

SİYASAL BİLİM ve HUKUK

DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS IN TURKEY

Prof. Dr. Cemal MIHÇIOĞLU

Post Second World War experiences in Turkey have shown that a cadre of public administrators who were products of a static educational system and were further trained in the traditional patterns of thought and behavior of the existing bureaucracy had difficulties in coping with the requirements of a society making strides towards economic and social development.

The ability to meet the requirements of rapidly changing conditions depends largely upon the quality of the administrators, their attitudes and skills, which is mainly a matter of training.

In this paper an attempt will be made to discuss the subject of the development of senior administrators in Turkey, attention will be drawn to their needs for further development, and a description of the present efforts will be given.

SOME GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS IN TURKEY

Like all men, senior administrators carry the imprint of the social environment in which they are brought up, the experiences of their past life and the education they had. A knowledge of these factors that have the character of a «pre-entry training» is essential, because they have a direct bearing on the nature and scope of the training programs to be arranged for them while in service.

Who is the senior administrator in Turkey? What is his social and educational background? What schools did he attend and

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what did he study? How does he carry out his work? In the following pages answers will be sought to these questions.

Who is the Senior Administrator?

In Turkey it is difficult to answer this question fully and definitely. Although undersecretaries, deputy undersecretaries, directors general and deputy directors general at the headquarters and provincial governors at the local level clearly fall into this category, one is not certain about such staff posts as heads of boards of inspection and research that are of comparable importance and with which the higher administrative posts have a constant interchange. The fact that in Turkey there is not as yet a horizontal administrative class and that appointments from technical and professional posts to senior administrative positions and back is normal practice makes a clear delimitation rather difficult.

Social Background of Senior Administrators

Studies on the social background of senior administrators are limited. A survey conducted in the capital city of Ankara in 1964 covering 136 senior administrators (undersecretaries, directors general, their deputies, heads of boards of inspection etc.) indicated that the fathers of more than 60 % of them were public servants. The ratio was 30 % for grandfathers and it was concluded that during the last fifty years senior administrators had been selected from a narrowing social base in Turkey. As father's profession, public service is followed by members of professions and trades (11 %), farmers (7.5 %), and shopkeepers, artisans and small traders (3.5 %) [1]. Another study on provincial governors shows that 48.9 % of them are sons of public servants, followed by traders and industrialists (15.6 %), farmers (13.3 %), members of professions (8.9 %), and shopkeepers, artisans and small traders (6.7 %) [2].

If one is permitted to generalize on the basis of these two studies, it could be said that the fathers of approximately half

[1] C. H. Dodd, *The Social and Educational Background of Turkish Officials*, *Middle Eastern Affairs* (Volume 1, April 1965, No. 3), p. 268-276.

[2] *Kaza ve Vilâyet İdaresi Üzerinde Bir Araştırma* (Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi yayını. Ankara, 1957), p. 17.

(or more) of the senior administrators are public servants. About 1/4 of these administrators are sons of members of professions, traders and industrialists, and the remaining 1/4 come from families representing other strata of the society, mainly shopkeepers, artisans, small traders and farmers. Sons of those employed in private offices and laborers form a negligible minority. This leads us to the conclusion that senior administrators in Turkey generally come from relatively more privileged circles of the society.

According to Dodd's study, 34 % of the senior administrators were born in the three largest cities of Turkey (i. e. Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir) and the remaining 66 % elsewhere, while the birthplaces of provincial governors tended to be scattered around the country in a balanced manner rather than clustering in certain regions.

The above figures clearly demonstrate that some sectors of the society are over-represented in the higher levels of administrative hierarchy while others -particularly peasants who constitute roughly 65 % of the total population- that do not enjoy favorable educational opportunities because of their socio-economic position are grossly under-represented. A broadening of the social base in the selection of these administrators will undoubtedly be more in conformity with the overall interests of the society.

Educational Background of Senior Administrators

Nearly all senior administrators in Turkey are graduates of institutions of higher education. According to Dodd's study, 98.5 % of the senior administrators who responded to the questionnaire are graduates of a university or a school of higher learning while only 1.5 % are high school graduates. Of these administrators 6.6 % obtained their degrees in American and Western European universities [3].

