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PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT INTERN PROGRAM ORIENTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 24, 1978

"THE EDUCATION OF THE NEW PUBLIC EXECUTIVE"

As Chairman of the Advisory Committee for the Presidential Management Intern Career Development Program, I am privileged to join you who have been selected for this important program. We are here today to learn better how we can help develop successful careers as public managers of the future. Why does development of future managers have such a high priority? The answer in brief is that we must be able to make Government more responsive, provide public services at lower costs, and translate policy objectives into more effectively implemented programs. These are necessary to remove serious and growing doubts about managerial capability to effectively carry out the essential missions of Government. These are necessary if we are to fulfill the purposes and vision of our constitutional system of government and remove doubts about whether that system is adequate to the challenges of America's third century.

What Kind of Managers Will the Federal Government Need in the Year 2000?

The problems of the manager today are far more complex than when I started my Federal service in the turbulent days of the New Deal.

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We needed good managers then, but we need them even more today. Many of you joining the Federal service now will hold positions of great responsibility in the year 2000.

The National Institute of Public Affairs was established in the 1930s to bring promising, young, college graduates to Washington, hopefully challenging them to join the Federal service. Today, President Carter's decision to inaugurate this new program is a recognition that the same need still prevails and may be even greater in the future.

Having been a participant in and a close observer of the Federal scene for nearly 40 years, I would be the first to admit that we have not found all the answers for developing managers in the public service. However, I am confident of one thing--and that is, when organizations succeed, the critical component is the presence of good leadership and highly trained professional people. We need people who care deeply about Government workings and who agree that public programs will succeed only as long as we are able to attract and inspire good people to join the public service. We need people who look upon the public service as more than just another job. We must have people who are dedicated to making Government work better, who care deeply about their fellowmen, and who are willing to do that "something extra," even at personal sacrifice. We need people who are willing to take risks and to innovate. And, perhaps more importantly, we need people who understand the role of the manager or executive in what will always be a political setting, where controversy will exist,

where criticism will be rendered, and where moral choice is always necessary. In short, we need more people in Government who care deeply about the survival of democratic institutions. I am confident that you can pass these tests.

As young people, it is particularly important that you ponder what the world will be like. What will be the role of Government in deciding the kind of a world in which we will live? Certainly we cannot predict the future with precision. However, in a highly interdependent world with rapidly growing population, where energy and basic resources become more expensive and more difficult to obtain, and where science and technology must play an increasingly important role, we can be certain that Government will play an even more vital role in the lives of all of us.

The kind of manager the Federal Government will need, therefore, is a matter which should be a particular concern as you think ahead to the skills and attributes you will need to help solve these problems as well as assure personal success. This is a matter which the Advisory Committee and the National Institute of Public Affairs have addressed. We have concluded that there are at least three key skills which will be particularly important. These are a better capability to plan, analyze, and evaluate programs, along with the more basic and traditional tasks managers perform. You will need to develop an understanding of the importance of these tools and at least some skill in their application--along with other sophisticated

and often highly analytical tools they now entail. But most importantly you will need an appreciation of both the values and limits of these tools. In other words, we urge that you avoid too heavy reliance on these technical tools and procedures--important as they are--which may tend to "triumph over the purposes" these tools are designed to achieve.

Government today has become more complex by virtue of its very size. Most agencies are large-scale organizations and will become larger as the role of Government increases. The challenge is how to make large-scale organizations work effectively, that is, how we can combine the skills and disciplines needed to plan and execute programs without becoming burdened with paperwork, red tape, and an environment which creates an attitude of caution and motivates against risk-taking and innovation.

There are individuals and organizations which have found solutions to the problems of large-scale organization, creating an environment of high morale, high productivity, and public responsiveness. But we can also find examples where this is not the case. In this respect Government is no different from large-scale private organizations. The essential difference is that in the Government you work in a goldfish bowl. The public spotlight is always on the functioning of Government. You devote more time accounting to the Congress and through the Congress to the taxpayer, the electorate, and the individuals and groups affected by Government.

The task of the National Institute of Public Affairs is to assist the Civil Service Commission and the participating agencies in helping you understand the tools and attributes which are most likely to enable you to succeed and to achieve job satisfaction in this environment where the relationship of technical skills to the larger program purposes they serve is made clear. This has been articulated in the program's objectives: "To combine skills (planning, analysis, evaluation) and public service values in a way that helps interns become creative, risk-taking leaders."

The Situation As a Whole

Harlan Cleveland, an outstanding public servant and educator, has long emphasized the importance of gifted generalists in Government. His words are that the future public executive must have a sense of responsibility for the "situation as a whole." What Cleveland means by this phrase is that the successful manager understands the total context of the specific actions for which he is responsible--the role of the Congress, the courts, the issues involved in the separation of powers, the issues involved in intergovernmental relations, the role of Government in regulating and fostering a private enterprise economy, and many other issues. As a Presidential Management Intern, you have the opportunity to apply your generalist orientation to a world of specialists and to tasks that have specific goals. Two of the stated objectives of the development program are relevant to these objectives: "To enhance and nourish generalist

public service values" and "To understand the 'situation as a whole' and balance the political, contextual, and technical environments."

The New Public Executive

The National Academy of Public Administration in 1973 issued a report on Meeting the Needs of Tomorrow's Public Service. I believe this report is still relevant to the issues you will encounter. Three major conclusions in that report have been taken into consideration for the development plan during the next 2 years. First, the Academy concluded that the organizational environment of the future public executive will be characterized by less hierarchy, greater use of temporary project groups, more decentralization, and a leader who is an adviser and consultant, not the "boss." Change will be the norm, continuity the problem. Such an organizational environment calls for new types of leadership.

Second, the Academy report suggests that loyalty will be more to professional and peer groups and employee unions than to the public service ethic. In you, the public service ethic needs to be continued. Our system of government can succeed only if its top managers are committed to broad democratic values and a sense of responsibility to the public at large, as well as to their immediate tasks.

Third, the report emphasizes that often there will be conflicting demands for more participative management and flexibility within the organization, with countervailing demands for more citizen control of administration. Therefore, one objective of the Presidential Management

Intern development program is: "To foster sensitive, responsive, and effective leadership, managerial, and executive qualities." The creation of the Senior Executive Service, proposed by the President and now pending in Congress, is designed to further support the values I have just mentioned. It will clearly give Federal executives more responsibility and link rewards to performance. It will foster greater mobility among agencies, increasing continuity from one administration to another. Your internship is a good prelude to preparation for the Senior Executive Service.

I foresee for you many frustrations and constraints as well as opportunities. We have struggled to develop a program that will help bridge the gap between your academic and work experience. Many persons in government and education have contributed to the NIPA program plan. Many of us have pledged to share fully with you our years of experience. We also hope that what we learn together will help future students in public administration. We trust that your career of exciting and responsible contribution to the public service will be enhanced by the next 2 years.

In 2 years, your intern status will end. It is our hope and belief that most of you will take places within the Federal Government. For those who do not, we believe the program will give you a better understanding of the difficult problems facing the manager and instill in you a desire to participate in public affairs. It is our hope that these beginning years will give you the determination to grow and to utilize the support system of your peers, cluster leaders, resource

persons, supervisors, and mentors, and to continue your education to meet the needs of tomorrow. The key is to be able to "learn and change from experience."

Your formal education may be largely behind you, but your personal education has just begun. The purpose of the National Institute of Public Affairs program is to help you begin this discipline of self-education while you gain work experience.