

In his

• We heard the other day a presentation the other day by Dr. Vijay Kumar in his characteristic free and flamboyant style ~~is~~ with a gay abandon.

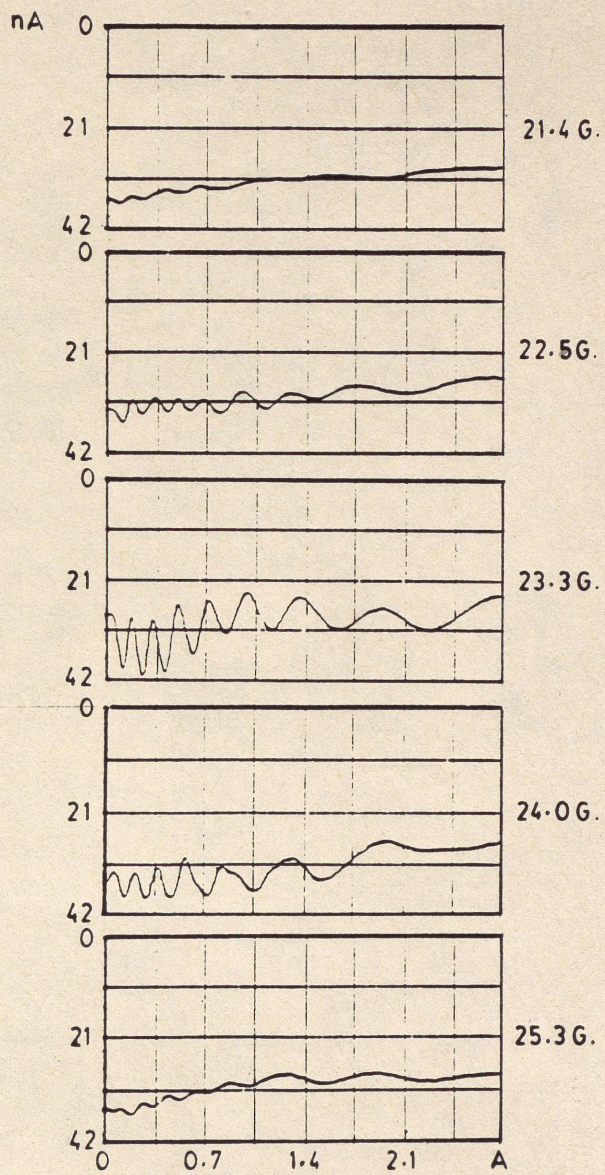
Therein he ~~has~~ paid a singular tribute to the Director whom he euphemistically refers to as the ~~management~~ ^{and} other members of the faculty, in fact ^{almost} all the members of the faculty ~~by~~ who have put in a lot of time and effort & through a variety of committees to ~~put~~ bring VRL to the present stage from the turbulent years of the ^{and mid} early eighties. They have all contributed their mite to the improvement and sustenance of this Laboratory.

Nevertheless we are told that virtually

There is nothing right with this Laboratory

~~I think if indeed~~

~~Dr. Vijay Kumar has paid a singular~~



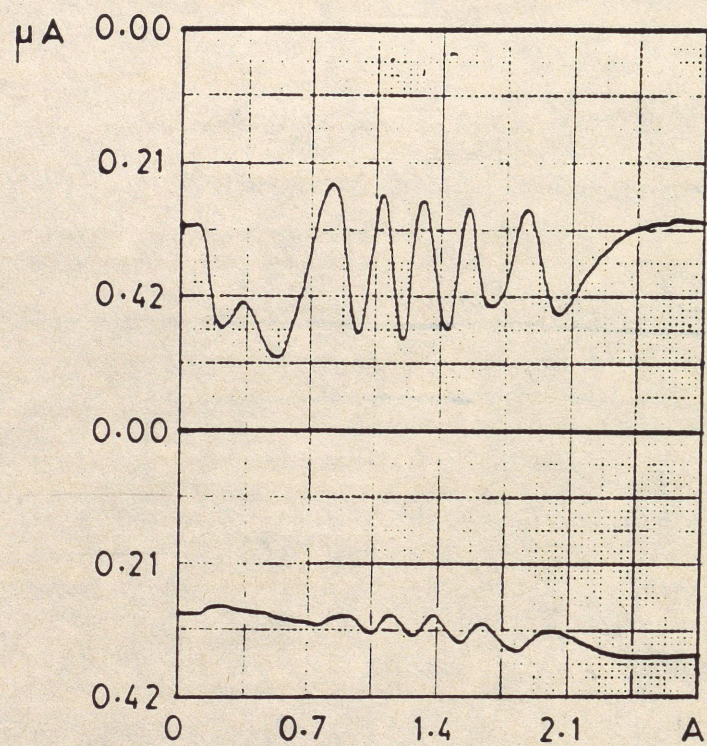
The morale of the scientists is down
There is widespread dissatisfaction
and Chaos is about to take over.