Out of 399 senior administrators who attended the management seminars organized by the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East, 97 % were holders of a university or equivalent degree and only 3 % had a secondary education. The rate of those who had had their higher education abroad was 13 %.

Senior administrators in such Ministries as Interior, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Commerce, Justice, Labor etc. are generally political

[3] C. H. Dodd, *op. cit.*, pp. 273 - 274.

science or law graduates while the majority of those in such technical departments as the Ministries of Public Works, Communication, Power and Natural Resources have an engineering background. The senior administrators of the Ministry of Agriculture are generally agronomists, veterinarians and forestry specialists while those of the Ministry of Education are members of the teaching profession and those employed by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare come from the medical profession.

The organizational laws of various ministries and departments put the senior administrative posts under the monopoly of the professions that require a higher education or of the graduates of specific institutions of higher learning. When this is not the case, the present personnel system that ties the grade of entry to the level of education makes the advancement to senior administrative posts quite difficult for those who are not holders of a university degree.

The knowledge of administration in the narrower sense of the term that the present senior administrators acquired during their education is rather limited.

The curriculum of the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Ankara (a continuation of the Imperial Civil Service School which was established in 1859 for the purpose of training the administrative cadres of the Ottoman Empire) has traditionally been composed of courses on law, economics and politics with a strong emphasis on law. Curriculum changes made in 1954 and 1966 shifted the emphasis from law to economics and political science subjects, and introduced new courses dealing with administration as a process in addition to existing courses on administrative law, public finance and such tool courses as accounting and statistics.

At the Law Faculties, the courses more directly related with administration are courses on administrative law, public finance and tax law. Their curricula comprise, in addition to a substantial number of law subjects, a relatively limited number of courses on politics and economics. The Faculty of Economics of the University of Istanbul does not differ greatly from that of the Law Faculty excepting courses on business organization and management. Academies of Economic and Commercial Sciences offer courses on business administration and human relations in management in addition to the subjects mentioned above. The Faculty of Administrative Sciences of the Middle East Technical University (founded

in Ankara in 1957) offers a relatively greater number of courses more directly related to administration. Courses on administrative law are taught at various faculties of the Istanbul Technical University which trains only engineers.

On the basis of these, it could be generalized that in Turkish universities and other institutions of higher education, courses on Law, Economics, Politics and Business Management are taught in different dosages, but courses dealing directly with administration and management are quite limited and insufficient.

Major Traits of Turkish Senior Administrators

The attitudes and behavior of Turkish administrators, more specifically senior administrators have been severely criticized by both Turkish and foreign observers. Some of those criticisms which call for a change, may be summarized as follows :

1. The typical senior administrator is not a sufficiently action-oriented person. This trait seems to be a result of an authoritarian and paternalistic family structure and of an educational system which tends to put premium on the repetition of acquired knowledge as a criterion of success rather than on creative thinking. It tends to push the administrator into a relative passivism and to create a bureaucratic spirit which is hardly compatible with the needs of a developing country.

2. The typical Turkish senior administrator has an authoritarian personality. The civilian administration still bears the traces of this country's military tradition and does not easily permit the creation of a permissive atmosphere and a smooth flow of communication between superiors and subordinates.

3. The Turkish administrator has an excessive centralist tendency. The power of decision even on matters that could easily be handled at lower echelons is concentrated at the higher levels of the hierarchy. This usually stems from a desire to exercise an effective control over subordinates and to avoid possible abuses. It creates a parallel centralizing tendency in the laws and regulations, and leads the subordinates to seek their superiors approval on questions which are within their own jurisdiction. As a result, the senior administrator devotes a substantial amount of time to details at the expense of more important matters of policy and other managerial functions.

4. The administrator who seems to be more loyal to the letter than the spirit of the laws and regulations, tends to consider them as an end in themselves rather than a means to a socially meaningful end. The «literal application of the law» is taken as the main function of an administrator, and in many cases the letter of the law is used as a shield to cover the insufficiency and lack of initiative of the administrator.

