

## NATURE AND CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

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### ABSTRACT

A great deal of evidence exists on the interdependence of maladministration and corruption. Investigations of corruption have clearly shown that sometimes as a result of inertia, sometimes of maneuver-maladministration increases the discretionary and arbitrary power of administrators in every phase of the process, which leads to public measures being 'purchase' by bribery; the artificial creation of demand, the contamination of the tendering system, the weakening of official controls. Corruption also creates maladministration through arbitrary increases in the cost and distortion of demand for public works. Maladministration fosters mistrust in the public administration among citizens and entrepreneurs as well as doubts as to the effective enjoyment of legally sanctioned rights. This paper is an attempt to elaborate some of the causes of corruption.

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### INTRODUCTION

The forms of bribery and embezzlement are profusely variegated. The less well placed of the staff would find it very difficult to mend their ways because often their salaries do not come, sometimes delayed for months, sometimes vanishing altogether. Many owe substantial sums borrowed for getting the appointment.

Careful observers have noted the presence of bureaucratic corruption of particular type, namely, the practice of buying favours from the bureaucrat responsible for formulating and administering the

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government's economic policies. Typical examples are bribery to obtain foreign exchange, import, export, investment or production licenses, or to avoid paying taxes. The amounts received in this way involve the subversion of government's economic policies. This type of bureaucratic corruption hampers development by preventing the government from obtaining tax revenues necessary for development policies. It has encouraged immorality and has self-seeking, leading to widespread cynicism. It has reduced the willingness to make sacrifices for the society's economic development.

Officials incharge of public works have used buses and other equipment, materials and man-hours belonging to the state in building houses for themselves or hiring them to other people. Customs' officers have plenty of scope for speculation in exchange for bribes. Some of them pass goods without levying the duty or at least reducing it substantially, whereas people who give them nothing may have to face interminable delays with the added danger that their goods will be damaged or stolen.

The police may be among the worst offenders against the lay: they levy illegal tolls on vehicles, especially the so-called heavy lorries which usually carry many more passengers than they are allowed and transgress a variety of minor regulations. They are allowed to proceed regardless the infractions of law if they pay the policemen's toll.

Campaign contributions are a common feature of the police, population planning, the revenue, the customs, the excise, the public works, the railway, the

rural works, the forestry, and some other departments. The spoils are divided by individuals in their respective official positions.

In addition to these techniques of graft, there was employed in conjunction with the primary methods various subsidiary or ancillary techniques. The method of maintaining secrecy was fairly obvious. The terms of an agreement to give some particular privilege were vague, indefinite or merely implied. Non-verbal symbols were sometimes employed. As little documentary evidence as possible was created. When payments were made by commercial banks or corporate funds, false entries were made. Doubtful records, - one false, one true, - were sometimes kept.

Various methods of camouflage and counter-propaganda constituted another subsidiary technique. In most of instances, the accused had an explanation different from the interpretation offered by the prosecutor. The dirtiest form of "steal" was sometimes transformed by the public welfare. If this could not be done, sufficient dust was raised to create confusion and doubt.

The private commercial banks and corporations allocate to their managers funds for which they do not account in writing but only verbally, and from which they draw bribes for officials on whom they depend. The big corporations have teams whose job is to operate networks of corruption. The official name for these activities is public relations.

One of the most unsavory forms of exploitation arises from the handling of applications for job. The

clerks who have access to them as well as their superiors who have some say in the matters, will reshuffle, remove or destroy the applications so as to favour their relatives or those who have paid them a bribe. Sometimes the competition takes the form of a kind of auction in which the prize goes to the highest bidder while the rest forfeit their bids.

Many people who have the power to hire and fire will try to impose upon the subordinates a ransom for being allowed to stay in employment, and if the latter have subordinate of their own, they will try to recover their expenses and make a profit by applying the same technique. Therefore, a kind of quasi-feudal network of tribute levying goes right through some departments.

Over the years, top and middle level bureaucrats got luxurious houses built in Gulberg, Islamabad, University Town, Satellite Town, Pakistan Employees Co-operative Housing Society and other housing societies at Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The bureaucrats accustomed themselves to habits and a scale of living that was mathematically impossible to equate with their known sources of income. Many bureaucrats live either in rented houses or in houses allotted to them by their respective departments/ministries and rent out the houses owned by them. Some were found running enterprises that they could not have possibly brought by stinting on their house - keeping money. Wives of bureaucrats were seen at official functions shimmering with jewels and gowns that in honest societies would have immediately caught the eye of income tax officials.

Many instances of bribery in public administration are those in which the citizens pay in order to get what he is entitled to anyway. Businessmen

and agriculturists often regard the payment of *Bakhshish* to be as much a part of the application for government are generally based upon the rank of the officer, the character of the services being requested, and the financial means of the claimant.

The very essence of administrative corruption is the predominance of self-interest regardless of public interest. Besides the distribution of favours, the corrupt bureaucrat has many other means of procuring and retaining power. They pose as "yes-man" to politicians in power who take them into confidence and ultimately get circumscribed by the bureaucrats. The bureaucrat then explores the situation to promote his self-interest. The rank-favouritism shown by the corrupt bureaucratic organization to its servile adherents must make enemies of those who feel themselves slighted. And there are many other consequences of corrupt bureaucratic rule, which directly but non-the-less surely inflame the sufferers against the injustice of the existing order, insufficient and inferior school accommodations, the absence of means of recreation, inadequate hospital equipment, dirty streets, impure water supply, neglect of administrative reforms, poor and high-priced utility services and several others. All things considered, the corrupt bureaucracy is the sorriest savior of society.

