in such broad and basic questions as how the program of Agrarian Reform should be organized — superagency versus coordination among regular ministries.

Similarly, little attention is being given currently by Public Administration personnel to the field of Program Management — how to organize and run effectively an Agricultural Extension Service, a Malaria Eradication Program, a system of monetary stabilization. Subject-matter specialists are devoting attention to these problems, but as yet Public Administration technicians, either from the local governments or from technical assistance agencies, are making relatively little direct contribution to this area.

Perhaps the area of greatest concern — direction, supervision, control and coordination — has received almost no attention. Studies of administrative problems tend to address themselves to the more formal and organizational aspects of administration. Training programs, too, still give primary attention to techniques and to staff activities. The big problem remains — how to get things done through government, quickly, efficiently, democratically.

#### IV. SOME OF THE PROBLEMS AHEAD

There can be no question of the administrative progress in the past ten years. Nevertheless, this progress has been largely in the *means* to improve administration. Improvements have been made in most countries in training, modernization of administration of individual offices and programs, and in the establishment of some technical staff activities, e.g. budgeting, organization and management, and personnel.

Relatively little attention has been given to the much larger question — how to adapt the machinery of government to the requirements of rapid social and economic development. A brief sketch of some common issues will give some idea of the magnitude of the problems facing most Latin American governments and the agencies that provide technical assistance in governmental administration. This discussion is not intended to be exhaustive or comprehensive, but it suggests the nature and dimensions of some of the problems ahead.

##### 1. *Strengthening the Executive*

The process of planning and achieving social and economic development involves far more than the establishment of a well-run Planning Office. Among many other activ-

ities, there is need for: a continuing flow of current, reliable information from all ministries and offices for purposes of planning and evaluation; participation by individual ministries and offices, and by groups of ministries and offices, in the development of the Plans and Projects (the design of feasible projects by individuals with first-hand knowledge of what to do and how to do it); ways of tapping the thinking of business and professional groups, of taxpayers, of special interest groups, of citizens, in the planning process. Thus almost any unit of government may become, at some point, a part of the planning process. Consequently, the realism and timeliness of the planning may rest, in a large measure, on the quality of performance in scores of offices which have been accustomed to providing minimal services or serving largely as the safe havens for the unemployed or the politically favored.

To the extent various phases of the plans fall in the public sector, scores of these offices will be involved in the conversion of the plans into action. The governments must quickly come to grips with the question of whether social and economic development is possible with untrained employees, many of them working only 20-30 hours a week; with decision making centralized in a minister in the capital city; with no current system of issuances of instructions, policies, and procedures; with no ready flow of information upward from the offices to the policy makers. Questions of this type suggest that countries seeking rapid social and economic progress are faced with a major overhaul of the operational machinery of government with all the attendant problems of an administrative, cultural, political and public relations character.

The problem, however, is not limited to the operational level. There is need for reappraisal of the role of the Executive as decision-maker, coordinator, and chief of operations. The work of the planners will be essentially academic exercises unless decisions are made to support and implement the different parts of the Plan. These decisions will not be easy; frequently they will be highly controversial; often they will involve clashes with the economically and politically powerful. Nevertheless, without clear-cut decisions by policy makers, who can gain legislative and political support for their decisions, the process of development will be slowed.

Coordination is not easy, at best; the problem is even more complex in Latin America. Each minister in many countries is virtually

a law unto himself, staff work has not been developed, and at present almost the only institution for coordination is the cabinet or Council of State. And yet, it is axiomatic that the planning process must be built on coordination — it *is* coordination. To cite just one simple illustration: Plans for training of future school teachers may be dependent on projections of population growth based on census data, plans for opening new areas with new roads, the school building program, the nature of the planned agricultural and industrial development, availability of funds, etc. Some five Ministries are involved. This type of illustration could be multiplied a hundredfold with respect to balance of payments, agrarian reform, industrial parks, and almost any program of a social or economic character. The problems of coordination become even more complex with participation in multi-country economic programs such as the Central American Common Market.

The process of converting the governmental machinery to an action program runs counter to the traditional pattern. Though the Latin American governments normally act quickly to implement specific, single-action, Presidential or Ministerial decisions, for the most part they are not geared to fast, sustained actions on a wide variety of fronts. And few countries have any machinery to advise the executive of the rate of progress or shortfalls in carrying out the program.

## 2. Autonomous Agencies

As a matter of fact, the executive has limited control over a major portion of the executive machinery in many countries because of the extent and importance of the autonomous agencies. In general, these agencies tend to be non-political and better run than the regular agencies of government. Because of their relative efficiency they have proliferated in some countries to a point where they are responsible for a major share of the work of government. In Ecuador, as a case in point, over 60 per cent of government income is earmarked for these autonomous agencies.

