

THE PUBLIC SERVICE : WHAT IS TO BE DONE

WANANCHI COMPLAINTS

The basic complaint by the wananchi has been that the nature and process of service has deteriorated. Civil servants, be they in Provincial Administration, Central Government or even the Police, are arrogant, corrupt and lack commitment to work. Wananchi go to great length to document how it is impossible to get a simple service without being asked to give chai. Even where one is entitled to a service in a hospital wananchi complain they are being asked to pay. Yet the problem is deeper than corruption and chai.

"WE BUILT THIS COUNTRY" NDENGWA

In the view of a significant number of intellectuals, the Kenya Civil Service began to deteriorate after the Ndegwa Report allowed public servants to get into business. This is an issue which government must take seriously if the service is to be redesigned to cope with the future.

Whereas the conclusions of the Ndengwa report that the major talent was locked in the service made sense then, it does not now. It will be irrelevant in the future. The brightest and most aggressive of Kenyans got into public service in the sixties. They were challenged. They innovated and made a major contribution to this country. This was so since the public sector was the dominant employer, economic actor and the source of innovation. The public sector is none of these now and neither will it be in the future.

REPERCUSSIONS FROM THE EXTENSIVE ACCUMULATION BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Opportunities provided by the Ndegwa report have led to fantastic accumulation of wealth by the public service. Whereas there is nothing wrong with that, such accumulation has denied similar accumulation to the private sector for it is the controllers of licences, credit, and political influence who play at being entrepreneurs. This has two negative impacts on society. First, those in the service spend a lot of public resources, office, phones, vehicles, and most important time, on their personal businesses. This inflates cost of administration and service provision by the service. The second issue is the denial of efficient allocation of finances, time and entrepreneurship to an indigenous private sector. For cultural reasons the partners of the public sector in business are either Asians or Europeans. The argument being that they would not talk. Thus the accumulation by those in the public service is not efficiently used to generate wealth for the country. It is siphoned by the Asian and European controlled businesses and repatriated.

INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING

Since most of the industrial production is still in the hands of Asian and European foreign businesses, they determine the increases in the cost of living. Africans have not invested in the industrial sector in any significant way. It should be clear from the argument above that those with resources to do so have made partnerships with external investors who actually run the businesses. Similarly since the economic policy has never set a goal of producing machine tools for the country there is not a good basis for getting into industrialisation by Africans. Arguments for Jua Kali miss the point. Tinkering technology is not what determines a country's long term industrialisation but the creation of a machine tool and information processing capacity to create markets. Inflationary pressure is essentially generated by the industries which produce consumer goods which are not regulated. In the case of Kenya those who control industry also control processing and distribution of agricultural products and urban real estate. Thus Government is not able to use normal policy measures to manage inflation. Since taste for the imported have been generated, the country is held hostage by the trading system controlled by foreigners. Salaries in such situations become irrelevant.

OLD SERVICE SERVING VERY YOUNG POPULATION

It is estimated that 60% of the population are under 15 years, 80% are under 25. Thus only 20% of the nations population is above 25 years. The pre-independence generation is an endangered species. Yet they are the influential rulers, public servants and workers. their values, made under colonial society and tempered by the optimism of independence, are not the values of the majority. For example, they are convinced that tremendous progress has been done. This is true but is of no consequence to those whose formative years came after independence. They are not interested in the struggle. They do not see the improvements. More significantly they do not want to know. their agenda is self improvement. They are the ones most bitter about the collapse in the service ethic of the public service for it presents a bottleneck to whatever it is they want to do. they are not intimidated by authority or authoritarianism. they generally do not vote. they do not care about politics. They tend to become fanatics in religion. They create their own social networks which do not respect tribes or traditions. In short they are the modern Kenyans. Such Kenyans resent the controlling state with its many licences for even hawking, marriage etc for these are seen as infringements on their freedom of choice.