(it is a very serious matter)

If this is indeed so, I would certainly like
to know ~~and~~ from this faculty and would not
want to lose a second to apprise our
Council of Management so that they are not
taken by surprise as ^{much} as I have been ~~taken~~ by
this ominous ~~prediction~~ description of this state of
affairs.

But we must first examine
whether it is indeed so.

⇒ Furthermore we are told that our scientists
are very good. This of course, I would
whole heartedly endorse. But then we are also
told there is something seriously wrong with
our science. If that is indeed so we
should like to hear so from this faculty.
What is wrong with ~~that~~ ^{our} science — ^{the} science
that ~~they~~ ^{we} have ^{all} been doing, because after all
we ourselves ~~have~~ decided what science
we should or should not do.



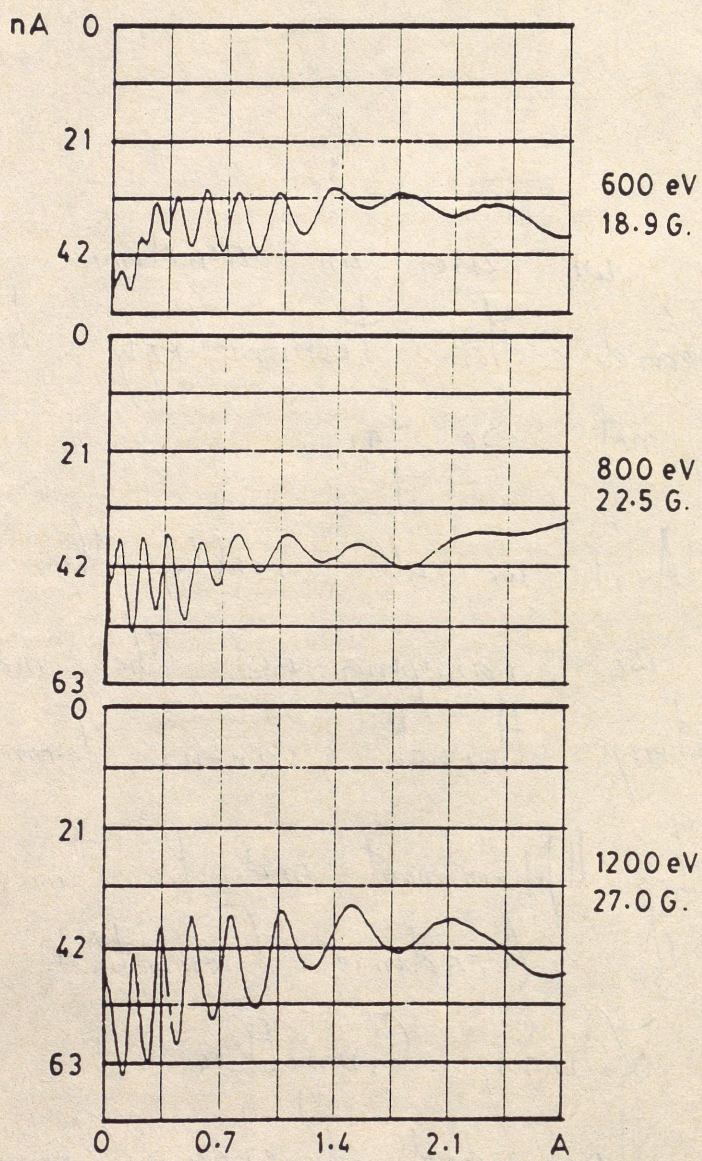
We are furthermore told that "management" is insensitive to criticism [- the "manager" and "management" should not be stubborn all the time]

But first, we should find out who is this "management"? Is it a euphemism for Director?

