

STAFF PROBLEMS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE economic, social and political changes which have taken place throughout the world since 1945 have been responsible for setting a new pattern of international relationships completely different from those which existed before 1939. This has accounted for the rapid development of international work in all aspects—economic, social, cultural, political and military—and in the creation of most of the familiar international organizations to-day. The international organization, working with a secretariat representative of all member countries, is thus a relatively recent phenomenon and has many unsolved problems.

International administration is still developing and largely experimental. It is only in the past few years that the basic problems of a multi-national organization have become apparent and that an effort has been made to study and understand them; it has been suggested that the future of international organizations will depend on their ability to remain flexible and avoid becoming set in their ways too soon. Unesco, for example, has acquired many new member states in the past few years, bringing its total membership to more than 100. This of necessity brings new problems of leadership and administration calling for a high degree of flexibility in policy and attitudes.

The most persistent problem with which the 'administration' of an international organization has to deal is that concerned with people and the maintenance of an efficient, loyal and contented staff of different nationalities with different cultures, different attitudes, different standards, and different methods of working. Much depends on the nature of the organization and its degree of independence and security. Both the European Coal and Steel Community and the International Bank operate with relative security and independence, since they do not

rely on annual contributions from member states. The former is also guaranteed by a fifty-year treaty. This must greatly facilitate plans for the recruitment and training of staff and for the establishment of administrative practices and procedures. Again, good working relationships and clear lines of communication are relatively easy to establish in an agency such as the World Health Organization, where common professional interests override national and cultural differences and help to unite the working group. Other organizations with highly diversified programmes requiring experts in widely differing fields find that this tends to divide rather than unite the group. Leadership and morale then become of supreme importance.

There is still, fortunately, much enthusiasm and high idealism associated with international work and there are many sources of satisfaction for the individual, but the nature of its organization and the administrative techniques used bring difficulties and frustrations which have no counterpart elsewhere. The question of morale is always a difficult one, but is particularly complicated in the international group, where the necessity of being truly representative can sometimes override all other considerations, and where the problem of 'communications' is unusually difficult. It is paradoxical that the international organization must be representative if it is to be efficient. This, of itself, complicates the normal procedures associated with the administration of personnel and the techniques used in the personnel management function.

These problems and the way in which they have been tackled have been described by Mrs. V. M. Clarke in an article entitled "The International Organization", which is published in the December issue of *Personnel Management* (45, 154; 1963).

PRESTRESSED CONCRETE

PRESTRESSED concrete, already well established in the field of civil engineering, is now becoming an increasingly used structural material in the design of modern buildings, but its potentialities in this respect have not yet been sufficiently realized. This is the view expressed by the Prestressed Concrete Development Group in a recent illustrated pamphlet entitled *The Use of Prestressed Concrete in Buildings**, published by the Cement and Concrete Association, 52 Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1, January 1964.

As a structural material, concrete is very strong in compression but weak in tension, and the basic principle behind prestressed concrete is to eliminate such weakness. The technique is to apply compressive stresses with high tensile steel tendons to those parts of a concrete member normally in tension (the bottom of a beam, for example), thus making those parts also in compression, resulting in extremely strong concrete units. Two methods of prestressing concrete are used, one known as 'pre-tensioning', the other as 'post-tensioning'. The former is normally used in factory production and depends largely on achieving complete bond between tendons and concrete, very much as is the case with reinforced concrete. "The tendons are first stressed in the forms, and anchored at their ends. Concrete is then placed around the tendons

which are released from their anchorages when the concrete has reached the required strength. The member is now under compression." Post-tensioning is the process largely used for concrete *in situ* and is particularly suitable for large structural members. In this process the concrete is emplaced around ducts enclosing the tendons, preventing them from bonding to the concrete. After hardening and reaching the required strength, the tendons are stretched by hydraulic jack and anchored at the ends of the member, placing it in compression. The ducts are grouted solid; this prevents corrosion of the tendons and improves the load-bearing properties of the concrete member. An alternative method is to form the duct of solid rubber, inflatable rubber tubing, or some other easily extractable material; in this case the material is withdrawn some twelve hours after concreting and the tendons placed in the duct so formed.

From a practical point of view, prestressed concrete in buildings permits of large spans with relatively shallow-sectioned members, even where heavy loads are envisaged. This means fewer columns, more unrestricted floor space, equally a reduction in weight and floor-to-floor heights. Where tall buildings and deep basements are involved, the prestressed concrete retaining wall can be used for reducing wall thickness. It is claimed that aesthetically the appearance of a building may be much improved by prestressed concrete in affording opportunities for designing large uninterrupted spans, sweeping shell canopies

* Prestressed Concrete Development Group. *The Use of Prestressed Concrete in Buildings*. Pp. 16. (London: Prestressed Concrete Development Group, 1964.)