These new Kenyans are risk takers. They do not hunger for arranged jobs or ethnic networks. They are open for creation of totally modern society based on individual achievement or failure. They are a fantastic problem to their families but they happen to be the future. they take their cues from the international arena of music

and ideas thorough the mass media. Even their dress and language is not made in Kenya but is imported form the likes of Michael Jackson. These are the clients of the public service. A service whose ethics and practices are based on formal hierarchy, excessive authoritarianism, routines rather than innovation, power rather than service, and the use of the state for accumulation rather than individual entrepreneurship.

To serve these new and many Kenyans, the service must change its style. It must become a super market rather than the restricted and authoritarian formal structure it is. Style is best illustrated by going to an office. You first confront the askari who wants to know why you need to see the boss. If after discussion he is convinced, then you have to pass the huddle of a secretary talking endlessly on the phone. You may be lucky to be allowed to enter the sanctum after hours of convincing many levels. Woe unto you if you have to get a licence. You are sent away for days on end. If you want a police extract and are in Nairobi you go thorough a routine similar to above, then travel to one police station to pay Ksh. 20 to get a receipt and then come and start the routine all over again in the relevant police station. Last month, a calculation the economic cost of this routine , excluding the Ksh. 20 for the receipt, for a consultant yielded Ksh. 6,000 for a consultant, in spite of his using contacts. This included time lost on his hourly charges, transport, including ferrying policemen between two police stations since the right papers were not available. This is higher than an planned cost sharing. A costing of a house servant who was chasing the same piece of paper at the same time showed that she spent four days, and Ksh.200 to get a similar piece of paper.

These costs are so high that most wananchi refuse the service to reduce costs to them. Where they need the service they buy it directly, usually called bribing.

THE CAUSES OF BRIBERY WITHIN THE SERVICE

From the service point of view bribes are income generating projects. Individuals look around and see their compatriots, big public ad private people accumulating. they are faced with a situation where basic pay cannot meet their obligations. Thus they start a project. Cases - a police lady corporal filling a form for an illiterate house servant charges five shillings. This is by the way 25% of the house workers daily income.

How do we solve it.? To begin with, salaries of public servants must be competitive. Since this is being handled by the Mbithi Commission, I do not make further comments. But even more fundamental is to deal with the structural problems. There are too many steps into getting a service. There must be simplification of how service is provided. It must be provided in transparent situations. If all lady corporals filling forms are in the open , it will not be easy to create cabals for asking houseworkers for

hurdle

abstract

the five shillings. It must also reduce the bureaucratic demands for service. Why must one pay Ksh. 20 for a police extract? If revenue must be raised, create simple, cheap and easily accessible systems. For example, one 20 megabyte computer will be able to handle all data on house break ins in the City. Terminals in each police station would make this information accessible to all. Rather than detectives and ordinary police running around with piecemeal information and selling it to the clients. And finally, we must cut the public service perhaps by as much as 50 - 80 percent.

There are two reasons for this. First to reduce costs, second to create a future oriented service and three to set up modern management in the service. It is estimated that in most ministries 80% of the budget is spent on personnel. If one adds office space - an item GOK does not seem to cost - probably this figure will rise up to 95%. It is public knowledge that almost all the development budget is from donor funds. The point is simply that we have employed many more people in the service than the country can afford. To paper this problem by arguing that if government does not employ people there will be riots is only to keep postponing the problem. We cannot continue to support employment of people we do not get economic value out of. Cuts must be in all sectors, but some need more drastic cuts than others. For example, when the country was illiterate, it needed agricultural extensionists who would talk to farmers directly. Now that we are completely literate at the household level, and 60 percent literate at the individual level, why do we still use the extension system which is so expensive? We can deliver the same agricultural messages through radio, expanded television, newspapers, booklets etc for about 25% of what MOA spends annually. The point is simply that we are not taking advantages of our people resource base. Those trained and employed in agriculture should go into direct production, agro-processing and marketing but not just sit in offices drawing salaries waiting for petrol so as to go and talk to farmers. Even more criminal are proposals for creating field staff for ministries like Energy, Water, Reclamation, Industry etc. The literate modern society that has evolved since 1960's demands mass media techniques and not bodies which are stuck in offices. They demand this because messages have to be immediate, specific and much more tuned to day to day problems of specific places. So, reduce staff, and create smaller service with relevant skills for now. The example of extension is apropos. We shall need mass communication agricultural experts rather than the specialists we have now. Government need of get into the agricultural messages distribution. It can leave that to individuals and business who have already started competing for delivery of the same. Look at the number of local magazines by individuals, cooperatives and other mass media delivery of such messages. the needed policy is to drop the cost of bodies in public service extension and spend the money in agricultural research where we need to pioneer new crops, messages etc.