I am afraid, in academic circles, and I believe we are an academic circle, I have not heard this terminology being used, at least not so far.

Aren't we all really the management?
Aren't we carrying out the management of this Laboratory through various Committees?

- The Appointment and Promotion Committees
- The Academic Committee
- Library Committee
- Stores and Purchase Committee
- Workshop Committee
- Other promotion Committees
- Redressal and representation Committee



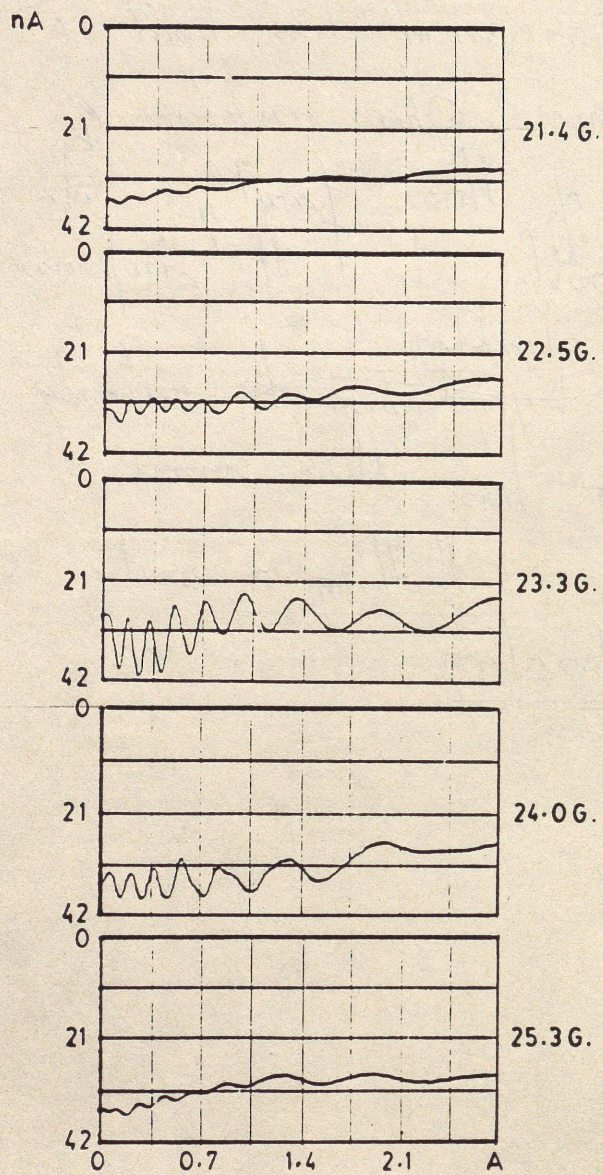
~~In a singular tribute paid to me and to
the other members of this faculty who have
can in fact all ^{the} members of this faculty~~

Dr. Vijay Kumar has paid a singular tribute to
me and other members of, in fact ^{almost} all the
members of this faculty who have contributed
their ~~note~~ ^{efforts} to the improvement and sustenance of
this Laboratory.

~~Dr. Vijay Kumar has certainly~~

He has his ~~summary~~ ^{summary} is simple:

Nothing is ~~quite~~ right with this
Laboratory



Presentation made by Prof. Vijay Kumar
at Academic Faculty Meeting on 28/1/95 ①

TO HAVE EXCELLENT SCIENCE IN A
SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY -

GOOD SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMMES

TO CARRY OUT THESE PROGRAMMES

I. GOOD FACULTY

II. EXCELLENT TECHNICAL
SUPPORT

} 60%

III. GOOD WORK CULTURE

IV. EXCELLENT ENVIRONMENT

} 30%

OVER & ABOVE V. HIGH MORALE OF EMPLOYEES
— 10%

SATISFACTION LEVEL

← SL

i) PROJECTS WOULD NOT GET COMPLETED
IN TIME.

ii) IF COMPLETED, THEY, MAY NOT
COME OUT TO THE SAME SPECIFICATIONS
AS DESIRED AT THE TIME OF MAKING
FEASIBILITY STUDY.

iii) As a result, the scientific staff would get frustrated.