Licenses of various kinds and exemptions from import duties on articles, which can be sold at great profit, are frequently given to the favorites of the bureaucrats or in exchange for bribes. Fabulous sums are obtained for granting concessions to foreign companies and fortunes are made from allotment of lands belonging to the State. Collections of income tax,

who lack "influence" or "pull" find themselves assigned to lowly posts, are denied promotion and salary increases, unable to obtain fringe benefits. One's appointment as Director or Head of an organization is not determined by his merit and qualifications but by his access to the appointing authorities, his personal contacts and the political influence exerted by the "extended" family.

Some officials of the Police, the Revenue, the Customs, the Public Works, the Income Tax and the "Law and Order" enforcement departments are in advantageous positions to extort bribes and other favours from "clientele" groups. Part of the extra income must be passed on to superiors or influential members of bureaucracy who protect the "rackets". The presence of several devices for augmenting income through the exercise of influence mean that the effective income and living costs of officials diverge strikingly from that officially sanctioned.

As for the different branches of administration it is generally assumed that the public works departments and government purchasing agencies are particularly corrupt, as are also the agencies running the railways, the offices issuing import and export licenses, and those responsible for the assessment and collection of taxes. More generally, it is asserted that whenever discretionary power is given to officials, the possibilities of corruption would be enhanced.

In a sense, the bureaucracy is privy to subsidized machinery. Its privileges and status are a prize eagerly sought by ambitious officials. The proliferation of

governmental functions, encouraged both by the first stages of industrialization and the rosy attractiveness of the "welfare state", give rise to rapid expansion of agencies, increase of offices and conspicuous over staffing. Yet the economy as a whole remains poor and the national budget is unable to provide adequate salaries. The low salary schedule provides an economic incentive for capitalizing on every opportunity each encounter to augment his official salary from unofficial sources.

The significant of bureaucratic corruption is highlighted by fact that whenever a political regime crumbled, a major and often decisive cause has been the prevalence of official misconduct and the concomitant spread of unlawful practices among businessmen and the general public. A few years before the advent of martial rule of 1958 in Pakistan, Tibor Mende reported that: "probably no other symptom of Pakistani public life has contributed more to the demoralization of the common man than corruption". Illicit practices had reached such proportions that their effect was likely to wipe out whatever benefits new economic projects might have secured for him. Some measures were taken by in response to widespread demand for action and a few officials were dismissed, but they were the small culprits.

#### CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

One of the major causes of corruption is the tendency of bureaucracy to suppress distinguished ability whenever they find outside their own fold. They are known, throughout the country, to promote

mediocrity by placing men of talent and merit under great hardship and difficulties.

The incentive to corrupt whatever official purposes public institutions are agreed to have is especially great in conditions of extreme inequality and poverty. The benefits of holding an office are relatively enormous; by comparison, the penalties for attempting to obtain bribe are fairly high.

Administrative corruption is relatively easy to conceal; partly this is because people are generally not too clear about what the official roles are. Partly it is because the law is ineffectively enforced and the police themselves are very much susceptible to corruption. And while traditional gift-giving can be distinguished from a bribe of money, it is quite obvious that from the point of view of the giver the one has shaded into the other, so that although the practice has taken on a new significance, as the open gift of a basket of fruit is replaced by a more furtive gift of a hundred rupee note, it is nevertheless an established fact of life, in which the precise nature of rule infringement is partially concealed by continuity with an older custom.

It seems impossible to declare that a society without an effective public morality cannot develop economically. On the other hand, there seems to be reasons for doubting whether under present conditions this is likely to happen. In the first place, most of the villages are extremely dependent upon government action for their development. Their development prospect largely depends on attaining the targets chartered in development plans. This requires single-minded

handwork from all holders of public office. If the civil servants consume their time and energy in trying to get rich by corrupt means, it is not likely that the development plans will be fulfilled.

If this is the pattern of behavior of the higher bureaucracy and if this is fairly well-known, it is likely to rob them of much of their authority both with subordinate in the government and with followers in the countryside. The wealth improperly accumulated may be modest by world standard, but still large in relation to the level of investment on which the economic development of the country depends. In this case, much will turn on how wealth is redeveloped. If bureaucracy tries to buy security by depositing their wealth in British, American and Swiss banks, it represents a wholly negative drain on the economy.

### **GREEDINESS**

Man's insatiable appetite for money is also listed among the basic causes, which produce corruption. Money like power also generates a heady effect and when it becomes an obsession, people generally tend to indulge in more irregularities, and the chances of corruption increase manifold. When the distribution of money is unequal and unjust, it produces jealousy, envy and enmity, all of which are elements which pollute human character and conscience. Those who want to possess more and those who do not possess thinking that they cannot dispossess others, adopt reckless means to increase their possessions. Moreover an individual who has the money, has an unmistakable tendency to preserve and increase it. In order to do so he must have

access to centers of power, particularly he must have access to the chambers of political decision making, which are the most potent reservoir of power. It is for this reason that acquisition and distribution of money has always been a very critical dimension of every known political system. Any law, which is meant to set limits to the acquisition of money, is resisted and its implementation automatically becomes a source of corruption. People's tendency to buy power with money is a very common feature of human history.