To create a **FUTURE ORIENTED SERVICE**, several things are needed. First, we cannot continue to depend on guess work. Every aspect of public life will need rational decision making which in turn is dependent on collecting **ON TIME DATA**. Such data is possible now given the reducing cost of computers, national infrastructure and the increased transactions of the nation. CBS in spite of its statutory monopoly of GOK data has been overtaken by events for it did not modernise its data processing capacity as fast as other sections of government. As a result there are many data bases within government which CBS does not know about. These have been set up to serve specific purposes. They are available for use. CBS by style collects for storage and eventual use. Consequently decisions are being made without hard data. This is compounded by the conservatism against and incompetence of top managers in the service to use hard data in decision making. These problems are not peculiar to CBS but are endemic to the service. No reports re on real time. They come years late if one is lucky. Decisions are made on opinion or as a result of ethnic preferences or on mythical basis. Public life is thus mystified. Debate on facts is abolished and thus innovations denied for individuals concentrate on fantasy.

A lean public service should be so organised that the top managers can get all national data on real time. Thus there should be interactive data bases at least from district level to the PS. This will also lead to cutting the many levels of paper pushers in the Ministries for PSs should be able to interact with all field personnel. This is done now by phone but the point is to make it part and parcel of daily work not just opinions by whoever is at the end of a phone. Probably the start should be done from Provincial Administration, the nature of whose work needs to be as near real time as possible.

The other point is that the bulk of the public servants will have to become data specialists and strategy planners rather than administrators or extensionists. A developed economy is more dependent on data than it is dependent on licences or routines or dated extension packages. Case in point, GOK established the Investment Promotion Centre as a one step investment centre which is supposed to generate investment. A client of ours has spent a year trying to get the one step approval. The first problem is the Central Bank, which still wants to determine where the money earned will be spent! The other problem is the Treasury which does not seem to have policy on whether Kenya welcomes service sector investments as much as factories. This is ironic since all modern economic theory shows that it is cheaper to generate jobs in services than in industry. Returns on services are also higher when they are sold externally (by using Kenyan experts) to bring foreign exchange. This example points out the demand of the future to have much more clear policy formulation and coordination across all sections of the GOK. Such specialists do not feature strongly in current GOK practice for the individuals are not trained in strategic planning and policy coordination. Hence the political

arena fills the vacuum left by innovating and giving directives. Ironically it gets blamed for confusing policy by many of the public servants.

Finally modern management within the service. The essence of modern management is to monitor inputs and outputs. This is where the public service is most delinquent. No accounting Officer knows the unit cost of any of the activities done under him. None of his subordinates know either. It is not just a case of the blind leading the blind but also a case of producing blind children. Part of the problem is historical. Accountants have never been seen as important as administrators in public service. This must change and not just stop at accounting. What is needed is for all public service units to cost their needed resources and to justify them in terms of specific outputs. MANAGERS SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR PLANS, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH PLANS AND THE INTENDED OUTPUTS. WHERE THEY CANNOT JUSTIFY INCREASES OR WHERE THERE ARE NO TANGIBLE OUTPUTS SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS SHOULD BE FIRED. During more than 20 years of interacting with senior managers at KIA I have asked and to date I do not know of a public servant fired for managerial incompetence. Such practice is due. It has been talked about but not acted upon.