5. That the administrator's door is kept open to the citizen is considered the main proof of his sense of responsibility toward the public, and as a consequence of this, he has little time left to devote to matters outside the daily routine. Partly as a result of excessive centralism and partly because of the widespread belief that results are obtained by having work done through orders from above, the senior administrator is frequently visited by citizens or members of parliament and political party officers acting on their behalf.

The above generalizations are based more on observation than scientific proof but a recent study on the patterns of work of senior administrators in the Ministry of Finance amply confirms some of these points (item 3 and 5) [4].

DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS AND THE PUBLIC PERSONNEL SYSTEM

The development of administrators in a country is closely related to its personnel system, legal provisions governing their recruitment and promotion, the evaluation of their performance, distribution of the training functions in the governmental organization as well as environmental factors of a social and political nature.

Legal Impediments

Generalist - specialist distinction is not made in recruitment to public services in Turkey. Graduates of universities and other similar schools are recruited at salary rates corresponding to their educational level and as their pay grades increase they are promoted to more senior posts, including higher administrative positions.

[4] Maliye Tetkik Kurulu, *Maliye Bakanlığı Yüksek Basamaklar Hizmetlilerinin Çalışma Modelleri Hakkında Bir Anket* (Ankara, 1968) (Mimeographed). This survey covers 3 deputy undersecretaries, 4 directors general and 22 deputy directors general.

The lack of an interdepartmental administrative class makes it impossible to organize a comprehensive training plan covering successive phases of an administrator's career.

At present, no test of fitness is exercised in promotions to higher administrative posts aside from evaluation made by the appointing authority. Neither is there any obligation to attend an advanced course similar to those required for promotion in the Armed Forces.

Another point closely related to the absence of a horizontal administrative class is the lack of stability in the administrative posts. For example, a high school teacher may be appointed director general at the Ministry of Education or an engineer could be made the Director General of the Highways Administration or State Hydraulic Works, and later he could be sent back to his previous post or to an advisory unit in the department.

No serious effort is made to evaluate the performance of the senior administrators aside from the merit ratings which are filled out by superiors as a matter of routine. It is claimed by some critics of the current practice that the appointing authorities are inclined to attach greater importance to the appointee's loyalty to the holders of political power than to considerations of merit and efficiency.

The State Personnel Law of 1965 contains provisions capable of bringing about radical changes in this situation. It provides for the establishment of an administrative class whose members would be transferable among various ministries and departments. The entry to this class, which would be open to the graduates of all university faculties and schools, would be through competition and promotions to higher grades within the class would also be based on the principle of merit. It seems that it will be necessary to organize a preparatory training program for new entrants at the beginning of their career, and a comprehensive training scheme covering all phases of this career will have to be developed. It has not as yet been possible, however, to implement this law because of its imperfections, and resulting pessimism about its future cast a shadow over the whole issue of creating an administrative class.

Agencies Responsible for Training

The State Personnel Department (the central personnel agency created in 1960) is responsible for the elaboration of general

training policy for the entire civil service. The State Personnel Law provides that this department will prepare a «State Personnel Training Plan» through consultation with the Ministries of Finance and Education, the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East, the State Planning Organization and other relevant agencies. The State Personnel Department is reported to be working on this plan.

Another central agency interested in the development of senior administrators is the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East that was established in 1953 through the cooperation of the Turkish government and the United Nations. The Institute's general training course has the purpose of providing a comprehensive understanding of the theory and practice of administration and management for officials having capabilities which mark them out as likely to progress to senior administrative posts. Apart from its normal training course, the Institute showed an interest in the development of senior administrators at an earlier date and tried to organize, from time to time, meetings and seminars on such themes as the development of administration and human relations. The management seminars that the Institute began to organize in 1964 for senior and middle level administrators gained in intensity between 1965 and 1967.

As to the individual ministries and departments which are directly responsible for the training of their own personnel, little is done about the development of senior administrators apart from the seminars that are arranged through the Public Administration Institute.

Environmental Factors

One of the main factors which seems to work against the establishment of a genuine merit system in promotions to senior administrative posts tends to be political in nature. Today, many critics claim that in promotions to such posts ideological affinity to the party in power takes undue precedence over merit.