It is due to the inherent corrupting propensities of money that certain commentators believe that money economy and capitalism play a very important role in increasing the incidence of corruption. It is pointed out that although corruption was present in all human societies, but its intensity increased manifold with the introduction of money economy. In pre-money economy, bribes could be given in the form of a horse and other material objects, which were inherently demonstrable. In other words, there was no way by which corruption could be kept secret and the result was that it was limited to vast extent. As societies develop, such opportunities increase manifold, and with it increases the possibilities of corruption.

#### **PEOPLE: LACKING IN POWER**

People get the government they deserve in an old adage. The same to a certain extent is true with regard to corruption. No one will deny the fact that the lust for power and greed among rulers are the fundamental sources of corruption, any rational appraisal of this social ailment must take into consideration the role of

the people's apathy, and their gross ignorance of the national problems. Denis Joseph in his examination of the causes of administrative corruption in India has concluded that masses in general are as much to be blamed for the continued existence of corruption as are those who indulge in this nefarious transaction. In his opinion, the extent of corruption in a particular country would depend on how much the people in that society are prepared to tolerate it. In the case of India, he says, the people must shoulder the major burden of responsibility for the current gravity of corruption. They are inherently apathetic and their apathy is the major cause of government's graft and bribery.<sup>(1)</sup> This is particularly true in societies where the ruling elite has recently emerged from the masses without any tradition of their own. MacMullan talks about new men in West Africa who assumed power before they had developed any norms different from their people. They were not wealthy, and other than politics, probably had no means of earning their livelihood, the result was that they used every opportunity of "trading their power with the wealth of others".<sup>(2)</sup> The most distressing thing, however, is that the people in general tirelessly talk about fantastic stories of corruption at high places - some of them are nothing more than figments of a fertile imagination - but seldom take any concrete step to show their indignation publicly. In fact, they are not only passive, but seem to think it legitimate. In their minds, it is free from the stigma of wrongdoing.

In recent years, there has been a dramatic change in the attitude of the people in Pakistan due to the rising tide of materialism. In the past people were comparatively more illiterate, and less awakened, but

they were very critical of corruption. They generally respected a man only if he had a sound moral character and a good family background. This is not true any more. Today people respect a man who has money, and obviously those who are searching for social esteem, look for every possible opportunity to collect wealth and material assets, which would win for the popular respect. Rampant corruption in society is attributed to permissive attitudes of the people towards corruption. When a case is brought to their notice they put it away by saying 'every one does it' or 'it is an accepted part of life'.

Corruption is so universal and yet everyone seems to be helpless against it. The primary reason is the failure of the governments to take any action against it and the absence of social awareness among people about its evils. Politicians feel they have done their job by passing laws against administrative malpractices and then sink back in the cocoon of complacency. No one ever seems to know where to begin the fight against the corruption, and in the growing confusion pathways of rectitude further become murky, and the society is suspended in a limbo of indecision and bewilderment. In many cases, legal sanctions are available but they are seldom implemented, but it is my belief that if they are enforced, corruption will still be with us. Incidence of corruption will decline when politicians stop paying only lip-service to the ideas of public ethics, and the people leave their nonchalance and a sense of resignation, and show determination and courage in initiating social sanctions against both the corrupter and the corrupted.

There is another weakness among people, which becomes a source of moral turpitude in society. It has been observed that masses in general tend to emulate their leaders. It is a part of the same controversy, which

deals with the relationship between the leaders and the subjects, and shows whether people corrupt the leaders or vice versa. Some believe that if the leaders are corrupt that means that the people are corrupt because leaders after all are products of the same society. There are others, however, who think that masses more often than not tend to emulate their leaders and that it is from them that corruption spills over into the rest of society. In the literature on leadership, power and responsibility, the tendency is to give the latter assumption a relatively greater importance.<sup>(3)</sup> It is said that there are certain inherent elements in the character of the people, which keep them away from corruption, but their innocence and gullibility are exploited and manipulated by the crafty politicians and this is how they are dragged into corruption. It is observed that societies, in which individuals determine their social identity in terms of corporate kinship, are more susceptible to bureaucratic corruption. When a member of the group gains a position of authority, the entire group tends to descend upon him for favours. It is considered socially legitimate, because if an individual fails to fulfil this kinship obligation, he will be made to live the life of a social out-cast, because his socialization in most cases is confined to the members of his own group. In such a socio-cultural environment, public officials are under heavy pressure to exploit their positions for the benefit of their families or groups.

In a society where kinship ties have such overwhelming influence on human behaviour, public interest as a social reality does not exist. The only social virtue, which is admired and idolized, is the extent to which a person can serve the interests of those with whom his primary relationship is close and direct.<sup>(4)</sup>

**INSUFFICIENCY OF LAWS**

Every discussion on corruption must take into consideration the legal framework of a society, because the essence of all corruption is that someone from the formal or informal position has tried to violate the law. It is always a serious concern among the politicians, bureaucrats and others to find out how far the inadequacies of the laws themselves are responsible in creating the conditions on which graft and bribery generally tend to thrive.