The last comment on the future of the service is that Government should get out of trade and commerce. In all states the basic role of Government is to provide security and to enforce policy on every thing else. Observe that I do not include infrastructure in the fundamental business of Government. Increasingly , given the poverty of most Governments, it is coming back to fashion that the practice of past centuries where even infrastructure was in the real of private sector may be a good thing. Thus roads, water etc can be in the private arena. This is not to deny that infrastructure has a security component and thus the state could legitimately decide to keep it for itself. However, there is too much of GOK in the economic arena. The ICDCs, AFCs, and many other loss making parastatals should be sold. This is not a WB argument. It is simply that they are highly inefficient and they keep the indigenous private sector from developing.

PUBLIC SERVICE TO SERVE NEW KENYANS

Kenya has changed drastically in the last thirty years. The most important change has been the population explosion. The population has exploded when the country has not decided to industrialise. so all that is done in the future will be attempting to catch up with this problem. to begin with, policy making and public affairs are conducted in a manner which ignores the basic fact that this country is extremely dry. All agriculture , the mainstay of the economy , is done on only 12 % of the country. This fact is not even widely known by Kenyans. In the past we have overinvested in this 12% of the country since our external advisers argued for continuing cash crop exports which could only grow in those

regions. We did not invest in making the dry lands productive. We did not consciously try to move people and industry into the dry areas so as to release the high potential land for growing food. Consequently, from 1980s onward, we are vulnerable to shortages of food. We have opened ourselves to international manipulation since we cannot feed ourselves adequately. It is projected that by 1995, we will not even be able to produce enough grain even in the good years for land use in the productive areas is locked into tea and coffee and living space.

LACK OF UPWARD MOBILITY

Lack of upward mobility has been seen as a major problem in the service. Conversations with the modern Kenyans does not lead one to this conclusion totally. They by being extremely mobile people go into the service and immediately begin to look for alternatives. Even if the alternative is to stagnate and build your own company they prefer that route. We should encourage them to leave and build up their individual operations, by creating an option to retire with benefits if one has served for ten years and reaches the age of 35. In any case all public servants should retire compulsorily at the age of 50. There is need to pay specific attention to upward mobility at the levels above Senior Assistant Secretary. At this level perhaps there ought to be a very stringent application of a mandatory retirement rule at 50 years of age. At the same time there ought to be a regulation that one cannot just get into the levels above Senior Assistant secretary only for qualifying for retirement benefits. The regulation may wish to specify that one retires on the higher benefits only if he has been in the ranks above Senior Assistant Secretary for at least 5 years after they were 35.

The point about this proposal is two fold. One by enforcing the 50 year rule, one will create mobility within the service so as to get young people at the apex of the system. This will enable the system to get closer to the bulk of the population it is serving. Second if applied across the board with the 50- 80% personnel cut recommended elsewhere, it will send a powerful message that the public service is not a place to get in and wait for a pension, thereby diverting significant numbers of young people to private sector and defusing the potentially explosive issue of graduates being entitled to public employment. Thirdly, if individuals can retire after 10 years from when they are 35 to 50 years of age, it will assist the country in getting some of the talent locked in and under-utilised in the public service into the private sector which must produce wealth. The public sector does not produce wealth. It is in building up the private sector that individuals will invest and build up operations which contribute to national wealth. Increasingly many intellectuals globally see the public service as a training ground in the same way the British Army was for the empire.

DECLARATION OF BUSINESSES

There would not be a problem if the service had not gone into business in the same sectors it is supposed to plan policy, police and administer. Significant numbers are now major investors in the sectors they are supposed to be regulating. Since they have insider information they harass and deny service to ?wananchi. The most gross abuses are in finance, government contracts and commerce. In some respects, this is the fundamental cause of the increasingly vocal attacks on the service by normal Kenyan businessmen.

If GOK is serious about rehabilitating public confidence in the service, it has to consider reevaluated the NDENGWA report practice of allowing civil servants to own businesses. Two related suggestions have been made by those who have considered the problem. The first is to reverse Ndegwa by insisting that civil servants do not go into business. The second is to insist on disclosure of business interest.