But he would still analyze where he has gone wrong during the building of the system and doing the experiment.

iv) — Lacunae he would try to get them solved through ~~the~~ his personal influence and also through the higher ups. If still he cannot change the system to help him in his work, he is really frustrated.

v) If similar things are experienced by other faculty members also, the whole cream of the institution gets sour — frustration.

vi) If in addition to that, there are large perturbations in the system which may not still lead to chaos, then the faculty members slowly get indifferent or apathetic.

vii) In the similar manner, if there are large perturbations in the system, most of the other members of the institution (other than faculty members) also become indifferent.

viii) That is the time when everything is wrong with the science of that institution.

ix) Before the chaos takes over that institution, people who matter should start thinking seriously and at least one of them should address the others saying

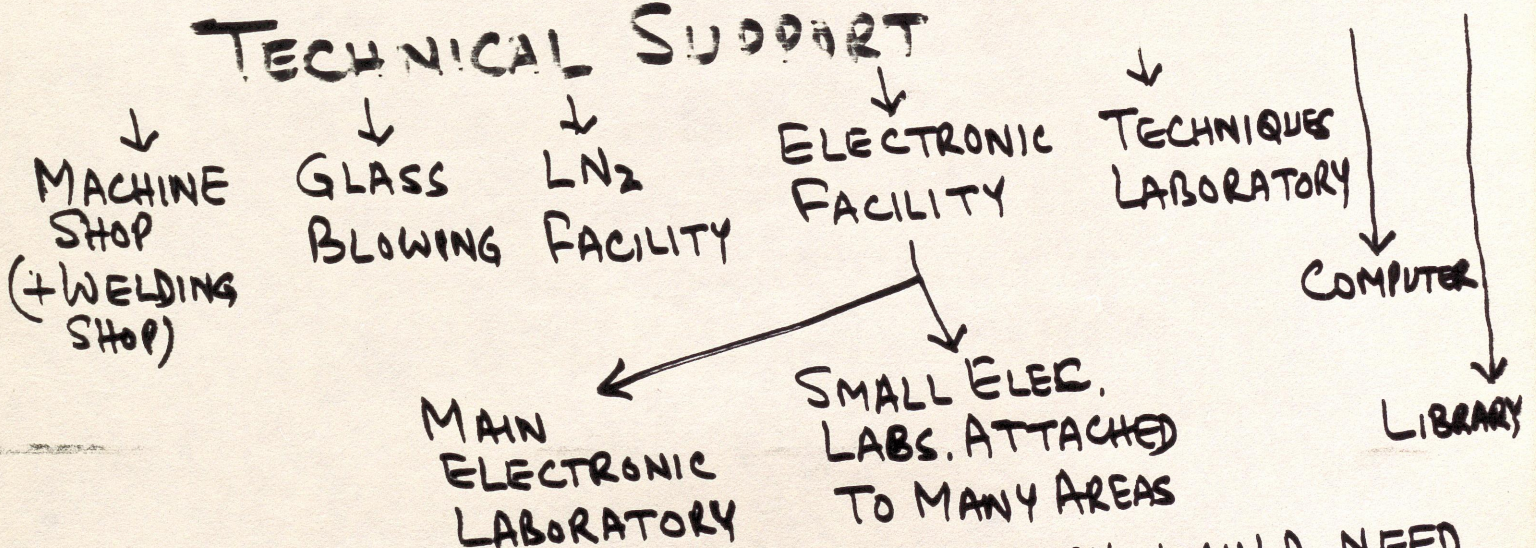
"WHAT IS WRONG WITH PRL SCIENCE?
HOW TO REJUVENATE IT?"

AND THAT IS WHAT I PROPOSE TO DO TODAY.