An analysis in this matter resolves around four points:

1. The effectiveness of the laws and the extent to which they are fortified by public opinion.
2. How easy it is to break the law and what are the chances of this violation being detected.
3. If it is violated, how much private gain a person can make out of it.
4. What are the inherent complexities and ambiguities of laws which make them susceptible to exploitation by corrupt officials.

Most observers agree that laws in the developing societies are deficient on all the four counts. There are several historical reasons for that. Each colonial regime brought its own legal philosophy from the metropolitan country and grafted it by force on the socio-religious environments, which were not receptive of it. These foreign laws introduced entirely new dimensions to what

was desirable and what was not desirable in human behaviour. The result was that enforcement of these laws was often very difficult and uncertain. District officers had to be given wide discretionary powers to implement colonial policies. As long as the officer was scrupulously honest, this conflict between law and norms of the people did not lead to corruption but in the hands of an unscrupulous functioning this conflict could become a source of widespread corruption. In Pakistan, laws against corruption have been passed in the most haphazard manner. The end result is that they may be incomplete or contradict each other, therefore, one is not surprised if anti-corruption laws instead of punishing the corrupt protect them. In some cases officers have been found selling cars, and other mechanical gadgets much above the controlled price, but nothing can be done against them because the laws against black-marketing are meant for dealers and are not against private citizens. In 1953 government of Pakistan issued the prevention of corruption rules to deal with corrupt civil servants. Under these rules any government servant whose property was disproportionate to his means, or his standard of living was not warranted by his income, could be retired compulsory. The rules did not recognize it as a cognizable offense; therefore the guilty officers could only be subjected to departmental inquiry. There was no provision for witness and a civil servant's bank account could not be checked. The result was that inquiries conducted under these rules remained often a farce. (5)

Corruption is aggravated in times of social and economic restlessness. It is said that in India and Pakistan corruption increased manifold in the wake of

the 1947 partition of the sub-continent. Partition uprooted millions of people on both sides of the border, and the influx of the hundreds and thousands of refugees unhinged administrative stability as governments tried to find means to rehabilitate them in new homes. In both countries people left trusts, and evacuee property worth millions of rupees, which had to be distributed among refugees for settlement. Since documentary evidence of the property left behind was not available, people filled highly inflated claims and overnight paupers became millionaires and millionaires became paupers. It was a period of panic, uncertainty and growing frustrations, and this is the kind of environment on which the scorpions of corruption thrive the most. The sudden influx of about seven million refugees created a critical situation, and laws, rules and procedures that were adopted to handle it were formulated thoughtlessly.

Another aspect of laws, which produces corruption is that every law puts certain people or groups at a disadvantage. It is very difficult to have laws, which are universally advantageous to all sections of the population. The result is that who are subjected to disadvantage compensate themselves by creating roadblocks in their implementation. Corruption is considered to be the easiest way of doing so. M. McMullan says that a high level of corruption is the result of wide divergence between the attitudes, aims, and methods of the government of a country and those of the society in which they operate, in particular of the procedures and aims of the government, which put particular groups of the population at a special disadvantage; that therefore the different levels of corruption in different societies depend on the extent to which government and society are homogeneous.<sup>(6)</sup>

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

It is a common observation that an accelerated tempo of development increases the opportunities for corruption in developing societies in general and in Pakistan in particular. If a comparison is made with conditions in the colonial era, the usual view of both South Asia and Western observers is that corruption is more prevalent now than before independence and that, in particular, it has recently gained ground in the higher echelons of officials and politicians.<sup>(7)</sup> The new rulers have made development a ruling passion of their life, and are mobilizing all material and political resources to achieve predetermined objectives in this direction. This has resulted in the proliferation of departments and agencies in which critical decisions are made and where officials are allowed to handle big financial transactions. The thesis that increase in the activities of the government multiplies the chances of corruption has a universal vogue. Bureaucrats at the state level became corrupt when they were given tremendous funds and large responsibilities to undertake large-scale projects for urban development. The other reason is that anyone interested in obtaining favours from the government finds the stakes considerably higher at the federal or state level-states disburse or regulate big money. They build motorways and in so doing spend billions on contractors, landowners, engineers, and consultants. They regulate truckers, public utilities, insurance companies, banks, small business finance corporations, they issue paroles and pardons, licenses to drivers, doctors, dentists, liquor stores, barbers, beauticians, teachers, real-estate brokers, and scores of other occupations and professions.

they control access to natural resources, and supervise industrial safety and workmen's compensation programme. The stakes are enormous. Theodore Eschenburg in his analysis of corruption in the Federal Republic of West Germany has concluded the 'gift inflation' in public life is an undesirable by-product of the 'economic miracle'. In other words, people today have more money to spare to buy costly gifts, and some clever businessmen label them as a part of their public relations campaign, and make the tax deductible.<sup>(8)</sup>

The government of Pakistan, in order to encourage people towards developmental activities evolved programmes of large-scale distribution of permits, subsidies, grants, leases and loans. The government in most cases passed laws and allocated funds, but left the choice of the beneficiary to the administrator. The planned allocation of resources, both in the industrial and agricultural sectors has necessitated numerous controls and licenses to make economic reconstruction effective and efficient. If an entrepreneur wants to establish a factory, he needs the permission of the finance ministry. He requires a separate license to import machinery, and may need official permission to import raw materials from abroad. If a farmer wants to buy a tractor, he has to have a permit from the proper authority. The government invariably controls improved seeds and fertilizers. If he is capable of installing a tube-well, he must have an electric connection for which he will have to see some government officials. If a farmer wants to plant a small fruit orchard, he has to approach the irrigation department for an increase in the volume of water. In other words if a person is a contractor to the government

on development projects, he will need to satisfy officials and inspectors.

