

NOTES FOR THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER'S  
ADDRESS TO D.A.U. CONFERENCE OF STATE SECRETARIES  
ON 3RD APRIL 1967

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The first duty of States Secretaries is to provide *positive and continuous administrative leadership* to all units of State Governments, including State departments and District Offices (not merely to Secretariats).

A. This leadership must cover—

1. *Work priorities* – what jobs Departments and District Offices are doing, their priorities, and how activities are coordinated.
2. *Implementation* – how *effectively, efficiently, and honestly* they are doing their jobs.

B. This leadership responsibility *cannot be delegated, nor can it be avoided*. Indeed State Secretaries must provide as example for District Officers and Department Heads, must reward them for exercising leadership by special letters of commendation and other methods and take them to task for failure to do so.

II. Leadership must be *positive*—

- A. State Secretary must take the *initiative* to assure himself that programs of work are the right ones and are properly planned and coordinated; and
- B. That *organisation, work methods, procedures* and *staffing* efficiently meet present needs and are not the dusty inheritance of a remote past.
- C. Cannot rely on or be satisfied with precedents or with past experience; must meet new situations with new methods.
- D. State Secretaries can be assured of my personal support when they exercise positive leadership.

III. Leadership must be *continuous*—

- A. State Secretary must be on top of his job so that he knows, and all his subordinates know that he knows what is going on.
- B. He must take prompt action to eliminate delays, correct deficiencies as they arise, and keep them from becoming serious. Indeed he should attempt to *anticipate* problem and solve them before they arise.
- C. If things go wrong, the State Secretary cannot claim that he did not know. It is his duty to see that he is continuously informed.

- IV. To exercise leadership State Secretaries must see that –
- A. *Policies* State Government and State departments are clearly *enunciated*.
  - B. *Programs of work for all Departments and District Offices are carefully planned in detail*.
  - C. *Organisation, procedures and staffing in State department and district office are adequate to the job to be done, that staff are properly trained and that proper standards of performance are set for each staff member*.
  - D. That *he is currently informed* of what is going on by–
    1. *Requiring and analysing regular and special written reports giving him current facts and figures on performance*.
    2. *By frequent meetings and telephone conversations with District Officers and Department Heads individually and in groups*.
    3. *By personal inspections, by getting around personally to District and Land Offices, field stations and projects for spot checks*.
    4. *By mixing frequently with people from all walks of life. This applies to all officers*.
  - E. *Prompt action* is taken on the basis of the information he has.
- V. To exercise leadership, State Secretaries have the following resources and instruments to assist them:
- A. *Their staff members*– Finance Officers, Commissioners of Land and Mines, Development Officers and Asst. State Secretaries must be required to help not only with routines, but *especially with planning and co-ordinating work programs, improvement of administrative machinery, monitoring the performance of District Offices and Departments, and ferreting out inefficiency and corruption*.
  - B. *Confidential reports* which they prepare for staff officers and District Officers, and *annual written appraisals* of the work of senior Federal officers working in State Departments.
  - C. *Proposed transfer of powers of discipline and promotion* to follow the example of the Federal Govt.
  - D. *Federal Government willing to help* with more complex and technical problems, especially those common to several States and districts, *through D.A.U.*
  - E. Federal Government asking for *monthly reports from States Secretaries* on field visits by them and senior staff.

VI. Most important of all are attitudes which senior officers bring to their jobs:-

- A. *Positive and continuing leadership*, making things happen instead of relying on precedents, avoiding decisions, or waiting for crises to develop.
- B. *Leadership requires* not only knowledge, eagerness to learn, and hard work but also “toughness” willingness to make hard and even unpopular decisions and to stand one’s grounds against criticism and pressure.
- C. *“Toughness” applies to –*
  - 1. *Fellow officers*– persuading Treasury for funds or FEO for staff, or demanding good performance from subordinates, or exposing and punishing corrupt practices.
  - 2. *Politicians*– independent democratic nation, officers must cooperate with politicians:
    - a) Politicians have their job to do as spokesman for the people, though sometimes they do so unwisely and abuse their position.
    - b) Officers have the job of carrying out Government’s programs and enforcing law efficiently, impartially, humanely, and with absolute integrity.
    - c) This relationship requires the use of persuasion, negotiation, diplomacy and give and take, all of which are part of the art or leadership.
    - d) *Where issues of principles arise on policy or on integrity officer has the duty to stand his ground. Senior officers, Menteri Besars and Federal Ministers have the duty to stand by and protect their juniors. This is how officers individually and the service itself gain and hold respect.*

VII Administrative leadership, Federal and State, are far more complex, sophisticated and demanding than before independence and will become increasingly demanding. Leadership is both a duty which cannot be avoided and a superb opportunity for public service. Officers can exercise leadership only by demanding and securing high standards of performance from themselves and from the officers they supervise.