To enforce the first option the GOK would have to mandate that all public servants in business quit. This approach can be preferred for several reasons. First it will be seen as a significant attempt by the state to deal with a domineering and exploitative public service by the population and donors who are increasingly vocal about corruption and who may link aid flows to Kenya on the states evidence that it is dealing with the problem of corrupt service.

The problem with this is that it can lead to a lot of agitation as the service resists its implementation. The GOK can get bogged down on recrimination for many months if not years as those identified to quit name others and the like. It would be a prime area of agitation. One does not have to be a genius to see how it can get linked to political agitation.

The other option is to call for disclosure of business interest by all public servants and to publicise it. In other words to make the data available freely to anyone who wants it. This will mediate conflicts of interest for as is today there are many who sit on tenders while their companies or companies they act for are tendering. If there is public information on who is with what companies, then there can be legal redress sought. If disclosures are systematic, it should be part and parcel of the regulatory regime that no civil servant is allowed business interests in a sector he is administering, policing or making policy for. The problem with enforcing an approach as this is its complexity and lack of a management handle. For example if someone is transferred to the ministry supervising land has a real estate, or a survey company, they would have to get rid of it. They could create dummy companies, as is the practice now where many illiterate wives and rural brothers have companies which they do not know about. This option does not lead to easy cleaning of the mess.

Ndengwa must be reversed. There are opportunities now for investing if one is a public servant. they include shares and stocks, land and money instruments. It is unfair that livestock personnel also have livestock consulting companies or provincial administrators also dominate district tenders which they adjudicate. Purely on political expedience Ndengwa must be reversed. If not, the public will continue agitating perhaps leading to the chaos so much written about in the papers. The second major expedient reason is the attitude of donors. Many of them argue that if there is no change on this, they will withdraw significant amounts of development funds. There is some evidence that in the donor forward budgets, they have already begun to reduce development aid. they will cover themselves by just putting money into budget support. If such a pattern of donor flows emerges and becomes the practice, it will have major negative impact on long term development.

BUSINESS LOAN FACILITY FOR RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS

Most of the retired public servants end up in business. Many students of the third world argue that if the private sector is to be strengthened, the service needs to retire people early and to give them some facility for floating them into business. this is not a hand-out or even part of the retirement benefits. The argument is that they should get commercial loan money for doing starting a business. Some of the donors in the country are interested in financing such a scheme. More specifically UNDP has been trying to interest the DPM in a scheme like this.

GoK should take advantage of this interest in financing ex civil servants and use the mechanism to slough off personnel from the service for reasons argued in previous sections. to the extent that a lot of them can get substantial pensions and other resources from their cooperative societies this mechanism may become a major way of decentralising small scale businesses for many retire to their rural origins. It is important that this facility be specifically for rural areas and further that it must be in a production activity preferably generating employment.

LACK OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

One of the peculiar characteristics of the public service in Kenya is the lack of systematic strategic planning. For example it is not until the past four years that within government a unit on long range planning has begun. This unit is still a project of a donor and not part and parcel of normal government machinery. None of the high level officials are trained in strategic planning. since they are supposed to make decisions which handle long term issues one is a t a loss to know how such decisions can be made. Case in point is urban transport for Nairobi. The country is currently caught between two proposals, one for a bus system which will have to be replaced in 1995 by a light rail system and another proposing an urban transit system now. The issue is donor driven. Local Government or Nairobi City Commission are only parties to the

extent that they participate in evaluating the various proposals. They did not develop a proposal of their own to set the policy framework within which the various donors would have to work. They could have done this simply by looking at Nairobi settlement patterns, car, bus and matatu based pollution and the environmentally driven diseases. The country is thus caught in a transport nightmare which will get worse as oil prices get higher and higher.