It has been observed that in nation building departments, like agriculture, community development, rural reconstruction and cooperative societies, officers with vast discretionary powers have made great fortunes. Corruption due to economic development is more rampant in cities than in villages. This is because the government is obsessed with industrialization and the focus of their intention is on establishing industry, trade and commerce in cities. Since the initiative in this direction is entirely from the government, the natural result is that administrators in charge of these projects are given unlimited powers in granting loans, buying machinery, and selling land for industrial purposes. They have vast authority in giving tax-holiday and tariff concessions to the industrialists. In this climate of haste and urgency, the administrator might literally pick up a man from the street and makes him a millionaire. Since an average citizen in Pakistan encounters public bureaucracies at every step of his economic activity, and finds them rigid and hidebound in rules and procedures, he has a natural tendency to circumvent them through corruption. This also tempts the needy bureaucrat or the one with weak character to seek rewards for his services. The present day government in an emerging society is engaged in multifarious developmental activities, touches the life of a citizen from cradle to grave, and is under heavy pressures from groups and associations for favours and patronage. The enormity of the governmental tasks and phenomenal expansion of the bureaucratic structures coupled with the temptations, which are inherent in the working of the welfare state, make corruption irresistible.<sup>(9)</sup>

The expansion of the public sector has been a matter of necessity, but in many cases the planning is so thoughtless, or the corrupting political pressures so acute, that even heavily financial projects have ended in a monumental waste. The recent history of economic development in Pakistan is replete with horrendous stories of economic disaster resulting from corruption.

In many cases corruption is simply a product of the malfunctioning of the market forces of supply and demand. Because of their galloping needs for the transportation of goods there is always a chronic shortage of railway's wagons. In these circumstances a businessman who has to shift his perishable merchandise from one place to another, is at the mercy of a petty official who handles the allotment of wagons. This has led to the practice of bypassing cumbersome procedures by bribing railway's officials.

In short, the pace of development and planning of economic growth have created a socio-economic climate in Pakistan, which tends to produce great opportunities for corruption. Rigidity of rules and expensive and time consuming delays have created a class of people called expeditors.

Wilber Bender, a member of the Massachusetts Crime Commission in United States explains: "The work of the Commission, however, did confirm the common view that an enormous potential for corruption is inherent in the modern welfare state. When a state has hundred of millions of dollars to spend on contracts for construction of roads and buildings and the purchase of

supplies and services, when it regulates and licenses all kinds of profession, trades and business, the possibilities are obvious for using improperly for private gain, the power to make decisions about these matters or for improperly influencing these decisions.<sup>(10)</sup> It is difficult to describe in concrete terms the avenues, and connections through which businessmen influence political decision makers. One thing, however, seems certain that most of them are convinced that legislators in Pakistan do not play a critical role in policy-making. They realize that if any pressure is needed in the force of kinship relationship, ethnic affinity, or even outright bribery, it is the administration, which is the reservoir of maximum information and which shapes public policy in a decisive manner.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE DEFICIENCIES

There are certain inherent characteristics in every administrative system, which are detrimental to honest behaviour. Secrecy, excessive centralization and inefficiency are common features of the governmental machinery in Pakistan. Each one of them has built in propensity to corrupt public officials. A certain amount of secrecy is essential for effective policy formulation and its efficient implementation, but in bureaucratic structures secrecy tends to become an obsession. Leaving aside that too much secrecy creates a psychological climate in an organization in which trustworthy individuals cannot work with confidence and courage, it has other implications, which force individuals to accept bribes. There is a tendency in nearly every department of the government to classify most of its deliberations as confidential and by law no member of the public can have

any inkling into them. There are often results in which those who hold in custody the relevant information assume importance and power far in excess of their rank and status. The only way interested members of the public can have the desired information is through influence or bribery. It is said that corruption would be reduced if government classify information according to some rational criteria, which, without putting national security in jeopardy, would make relevant information available to the public, easily.

Centralization of decision-making authority is another aspect of the administration, which has been a subject of unending debate and discussion among people. A certain amount of centralization is essential for effective coordination, but agencies and departments tend increasingly to concentrate departmental authority at the headquarters. Such a policy not only produces administrative congestion at the top of the hierarchy, but it also leads to other evils, which are inimical to effective administration. Delays and redtape become normal features of decision-making, and since there is no delegation of authority, it produces nonchalance and irresponsibility among the officers. The bridges of understanding between the staff and the policy-makers at the headquarters are blocked by suspicion and distrust and this paralysis renders the government and its decisions ineffectual. But more than anything else, over-centralization produces conditions in which people are forced to resort to corruption. Men adopt unauthorized means of doing things locally. Werlin, from his observation of the Ghanaian administration has drawn the following conclusions:

"The effect of corruption is to generate an atmosphere of distrust, which pervades all levels of administration.