FACULTY

BASICALLY PRL FACULTY IS WELL QUALIFIED AND HAS THE METAL TO PROPOSE AND EXECUTE CHALLENGING SCIENTIFIC PROJECTS.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT



BUILDING AN EXPERIMENTAL LABORATORY, WOULD NEED EACH OF THE ABOVE FACILITIES (TS) WHICH SHOULD BE AUGMENTED YEAR AFTER YEAR. ALSO, IN CASE OF ELECTRONIC FACILITIES AND TECHNIQUES LABORATORY, THERE SHOULD BE A PARALLEL R&D WORK VERY MUCH NEEDED TO COMPETE WITH THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD AROUND YOU.

TECHNIQUES LAB. — CLOSED
— UNFORTUNATE
MAIN ELECTRONICS LAB.

DOING \downarrow R&D WORK BUT NOT IN THE
MAINSTREAM OF PRL SO AS TO HELP
PRL SCIENTISTS.

WORK CULTURE

INCLUDES HIGH WORKING EFFICIENCY
DEDICATION
MOTIVATION OF EMPLOYEES
INVOLVEMENT IN WORK
SENSE OF PURPOSE

Also, SENIOR - JUNIOR RELATIONSHIP
 \Rightarrow if you expect something from your
juniors, you cannot be found
wanting on that account.

Also, WORKERS SHOULD HAVE DISTRIBUTION
OF WORK ACCORDING TO THEIR STATUS/
CAPABILITY.

ON ALMOST ALL ACCOUNTS
PRL IS LAGGING BEHIND.

ENVIRONMENT

\downarrow
SURROUNDINGS, CIRCUMSTANCES
WHICH EVENTUALLY INFLUENCE WORK CULTURE.

1) Sufficient give-and-take so far as
encouragement is concerned between seniors
and juniors.

2) a) Any routine work should get done automatically ^⑤ without any personal approach.

b) Any new rules already applicable in sister concerns should automatically get adopted without
— even if it benefits only a few people.

3) The administration should be 100% transparent in dealing with employees.

— Sometimes different employees may get different answers to ~~diff~~ same query.

4) Management should avoid any undue favouritism to some employees.

5) Distribution of budgets should be transparent.

6) Management should be receptive to criticism in a healthy way. It should not throw away the suggestions in the dust bin saying that the employees either are wrong or have developed cynicism. In other words, the management and the managers should not be stubborn all the time.

7) Social activities like sports, cultural programmes etc. should be encouraged. This in turn brings employees of all categories together i.e. more healthy interaction.

(6)

UNFORTUNATELY, ON ALL ACCOUNTS, PRL IS LACKING.

MORALE — ANYWAY, DOWN.

ON SCIENCE FRONT

WHAT IS WRONG WITH PRL?

1) The present scientific programmes, at least some of them, have not shaped up as per expectation. Reasons are:

a) they were very big projects and were not conceived properly.

b) time schedule for implementation of these projects, somewhere on the line, went haywire.

So science planned with these expts. has become less meaningful as during this time, the technology and also science which goes with it, has tremendously advanced.

2) The direction science should take in PRL has neither been convincing nor path-finding. It has rather been arbitrary and confusing. As a result, no group, area or division has been expanded to the extent that it could be called a "school of science in" at national or international level.

7

They are good individual faculty members in different areas but there are no schools in the real sense. Also, there are even sub-groups existing at sub-critical level.

3) Emphasis on technology has rather become secondary. Either we have large experiments almost 100% bought from the foreign market, or we have built experiments in the laboratory with the minimal available technology. Also, the technologies on their part are not being upgraded. Again, the technologies are not being exchanged between different groups. The result is, for example, that in some laboratories, still X-t or Y-t chart recorders are being used even when 20 years ago, multichannel analysers in multiscaling mode were made in PRL.

4) Faculty members have dissatisfaction about the way new projects are being started in PRL through backdoor. They say that for a two/three lakh budget, they have to defend science giving lectures after lectures in their areas but for some projects with budget levels ≥ 30 lakhs, there are never discussions. One fine morning, one comes to know about the existence of that project.

(8)

5. Large no. of reviews and too much of documentation are not conducive to befitting science culture. No doubt, optimum documentation is required, but too much documentation leads to confusion and waste of time. Too many reviews including peer reviews of the existing and new projects brings unhappiness in the faculty as they feel that probably, they have lost credibility.