Strategic planning sets long term national goals. It also sets up the different pathways to such goals. For example we know there will not be enough food from now on. We should have a systematic plan of how we produce extra grain in the Arid and Semi-Arid lands for it is only there that there are two key variables- land and sunlight for photosynthesis. The other elements missing- water and fertiliser need to be planned for. Incidentally there is enough water which can be harnessed with simple and cheap technologies. On the fertiliser, we can get it from plants. However in the long term we may need to initiate negotiations with Tanzania which has enough known gas reserves to go into fertiliser production.

Another example. In the next 50 years, if we do not control population growth, we will have to export population. Perhaps we ought to be negotiating with Sudan to get land concessions in the South! We can offer to develop it for them.!

These are issues which GOK needs to develop strategies on and assign the responsibilities in a coordinated manner. The problem is skills and compartmentalisation. Let me illustrate. In a seminar for senior managers in KIA i asked the senior police officers how they will monitor tourists who will occupy a strip of our coast from Malindi to Lunga Lunga over the next ten years if the plans of Tourism come to be. They had not related tourism growth with the need for surveillance. Consequently they have not even begun to train specialists in all the tourism languages, a fact also unknown by the Ministry of Education senior managers, nor had they put into training electronic surveillance experts who must plan and execute the system in the next five years, if we are to have a system at all.

To get future strategic planning for security, production and even garbage collection now we need to bring all the senior public managers to agree on the issues, technologies and processes of relating the two. For example Japan is set to become the major aid source. How many Kenyans know Japanese? How are we to know what they are doing here and reporting? Or are we to continue begging them to give us data after their studies since the reports are in Japanese.? How do we ensure we are not manipulated?

These are not an issue for a single ministry or even a STRATEGIC PLANNING DEPARTMENT. They are an issue of arriving at national priorities and setting goals for many ministries, universities and

indeed private sector and individuals. The best way to handle such issues is to get **KENYANS** with the necessary skills to plan strategies and plan the priorities and to get the political, civil service and private sector involved. Our neighbour to the South, West and North plan like this. They have long term national strategies. These are done by their people and not some foreign advisors. We must ensure that such activity is done here for not only our national survival but also to give purpose and macro targets for the whole country. Such steps will also ensure that the service responds to public demands. Part of national management now is to anticipate what demands will be put by the public which at times is thinking and can easily get ahead of the public service. Case in point, the day oil prices went up, a lot of our clients cancelled transport based operations.

To create management which responds to strategic planning there are skills which all job categories above M must increasingly be made to acquire. They all must be taught strategic planning and be computer literate. This will help them manage the complex world they are called upon to manage with hard data rather than guess work. For those in the categories now, m they will need to be trained. It should become policy that no body is promoted into those ranks if they do not have these skills for they will be irrelevant to the needs of the jobs they are to occupy.

THE NEW PERMANENT SECRETARIES

To change the service and to make it responsive to future needs of Kenya, much more detailed management of public affairs and strategic planning of resources will be called for. It is important then that the skills the top managers bring to public life show and prove that he is managing hands on and not the colonially inspired marionette who only gives orders. To create this new manager, they must be people with at least university professional training. Further they must be put through a detailed national strategic planning exercise where the specific tasks of their ministries are handled by their peers from the public service, private sector and universities. Specific plans for their new appointments must be required as the output of their participation in a strategic planning section. These must be supervised by the head of the service and the PSs held to them.

The new tops must be recruited because they have specific managerial skills. They can be picked from the private and the public sector. If they have by that time not picked computer manipulation skills for management, they must be put through a formal training system. It is not good enough that the system be managed by individuals who cannot handle the complexity of tomorrow for to do so is to condemn this country to under development.

SHIFT TO THE PRIVATE ARENA AND SCALE DOWN PUBLIC SERVICE

As society develops, more and more the need will be for a private service which responds to public needs and not the service. Somehow I feel that this is not clearly understood by many of us. If one thinks of the needs of a typical Kenyan, more and more he does not need to see officialdom or even interact with it. This has led to the diminution of the relevance of the public service. It is a lesson many in it do not seem to understand. On its part, the service does not seem to understand that it will have to do different kinds of things which are of importance to the public than to date. Case in point, it will be necessary to give more accurate meteorological data to scientific farmers than is currently available. If you are growing flowers worth millions of shillings a cold spell can ruin you. Yet to date the only publicly available information is on sunshine and rain and highest temperature. This is the information which was needed by colonialist from other climates who were afraid of the sun. Why are we offering it thirty years latter when scientific farming demands that you know humidity, rainfall and high and low temperatures?