This discourages top leaders or administrators from preparing subordinates to undertake an increasing amount of the requisite workload and decision-making. At the same time, their capacity to supervise and correct what goes on is also reduced. Consequently, the delegation of authority which is essential for successful administration becomes impossible. Yet where decentralization cannot take legitimate institutional forms, this accounts for the common situation of underdeveloped regimes appearing to authoritarian but actually being impotent".<sup>(11)</sup>

Is there any relationship between corruption and inefficiency? Examined superficially it would appear that perhaps there is none, because in order to be corrupt one needs intelligence, and the ability to manipulate rules and regulations efficiently so that legal activities can be camouflaged. This, however, is not entirely correct. Very often inefficiency itself becomes a major source of corruption. The damage to public morality by this source can be widespread. Robert Brook says, "The corrupt official must know the better and choose the worse; the inefficient does not know any better. In other case the external circumstances may appear to be closely similar and immediate results may be equally harmful".<sup>12</sup>

It is argued that even if the inefficient officer himself is honest, his inefficiency is likely to be exploited by others. It is also likely that his deficient performance would block the avenues of his own promotion and to improve his image he tempts to adopt illegal means.

#### IMPEDIMENTS OF CIVILIZATION

Some leading philosophers have contended that civilization itself exercises corrupting influence on human behaviour. In their opinion the forces, which

civilize man also make his life complex, and as he cultivates sophistries of culture and city life the corrupting tendencies multiply in him. They notice in the simplicity of the primitive men elements of pristine human nobility, and believe that if men are to be saved from moral disintegration the best way would be to hearken them back to a style of life, which is simple. In other words, the complexities of civilization make the human mind crooked, and this crookedness is projected in the social, economic and political activities of the people. Among the Western thinkers, Machivavelli has discussed and philosophically dissected the theme of corruption at great length. He lists civilization among the important factors, which erode the foundations of human character. He has made a subtle and suggestive condemnation of civilization in these words; "Doubtless anyone seeking to establish a republic at the present time would find it easier to do so amongst uncultured men of the mountains than amongst dwellers in cities where civilization is corrupt, just as a sculpture will more easily carve a beautiful statue from rough marble than from marble already spoiled by a bungling workman".<sup>(13)</sup> Even a cursory glance over the developing societies can convince an observer that because of rapid changes people are becoming more materialistic in their attitudes. They are always searching for means by which they can provide themselves with luxuries commonly associated with a higher standard of living. They have lost their sense of proportion and hate to live within the means available to them.

#### TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

The type of government certainly can have a bearing on corruption. Democracy and dictatorship are

the two systems highlighted in the debates, but after endless controversy there is hardly any sign of determining, which one has less propensity of corrupting human character. It is said that democracy generates certain countervailing forces, which exercise check on the abuse of power in the state. Free press, political parties, pressure groups and the general competitive nature of the system uncover malseasance in politics and administration much faster than under a dictatorship. There are those, however, who consider that democracy gives a powerful impetus to corruption. Its loose and freewheeling structures, its distribution of authority among various factions, and slow and cumbersome procedures by which the government is run, all have inherent tendencies for corruption. Election expenses tend to be so exorbitant that without raising funds through fraudulent means politicians cannot successfully flight their political campaigns. This widespread corruption, is a potential dynamic, which can undermine the moral foundations even the most stable political system. It is argued that corruption does not pose a serious threat to dictatorship, although occasionally it is used as weapon of attack against individual holders of powers. If someone wants to see corruption in its naked form, the supporters of this thesis would say, go to any acquisitive society in the west where liberal democracy is the political gospel. It is a matter of common experience that in such a society, "money talks, what works is justified and people are judged by what they have rather than what they are", judged dispassionately, one would say that both dictatorship and democracy have constitutional elements which can produce corrupting influences. There is no question that democracy with all its excellence of

freedom and human rights is continuously plagued with a climate of political uncertainty. In such environments peoples' ideals of public morality are easily contaminated; ways of life become devious, and deceit and treachery become the common sockin trade of human dealings. Under dictatorship, rights and freedoms are quenched but there is comparatively more security. But the cross-cultural study of political system can easily show that if the insecurity of democracy produces corruption, too much security under dictatorships also demoralizes people. They become complacent and ease-loving and ignore the basic duty of exercising vigilance over the actions of those who preside over their political and administrative destiny. In such a system positions of authority are given to those persons not because they are virtuous but because they are popular. This kind of situation is a paradise for power-seekers. Shrewd and powerful leaders, whose sole professional acumen is to augment their own power and eliminate qualified men from the field of public life, occupy offices. To day corruption is rampant in every political system but the situation in Pakistan is very critical. It is held responsible for corrupting the economy, and paralyzing efficiency and effectiveness of administration.

#### **POVERTY-STRICKEN AND UNAWARENESS OF THE PEOPLE**

It is pointed out in certain quarters that corruption is basically an economic problem, and poverty has to do a great deal in making it so universal. Every developing society reminds an observer of Disrelish "Two worlds". The grim reality is that most developing societies suffer from naked inequality in incomes, material assets, and living standards. The masses of

people are wallowing around in misery, while a microscopic segment of the population enjoys an extremely demonstrable affluence.<sup>(14)</sup> In many cases the per capita income of the poor societies is less than one hundredth of that in the developed societies.<sup>(15)</sup>