An interesting development from this point of view is the enactment of a law in 1967 exempting the appointments to senior administrative posts at the Ministries of Finance, Commerce, Industry, Communication, Public Works and Agriculture from the normal civil service provisions concerning seniority and pay. Whether the motives behind this law, which gives the government great latitude in these appointments, were patronage considerations

or inspired by a genuine desire to find the competent people wherever possible and to use them, is open to discussion.

As a measure intended to reconcile the principle of merit with possible tendencies of political patronage in appointments to these posts, it has been proposed that the agencies be required to fill vacancies at the middle administrative levels through appointments from among the graduates of the Public Administration Institute. It is hoped that when this is done, nearly all undersecretaries, directors general and their deputies will, within 10 or 15 years from now, have been selected from among those who have had training in the field of administration and management [5].

The 1968 Annual Program of the Second Five Year Plan provides for the completion of preparations within this year of a system whereby advancement to higher administrative levels would be based on merit and require the successful completion of a training course in administration and management.

Another widespread complaint is about senior administrators' being rather frequently moved around by governments. Although comprehensive statistics are not available on this subject, a recent study covering some 870 senior administrators who served in 21 State economic enterprises up to 1965 indicates that 72.8 % of these administrators served for terms of less than five years which is taken as a normal term of office while 4 % of them served for three months or less. Directors general had the shortest terms of office and the correlation between their turnover rate and political changes seemed to be more marked both in speed and numbers than any other level. According to the same study, an overwhelming majority (82.4 %) of the senior administrators come from the public sector, transfers from the private sector being under one per cent. The rate of those who switched from State economic enterprises to the private sector is only 2.1 % [6]. Another study conducted in the central government organization also indicated that the rate of transfers from the private sector to public service and those who transferred to the private sector and came back is 3.4 % [7].

[5] See the author's following article: «Yöneticiler İçin Eğitim Zorunluluğu,» **Amme İdaresi Bülteni** (sayı 13, Ağustos 1967), p. 16.

[6] «İDT Yöneticileri Araştırmasının Bazı İlginç Sonuçları,» **Amme İdaresi Bülteni** (sayı 13, ağustos 1967), p. 9; and «Yüksek Kademe İdarecileri Araştırması,» in **Personel Çalışmaları** (İktisadî Devlet Teşekküllerini Yeniden Düzenleme Komisyonu, Ankara, 1968), pp. 85-205.

[7] Oğuz Onaran, **Yönetici Sınıfının Eğitimi : Belçika, Fransa ve Türkiye'de** (Türkiye ve Orta Doğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, Ankara, 1967), p. 79.

Five out of 6 undersecretaries who attended the management seminars organized by the Public Administration Institute between 1964-1967 (inclusive) [8] left this post and do not at present occupy any senior administrative positions. The same is true for 3 out of 9 deputy undersecretaries, 10 out of 30 directors general and 10 out of 55 deputy directors general who went through these seminars.

It follows from the foregoing remarks that the high rate of turnover among the senior administrators prevents the filling of the training gap through on-the-job experience and creates a greater need for training in addition to the lack of stability that it causes.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

No official attempt of a systematic nature has so far been made in Turkey to determine the development needs of senior administrators. However, numerous shortcomings encountered in the management of public affairs are considered as obvious evidences of a generally felt need for improvement.

Knowledge Needs

It is obvious that the senior administrators with strictly professional and technical backgrounds have a need to acquire a sufficient amount of knowledge in such fields as economics, politics and law in order to gain a broader perspective, develop a better understanding of their agencies' place in the overall governmental organization, and be aware of social, economic and political implications of their decisions.

Many of the present senior administrators who have a background in economics, political science and law, find that the rather bookish knowledge they acquired in the schools of their time without being related to the problems of the day proves inadequate. Training programs which critically examine the problems of the society in the light of these disciplines would also be of great value to them.

It is obvious that the various topics of administration and management in the narrower sense which today's senior administrators did not have the opportunity to study in school will have to take a prominent place in the training of senior administrators.