If they are relatively efficient, why be concerned? A development plan presupposes a national determination of priorities and programs, but the very autonomy of these agencies may give them leeway to determine the extent of their participation. An Agricultural Production Board might, for example, be at cross purposes with the Agrarian Reform Pro-

gram. Fire the Board? Impossible in some countries where the President of the Republic has almost no power of dismissal and can get control over appointments in these agencies only toward the close of his term of office when fixed-term appointments expire. Cut their budgets? In some countries, some autonomous agencies have, in fact, the power to tax. In others, where they operate on appropriated funds, executive and legislative review of their lump-sum budgets is purely nominal. Check them through audit or investigation? They are commonly independent of review by the *Contraloría* or Court of Accounts.

The autonomous agencies give rise to other problems. Some enterprises operate at a loss and are subsidized from the national budgets. Some studies suggest that uneconomic public enterprises in some countries are a significant cause of budgetary difficulties. There is criticism, too, of their ability to attract much of the scarce talent which, in terms of national interest, might better be spread among industry and the regular ministries of government. Still another cause for concern is that, in some instances, they may stifle the development of the private enterprise essential to rapid economic and social progress.

The foregoing discussion does not suggest that the autonomous agencies are all bad or that they should be done away with. Far from it. However, to gear the executive machinery to the tasks required for rapid social and economic progress, major attention must be given to the proper role and method of operation of the autonomous agencies.

## 2. Fiscal Policy and Administration

High on any priority list must be the area of fiscal policy and administration. As indicated earlier, a few countries have made major gains by improvement of tax administration, but there is still need, in almost every country, for comprehensive studies of tax policy, structure, and administration. There are few studies in depth which suggest optimum tax revenues and no concerted efforts to overhaul the tax structure in the light of economic development needs. At the same time pressing social and economic needs will not permit the scholarly studies some might wish while time runs out on the need for immediate increases in government income.

Parallel to the revenue side, little has been done in most countries to make the budgetary process an effective means for policy formu-

lation, resources allocation, or management control.

The areas of what and how much should be done by government, by autonomous agencies, by private initiative are questions that must be given increasing attention. These questions are becoming increasingly involved with the question of economic development and inflation. Almost every country in Latin America is suffering, in varying degrees, from inflation. Fiscal policy must take into account not only the needs for social and economic development, which are almost infinite, but the availability of resources and the inflationary impact of expenditures. Again the problem of the autonomous agencies becomes of significance because in most countries there is almost no control over the policies or budgets of the autonomous agencies. Of possibly as great importance, few countries have fully effective machinery to assure that policies and programs are carried out promptly and effectively by regular ministries as well as autonomous agencies. Any meaningful attack on fiscal policy, therefore, must give attention to implementation and control.

#### 4. *Local Government*

Still another problem that has received only passing attention is local government. With few exceptions, government is highly centralized and almost no decision-making or tax powers are vested in local government. Traditionally, in most countries, the central government decides where a school will be located, when and how it will be built, how it will be paid for, etc. This illustration could be multiplied for water supplies, roads, sanitation and a score of other local services.

This is not just a matter of transferring functions from the central government to local government. The issue is basically how to get local people to want to solve their own problems and to develop the political and administrative skills to do so. It involves the establishment of political institutions and responsible local government with a capacity to meet local needs. The solution to some of these problems, essential to economic

development and stable democracy, cannot be found solely through the techniques of municipal administration. The answers must come from political science, sociology, community development and a host of other disciplines.

#### 5. *Leadership and Responsibility*

There needs to develop in Latin America a sense of dynamic leadership for the solution of administrative problems. This requires a philosophy of the role of government as primarily one of policy formulation and leadership in meeting the needs of the people, creation of an atmosphere which encourages the development of individual and local initiative, and acceptance of the concept that services which should be performed by government must be performed economically and efficiently.

#### 6. *Training*

There is no *one* solution to these critical problems, but it is obvious that there must be a vast step-up in the quality of the public service. This requires a major, rapid increase in training of all kinds at all levels from policy formulation to routine operations. As this training is put to use, plans for social and economic progress will move forward. In turn, as the public sees improved public services, they will begin to support and demand conditions of employment that will provide for the improved quality in government that is essential for continued rapid social and economic growth.

Administrative problems, of course, differ in nature and seriousness from country to country. The techniques for bringing about desirable change also vary with local circumstances. But social and economic progress in many countries will be influenced by the attention given to strengthening the executive, a balanced approach to autonomous agencies, to fiscal policy and administration, to strengthening local government, to strengthening leadership and responsibility and to a massive step-up in training in and for the public service.