Poverty is a gruesome problem, but the phenomenon is not something new for these societies. The fact, which is, however, most disturbing is the agonizing awareness of this poverty among people and their desire to do something about it. Knowledge about the advanced societies is spreading very fast and comparison makes poverty much more painful than it had ever been before. They are living under the impact of the "demonstration effect" and this has produced a wide range of aspirations and expectations, which are beyond their reach. War against poverty in developing world has become a universal slogan among those who are engaged in extensive development efforts in these societies. This is the biggest challenge that the world faces today. Poverty, however, is not an isolated phenomenon. It is extremely complex and has its roots in numerous sociological, psychological and institutional aspects of society. More increase in production of goods and services probably will not alleviate the pangs of poverty. More than any thing else, a poor country like Pakistan needs a reformative crusade to mitigate the horrors of social injustice and misery engendered by economic inequalities. Pakistan has initiated reforms to undo them, but its enforcement is so inadequate that instead of doing some good they have become a source of additional confusion. In short, poverty has a great deal to do with the growing incidence of corruption in Pakistan.

The economics of poverty has produced patterns of political and administrative controls, which do not synchronize with theories and concepts generally accepted in the literature. Mal-distribution of resources and glaring imbalance of incomes often shelters constitutional safeguards, which have created the arbitrary use of power. The chronic anemia in the economy gives the government pretext to go, adopt arbitrary measures, and to excessively centralize the administrative machinery. All this is done to counteract poverty, but instead of cutting down on poverty, it increases the chances of incompetence and corruption. Salaries of government employees are very low, and with inflation running so high, there is always the temptation to use extra-legal means to supplement their income. Poverty not devitalizes an individual economically; it demoralizes him also and lowers his standard of ethical ideas. He rationalizes his illegal and morally reprehensible conduct in the name of economic necessity. While making an assessment of corruption in the Indian Judiciary, Monteiro pointed out that it was not the judges who were corrupt, but corruption was very common in the court staff. He thought "most of the readers and other court staff create circumstances, which make people pay them, some are bold and direct in their approach. For instance, in traffic offense a man approached the reader in the court to help him get away with a light fine. The reader advised him to wait, and a little later told him that he had been fined two rupees. The man paid the amount to the reader. But what about the fine? The reader said the man paid another two rupees. In other words a low-paid staff in a poor country is more susceptible to corrupt practices than officers on the higher echelons of administrative hierarchies. The

reason for their corruption is not that they have more power, but the fact that their salaries are low".<sup>(16)</sup> In Pakistan, the government is the largest employer of manpower resources because opportunities of employment in the private sector are so limited. Since independence there has been a major thrust towards the removal of illiteracy and this has resulted in the over-production of educated young men who are searching for jobs. For political and social reasons, government absorbs this surplus manpower in low-paid jobs. In many cases these low paid employees are entrusted with jobs, which entail considerable responsibilities, such as the implementation of labour laws, inspection of factories, sifting, and sorting grades of various commodities, checking of tickets in railway compartments, and inspection of restaurants. These positions have tremendous opportunities for petty corruption and no amount of safeguards and counter-inspection can check it. McMullan has propounded a thesis that one of the primary causes of corruption in a developing society is the acute disharmony that exists between the traditional mores of the society and the outlook of their rulers. In his opinion it is the product of the clash that exists between literate government and illiterate population. This disharmony in the first instance was engendered by the colonial rule, because foreign rulers came from societies with almost one hundred percent literacy, but the people whom they governed were completely illiterate. The class of newly trained native officials was literate and was expected to replicate the ethos of colonial authorities in their behaviour. Literate public officials and illiterate citizens are at cross-purposes; there is friction in their understanding, and corruption breeds on their

misunderstanding. The defenseless illiterate public becomes extremely vulnerable to exploitation. There is another aspect of this dis-harmony, which is an equally important cause of corruption. In many cases an illiterate citizen does not have the education, but he possesses enough money to compensate himself for the lack of knowledge and power. When he cannot fight the law with his knowledge, he buys it.(17)

### GOSSIPS AND RUMORS

It is difficult in Pakistan to determine with exactness the extent of corruption, and is even more difficult to prove charges of corruption against officials even if they are notorious for bribery and nepotism. The result of all this is that gossips and rumors become rampant and tend to engender a climate in which every body believes that corruption is the order of the day and it has become so endemic that nothing can be done about it. From platform and pulpit, people clamor for its eradication, political manifestos highlight anticorruption campaigns, every new regime blames its predecessor for perpetuating graft and bribery, and governments in order to win larger public support established vigilance groups and special anti-corruption departments. All these measures, however, fail to stop the spread of corruption. The public at large continues to believe that whoever wields some discretionary powers lives on gratis and gifts. These widespread rumors about corruption and feeling that everybody in power is corrupt, always has a very unhealthy effect on the ethical climate in society. In other words, baseless rumors and gossip mongering about corruption in due course itself become a source of corruption. An average citizen would

think that if every one else is corrupt, what harm would it do to the nation if he also becomes corrupt, it has been observed that if the parties involved in litigation happen to be the poor and the rich, and in case a judgement is given in favour of the latter, the former invariably attributes it to bribery.

In every society there are groups who have vested interests in spreading rumors of corruption. For instance, minorities often tend to publicize scandals of corruption for economic and political reasons. It would not be far from truth to say that scandal mongering is common political stock-in-trade of politicians in every democratic system. To discredit rivals they uncover secret deals and encourage leakage, which would show that their opponents have been indulging in large-scale graft and bribery. Government appoints special tribunals to try corrupt public officials and give wide publicity to the findings to discredit persons for re-entering public life. The history of trials for corruption shows that the majority of them were orchestrated for political reasons. Irrespective of the consequences the indisputable fact remains that they produce adverse socio-psychological climate in society, which are not conducive to rectitude in public life.