[8] At approximately the middle of this period (October 1965) elections were held and a new party came to power.

Such basic topics as the nature of the administrative process, planning, organizing, personnel management, coordination, human relations, public relations etc. are virgin subjects as fields of systematic study to a vast majority of them.

In a recent study, some 140 senior administrators of various ministries were asked to identify the fields in which they felt their knowledge was inadequate and had to be augmented [9]. Various topics were listed under the heading of «general subjects» and «administrative subjects». Thirty of the administrators did not think they needed any training. The topics marked under «general subjects» gave the following order of priority: Economics (development plan and economic development: 60 %, economic theory: 52.6 %, international economic relations: 45.4 %), statistics (39 %), international relations and organizations (38.1 %), law (29.9 %), Turkish government (27.2 %), and major systems of government (24.5 %).

Answers connected with the category of «administrative subjects» resulted in the following priority list: Organization and methods (57.2 %) [10] human relations (51.7 %), development of leadership qualities (48.1 %), personnel management (38.1 %), administrative procedures (33.5 %), and development of skills in speech, writing etc. (30.9 %).

In answer to a question on whether they felt a need for a formal training program or they could make up for this deficiency through their own efforts, the majority of the senior administrators tended to favor the latter, but again the majority thought that they would do better to attend a formal training program on O&M, international economic relations and international relations and organizations.

Although the specific topical content of a training program designed for a group of senior administrators would largely depend on their particular background and needs, the above topics generally seem to correspond to the needs of Turkish senior administrators.

[9] Oğuz Onaran, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[10] The respondents gave an unusually high priority to O & M, probably because many of them gave it a broader meaning than a technique of administrative improvement.

Behavioral Needs

No scientific studies are available on the attitudes, values and leadership qualities of the Turkish senior administrators. The general observations, however, tend to point to a need for attitudes more respectful of the subordinates' personality and opinions, that place less emphasis on traditional authoritarianism, and that leave more room for initiative and constructive ideas as well as a greater sense of responsibility towards the community. This general tendency seems to be dictated by such factors as the development of political democracy, advancement of the culture and the general social awakening. What has been said in the preceding pages on the personal traits of the Turkish senior administrators may give an approximate idea about those of their attitudes and behavior which need to be changed.

PROGRAMS FOR TRAINING SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

At present, there is no comprehensive training policy that covers the higher levels of the administrative hierarchy. The State Personnel Department which is charged with the duty of preparing a general civil service training plan, does not yet have sufficient mental preparation for this part of the training and seems to have tied the whole matter to the fate of the State Personnel Law's provisions relating to classification.

The individual ministries and departments not only lack in-service training programs for senior administrators, but they also seem to be deprived of a conscious executive development effort intended for the purpose of preparing middle level administrators for higher echelons.

Management Seminars

For the time being, efforts being made for the training of senior administrators in Turkey consist entirely of the management seminars organized by the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East [11]. These seminars which last 1 - 2 weeks, generally on a half day basis (or 25-30 hours) depending on the preference of the agencies concerned, are not organized according to a predetermined and comprehensive plan, but are arranged upon

[11] Eighteen senior management seminars have been organized from the beginning of 1964 to the end of 1967 and 399 higher officials have gone through them.

the request of these agencies in their own buildings. The seminar programs are prepared by the Institute in cooperation with the agencies. The Institute uses its own experts as instructors, but it also draws upon the universities and other government agencies for support.

The Institute paid special attention to these seminars' being requested by agencies, in other words, their being based on felt needs, but it did not refrain from encouraging such appeals. At the beginning, the source of these requests was an Under-secretary or a Minister who appreciated the usefulness of training starting from his immediate subordinates but the news printed in the press (particularly in the Institute's bi-monthly Bulletin) and radio broadcasts on the occasions of the opening and closing of these seminars prompted similar requests from elsewhere.

The main idea behind these seminars has been to take an agency as a whole and to inform all of its hierarchical levels starting from the top about modern concepts and techniques of administration and management in order to bring about a harmonious change in their general outlook. The Institute paid more attention to higher and middle levels and thought that the large number of first-line supervisors would be preferably left to the care of those who would be trained in its «training of trainers» courses.