6. The faculty feels that there is favouritism in distribution of budgets and sending people ~~to~~ abroad on deputation.

7. If the head of the institution remains most of the time away from PRL during a working year, it leads to an unhappy situation amongst faculty members. But one can't deny the fact that the head is also a scientist; so he has to ~~go~~ attend conferences, symposia, meetings etc. But it is also a fact that remaining away for a long time does not boost the morale of the faculty members.

Something goes for other faculty members who remain away from PRL for a long time during an academic year.

SOLUTIONS

(9)

- ① 8 to 10 Scientists should be recruited at a very senior level. These scientists should have national/international standing on subjects which are on the CHARTER of PRL. These scientists should be allowed to build schools around them.

10-15 scientists at intermediate level (of seniority) should also be recruited who ~~at~~ would have similar qualifications — and should be able to help senior scientists in building schools.

Some of the programmes which have served enough purpose should partially be phased out and the supporting staff thus rendered surplus should be attached to the new programmes to be taken up by the newly recruited faculty.

The above recruitment has to be carried out on war footing.

- ② The academic faculty should carry along with them technical faculty.

Every year, some part of the area budget should be allotted to technology development programme to be carried out by different technical faculty members in conjunction with academic

(10)

faculty members. The new/latest technologies should be pursued in a systematic but vigorous fashion. Some of these technologies may not find direct use today but would definitely be useful in near future. In other words, these technologies should be ahead of time.

The main electronics laboratory should be brought in the mainstream of PRL and sophisticated R & D work should be continued.

The techniques laboratory should be brought back to original shape and then should be augmented to have new technologies.

- ③ High level committees may be established to look into smaller matters like distribution of budgets to areas and individuals, deputation of PRL Scientists to foreign countries etc.
- ④ Taking new projects and bringing research money from outside agencies should be encouraged. The new projects should be discussed threadbare in the area meetings, then area seminars and then at higher levels. If and when projects are acceptable to DIRECTOR after the above triple screening process, he should make endeavours to get money from other agencies like DST, ISRO, CSIR etc etc.

② Because of promotion policy prevailing in PRL, almost 15 to 20% of the staff has got saturated in their scales and another 7 to 10% would get saturation in the next two years. In an institute where wages are never the bone of contention, the employees are getting frustrated because of lack of avenues ahead of them. All this has come to stay because of three/six year reviews where employees can get ~~one~~ as high as two additional increments every time they appear in interview. ①②

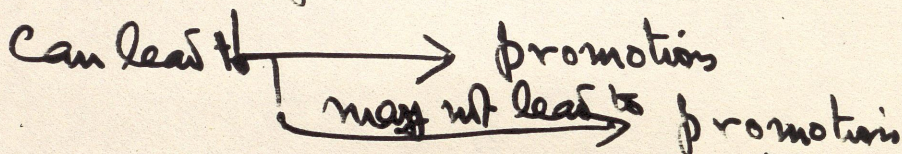
③ No social activities in PRL. As a matter of fact, this is one of the best tools for bringing employees together, increasing interaction between them. Even the Founders' day celebrations which used to be carried out every year have been stopped. The "moments giving" ceremonies for employees who have completed 25 years have not taken place for the last two years.

SOLUTIONS

1. START "PUNISHMENT" POLICY.

2. Promotions policy should be changed to one which exists in other DOS organisations.

4 year review



But

Could be ~~is~~ recommended for promotion after 6 months on the basis of same interview

Could be called again for interview after one year.

In this system, there is no provision for giving additional increments at any stage.

If we have to switch over to this policy, first all cases have to be normalized in a positive way in terms of existing promotion policy.

The above two solutions ^{steps} are very strong and tough but have to be followed without fail if you genuinely want to rejuvenate environment.

③ The head of the institution should have more interaction with the employees both collectively and if required, individually.

④ Social activities should be restarted in PRL with a great vigour.

— SWE —

⑤ After ① & ② are carried out, the management should dole out a few lollipops / more facilities to employees like additional hours of canteen facility, some common newspaper / magazine lounges in the library or elsewhere etc.