#### **LACKING IN POLITICAL CONTROL**

The administrative hierarchy in Pakistan has received a minimum of guidance, assistance, or supervision from the legislative branch of the government. Many legislators were either too concerned with staying in office, too ignorant of their responsibilities, or too cynical to devote much time to

deciding major policy. Thus, the budgets and various other items of legislation were adopted in a rather cursory fashion as presented by the secretariat and cabinet.

The country may benefit occasionally from the ability of the higher civil service to make decisions based on factual analysis rather than on popular support. It is very doubtful that the integration of Pakistan could have been achieved without the forceful role played by some of the senior civil servants and the governor-general (a formal civil servant). It was much easier for the government of Pakistan to adopt the metric system of measures than it would be for the government of the United States, because the pressure groups, which might oppose it has not achieved a position of substantial influence.

On the other hand, some factors make it very difficult for the government to take measures requiring widespread active public support for their effective implementation. A strong and representative cabinet and legislature could give the civil services a degree of support that an ineffective legislature cannot. In development programmes, this type of positive support is badly needed.

Similarly, when the civil servants are under strong pressure from a particular locality, or from the landowning classes, the industrialists, or other pressure groups, there is no strong countervailing pressure from the legislature representing the interests of the public. The civil service may attempt to carry a burden, which should be shared by the people's representatives.

The weakness of the legislative branch of the government in Pakistan was accentuated by the splintering and multiplication of political parties. There was no equivalent of the "loyal opposition" found in the United Kingdom or the opposition party in the United States. Consequently there was no strong and united political group striving to disclose the mistakes and corruption of the party in power.

The absence of effective local government must also be classified as one of the major political obstacles to optimal administration. Unable to resolve their problems locally, citizens blamed their troubles on the provincial government, and the latter probably with less justification, placed the blame on bottlenecks at the central level. There seems to be a natural tendency in Pakistan - as elsewhere also - to find a scapegoat. Important local government accentuates this tendency. Substantial powers might well be delegated to the local levee, providing an opportunity for whole - be politicians not only to get their start in politics but to assume a measure of responsibility for their own decision. Since permission for every major action must be obtained from a civil servant, the local politician is encouraged to be irresponsible.

#### ABSENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

The failure of the legislative branch to oversee properly the work of the executive branch has been described as one of the shortcomings of the Pakistan Government. The radio, being controlled by the executive branch, cannot be expected to act as a critic. The press, ever conscious of the government's power to penalize,

suppresses, or censors, must act with caution. However, constructive criticism is also lacking from other sources outside the Government. Such criticism of government operations as does exist is usually irresponsible and destructive, seldom based on a thorough analysis of the facts. The fault here lies in part with the government, because it effectively discourages any nonofficial persons from making a detailed study of its operations.

A Pakistani student, for example, who wishes to write a paper on some aspect of government administration may be received courteously by a C.S.P. officer who will patiently answer his more superficial questions. Most worthwhile research projects, however, must go far beyond this surface investigation to a consideration of details. As soon as this becomes apparent, the attitude of the civil servant becomes abrupt or evasive and the student finds that the interview has come to an end with no promise of any further opportunity to pursue the subject. This is not merely a case of an over busy civil servant, not wishing to waste his time. Many research projects require very little of the officer's time. The student may wish to prepare a job analysis of a group of clerks or make a work simplification chart of some cumbersome procedure or prepare a clear organization chart. He may be a well-trained individual whose final product could be useful to the government, but he cannot get the necessary cooperation.

This emphasis on secrecy, of course, is one of many carry-overs from the days of British rule when students, politicians and many newspapermen were regarded as potential troublemakers. There is also the

desire of the civil servant to avoid exposure of his mistakes and shortcomings. Any civil servant, however, would be cautious in the face of the official secrets act and the two volumes of security rules. The latter are highly restricted documents.<sup>(18)</sup>

Businessmen and industrialists seldom come forward with any constructive comment except when their own business is threatened by an import or other governmental restriction. Even if they were inclined to be critical of the government, they would hesitate because of the many ways in which their businesses are dependent on government approvals.

#### AFGHAN WAR

Corruption in Pakistan peaked during the Afghan war. Smuggling to other countries from Afghanistan and the supply of black market currency, as well as the promotion of drugs and the Klashnikov culture are areas close to the crime syndicates. However, the closed is perhaps the heroin trade in the region. Opium has been on the market for centuries, as the trade. It has always been associated with criminal organization both local and international. Heroin, refined from opium, follows the same path but with new conveniently packed in plastic bags, and so is easy to market. There is no need here to recount the effect of heroin addiction on man and society. What is of concern is the role of Afghan war in promoting the heroin trade and spreading the corruption in the society. Many of the top businessmen indulged in the heroin trades with its huge network of corruption. The crime syndicates would not have been possible without corruption. Thus, a chief of police engaged in heroin will not be interested in his

police work, will not give his best to it and will not spend maximum thinking time on it. His outward and conspicuous activity is only designed to justify his remaining in office. Thus is the real job, which he does not do.

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