

Scientific Policy Resolution in Relation
to Agricultural Research

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Being bound up with seasons the pace of progress in agricultural research has to be slow by modern research standards. In developed countries the effects of nature and seasons have been circumvented to a great extent by establishing facilities for growing crops under controlled conditions (e.g. Phytotron). Such units are not available in India and it hence becomes very essential that procedural regulations do not impede the already slow pace of progress. The Scientific Policy Resolution of the Govt. of India has had practically no impact on agricultural research. The reasons are well known but I would enumerate them in the following order:

i) Policy decisions in agricultural research are still largely in the hands of administrators who change jobs frequently. For example, the major body co-ordinating agricultural research in the Country, viz., ^{the} Indian Council of Agricultural Research is traditionally headed by a Civil Servant. Likewise the Directors of Agriculture in most of the States are also administrative men although the Secretaries to the Government dealing with agriculture are also administrators. A few decades ago general knowledge could be a substitute for precise knowledge while coming to decisions on technical matters. The position, however, is not so now.

ii) Because of the comparatively lower scales of pay, agricultural research has not attracted good brains, thereby causing paucity of really competent men.

iii) If we wish to promote research in the field of agriculture, we have to make it possible for scientists to continue their work on a particular crop or branch of

of study for a long time. The living world unlike the inorganic one is very complex. It takes time to understand the problems and to develop an integrated approach to their solution. Frequent changes in personnel are hence not conducive to progress. Unfortunately, the rules of recruitment and promotion are such that it is impossible for a person to continue to work in ^{the same} a field and not suffer financially as a consequence. Much has been talked about and several Indo-American Teams have pointed out this defect in our system. However, nothing has been done which can really alter the situation.

iv) There is no scientific atmosphere in departments administering agricultural research. Usually research Institutes are considered as sub-ordinate offices of a Ministry and archaic rules are applied. Even if funds are obtained for research from other sources like PL 480 funds, it is very difficult to make use of them effectively. It takes many months to create the posts which have been sanctioned and probably years to get them filled up. Even after a Secretary to the Govt. of India signs a contract with U.S. Deptt. of Agriculture to undertake a work and receives the money from the U.S. Government, procedural difficulties like the necessity for a Works Study Unit to scrutinize the post already approved in the project ect. come in the way of starting the research work- planned. Another example of the unscientific temper of our Ministries is provided by the fact that delivering a scientific lecture in Sister Institutes was until recently considered to be "not in the interest of the Government".

v) The present methods of recruitment both of gazetted and non-gazetted staff (through the Employment Exchange and U.P.Sc.) are extremely unsatisfactory and do not help to get the right man for the right job.

vi) The stability provided by Government service without at the same time provision to help good workers and eliminate the bad ones is not conducive to getting the best out of the people employed in research.

Unless new patterns of scientific administrations such as the one in vogue in the Department of Atomic Energy are evolved, it is difficult to implement the spirit let alone the letter of the scientific policy resolution.

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