A more important variable to small traders is price information. Markets for fruits, vegetables and generally farm produce is essentially unavailable for checking on the accuracy of VOK prices leaves a lot to be desired. Why cannot this information be made available through the VOK for all towns other than the selected few? Why does the government not demand that if the information is collected it be carried by papers on daily basis as is the case in other countries? of course there already are Kenyans collecting and selling such information to relevant consumers in the private sector but the point is much more information on markets and what is in demand where can assist trade greatly.

Related to this is the need to decontrol markets and to allow movement of goods in the country. All one needs to mention is the fact that Kakamega farmers cannot move maize from their farms in Trans Nzoia. These restrictive practices which were put to control the development of African trade should be abolished and the private initiative be given free rein. Nobody is advocating shipping scarce food out of the country but there is no reason why anybody who can move maize to Turkana should be harassed only to allow some public servants to speculate on supplying Turkana or Mandera.

6. ALLOW MUCH MORE DEBATE ABOUT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Part of the reaction against the civil service is the knowledge that they protect each others wrong doing and that there is little room for exposure of public wrong doing. This is the old problem of how the country allows freedom of publication and discussion. The fear of getting into trouble with the "state" is such that there has not really been discussion of public affairs.

Information is monopolised by the state. There is little that is

public about details on budgets, developments, borrowing , liquidity ratios, who owns what, family planning, social statistics etc. These categories of data are the working tools of a modern state. they usually are passed on to the public by mass media and by accessing the data from the state institutions who collect it. Yet they are secrets. How do we then expect our population to rationally plan the use of their individual resources ?

In human history, no more efficient check on bureaucracies has been developed than the exposure of wrong doing, usually done by a vigorous mass media. Too many complaints by officialdom has led to the mass media here not playing its public watch dog role for the penalties are grave. One of the major policy issues for discussion at the high levels of the state is whether to allow the flowering of journalism so as to also have a public watch dog or to stifle it with the result that public wrong doing will be institutionalised. The choice should be clear. A country does not develop until it has shared information which can only be done by mass media. Where the mass media is vigorous and healthy, the state is protected for wrong doers cannot hide behind the state.

It ill also be necessary to allow the growth of the informatics sector. The informatics sector is not just newspapers, but they are part of it. the law as is does not encourage publication. It still requires that one get licensed. The control on what is allowable is too narrow. One is not allowed to compete with instrumentalities of the state. For example, one cannot collect and sell whether information not to talk of CBS national data. Some of these information monopolies keep information from the user. If CBS data was accessible , marketing strategies would be better planned. If the data on farming is rationalised perhaps we can get into national food security for many who are not hide bound either in agriculture or CBS would be able to point out the real development problems and trigger public debate on why we waste so much money on extensionists who never reach anybody.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

I was asked to comment on why the public has such negative attitudes to the service. The simple answers are in the realm of corruption, and lack of commitment. I have tried to show that those fit into structural changes in the society which demand a different kind of public service and different ways of conducting public affairs. Central in this is the idea that this is a completely different country than existed in the sixties. The future is even more dangerous for if we cannot reduce the waste of a public service without strategic planning skills and anticipating **STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS**, there is a high probability that we will not survive as a country for the foreigners control a very large portion of our economy yet. If open rebellion results, they will disinvest and the very basis of society will collapse. It will take us at least twenty to thirty years to get to where we are today.

Building up a local private sector then becomes crucial. Freeing the mass communication instruments, and getting into the informatics and communication age is necessary from a political and socio-economic point of view. It is my pleasure to have been asked to comment on a real national problem. I hope it is of use to my country.