The main objectives of these far from pretentious seminars can be summarised as follows :

1. Imparting systematic information on the nature, elements and major issues of public administration to senior administrators the overwhelming majority of whom did not have an opportunity to study such problems.

2. Demonstrating the importance of personnel training in a country making efforts towards economic and social development by means of a concrete example in which the senior administrators themselves would participate.

3. Encouraging the delegation of powers to lower echelons by calling the senior administrators' attention to the disadvantages of excessive centralization which is one of the major problems of Turkish public administration.

4. Calling the attention of senior administrators to their responsibilities concerning improvements in the structure and met-

hods of the administration, and informing them about the techniques of administrative improvement.

5. Emphasizing the importance of human relations in administration in order to create a greater concern and sensitivity in them towards such problems.

Some of the typical topics discussed in these seminars are the nature of administration and management, planning, problems involved in the implementation of economic development plans, organization, management improvement, human relations in administration, morale, coordination, control, decision making, delegation of authority, public relations etc.. Although the topics treated in various management seminars are similar, an effort is usually made to get the agency's suggestions and proposals as to the course content, and to fit the program to the specific needs of the organization.

The main instructional method used in these seminars has been the lecture method, but special care has been taken to devote approximately half of the time to discussion. From time to time, such audio-visual aids as charts, projections and films have also been used.

EVALUATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

The evaluation of these seminars are based on comments by the participants during and after the seminars, on questionnaires filled out by them, the remarks of their subordinates on the effect of these seminars and on the improvement measures inspired by them.

Participants' Remarks. Comments by participants have usually been complimentary and at times laudatory. In several cases, the participants pointed out that the seminar convinced them that the administration was a substantial field of study with a highly transferable body of knowledge. Some of them said that the seminar provided them with a systematic frame of reference in which they could place their practical knowledge and experiences. Some others commented that what they heard gave them self confidence by showing the wisdom of their decisions about which they were not quite sure.

Evaluation Questionnaire. Anonymous questionnaires answered by participants at the end of the seminars also showed that

the participants were generally satisfied. The questionnaire included questions on the appropriateness of the length of the seminar, the suitability, adequacy and the degree of usefulness of the topics discussed. Among the answers given to an open question at the end of the questionnaire, the following are the most frequently encountered remarks: The seminar has been very useful - Reading materials should be distributed on all topics handled - Similar seminars should be organized for middle level administrators - Cabinet ministers and members of parliament should also go through such seminars - A handbook containing administrative knowledge necessary for administrators should be prepared and made available to them - These seminars should be repeated periodically (once a year or bi-annually) - More time should be devoted to discussion - Practical matters should be given more weight than theory - These seminars should be organized away from the administrator's work place, preferably out of town.

Impressions of the Subordinates. Following some of the senior management seminars, the subordinates of the participants remarked that there was a perceptible change in the attitudes and behavior of their superiors, that they were more receptive to new ideas, and even such ideas began to come directly from them.

Improvement Measures. Shortly after some of these seminars, concrete steps towards administrative improvement were taken which were reported to have been inspired directly by them, and special care was taken to circulate the news about them to a wider public through the Institute's Bulletin. These measures were taken as tangible evidence of the usefulness of such seminars. Another positive result of the seminars have been requests by participants for further training programs for their own subordinates.

CONCLUSION

The main conclusions to be drawn from the previous discussion may be summarized as follows.

No comprehensive plan for the training of civil servants -including the senior administrators- has so far been designed in Turkey and one does not yet observe an evident interest in formal arrangements for the development of high level administrators.

The existing training programs for senior administrators in Turkey consist of in-house seminars organized on a request basis by the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle

East. Although they prove useful, their scope and purpose is limited and a more substantial training effort is needed for the development of senior administrators.

An effective scheme for the development of higher administrators must be based on previous training at the middle and lower levels. In Turkey, the lack of a career in general administration seems to be an obstacle to a systematic approach in the training for administration and management. This obstacle, however, does not prohibit a more orderly handling of the problem even under the present circumstances.