

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1980-81)

(SEVENTH LOK SABHA)

EIGHTH REPORT

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS
CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY-NINTH REPORT OF ESTIMATES
COMMITTEE (SIXTH LOK SABHA) ON THE MINISTRY OF EXTER-
NAL AFFAIRS ON THE WORKING OF INDIAN DIPLOMATIC
MISSIONS.**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 25.5.1981



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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(1980-81)

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(1980-81)

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INTRODUCTION

1. I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Eighth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Ninth Report of Estimates Committee (Sixth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of External Affairs-Working of Indian Diplomatic Missions.

2. The Twenty-Ninth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 26 March, 1979. Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report by 1st September, 1980. The replies were examined by the Study Group 'H' of Estimates Committee (1980-81) at their sitting held on 27th February, 1981. The draft Report was adopted by the Committee on 7th March, 1981.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters :—

- I. Report
- II. Recommendations which have been accepted by Government.
- III. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.
- IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.
- V. Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Ninth Report of the Estimates Committee is given in Appendix IV. It would be observed therefrom that out of 106 recommendations made in the Report 79 recommendations i.e. about 74 per cent have been accepted by Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 3 recommendations i.e. about 3 per cent in view of Government's replies. Replies of Government in respect of 7 recommendations i.e. about 7 per cent have not been accepted by the Committee. Final replies of Government in respect of 17 recommendations i.e. about 16 per cent are still awaited.

NEW DELHI;

S.B.P. PATTABHI RAMA RAO

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

March 13, 1981

Phalgun 22, 1902 (S)

CHAPTER I REPORT

1.1. This Report of the Estimates Committee deals with action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their 29th Report (6th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of External Affairs-Working of Indian Diplomatic Missions, which was presented to Lok Sabha on the 26th March, 1979.

1.2. Action taken notes have been received in respect of all the 106 recommendations contained in the Report.

1.3. The Action taken notes on the recommendations of the Committee have been categorised as follows :—

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government :

Sl. No.—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 44, 45, 46, 47, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 66, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106.

(Total 79) Chapter II.

- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government replies :

Sl. Nos.—49, 62, 100 Total (3) Ch. III.

- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee :

Sl. Nos.—24, 29, 31, 32, 82, 85, 103.

(Total 7) Chapter IV.

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited :

Sl. Nos.—11, 33, 34, 35, 40, 42, 43, 48, 50, 65, 67, 68, 81, 83, 84, 87, 46.

(Total 17) Chapter V.

1.4. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by Government on some of their recommendations.

OBJECTIVES FOR MISSIONS

Recommendation Sl. No. 12 (Paragraph 2.45)

1.5. The Committee had recommended that objectives for each Indian diplomatic mission should be defined in concrete terms (not in vague generalities like promotion of friendship etc.) and inter-se priorities and broad guidelines regarding ways and means of achieving the objectives laid down by the Ministry. The Committee also desired that each mission should be asked to report to the Ministry periodically the progress made in the realisation of these objectives and the Ministry should, in the light of those progress reports, review the situation and, if necessary, revise the objectives, priorities and guidelines from time to time.

1.6. In reply (30th Nov., 1979) the Ministry have stated that they have a system of briefing the Heads of Missions and have, however, initiated action in redefining and improving the system, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee.

1.7. The Committee feel that the Ministry's reply is evasive and inadequate. What the Committee desired was that the Ministry should define, in concrete terms objectives for each mission and lay down inter-se priorities and broad guidelines regarding ways and means of achieving those objectives. The Committee had also desired that each mission should report to the Ministry periodically about the progress made by it in realisation of those objectives and the Ministry should in the light of the progress reports review the situation and if necessary revise the objectives, priorities and guidelines, from time to time. The Ministry's reply does not deal with the issues raised in the recommendation. The Committee would therefore reiterate their recommendation and urge that positive and expeditious action should be taken in line with the letter and spirit of their recommendation.

Foreign Service Inspectorate

Recommendations Sl. Nos. 13 & 16 (Paragraphs 2.76, 2.77 and 2.80)

1.8. The Committee had observed that the Foreign Service Inspectorate had failed to discharge its primary duty viz. to measure the achievements and deficiencies of missions or to evaluate their overall efficiency and performance with the desired degree of independence and objectivity. Its inspection visits were few and far between. It concentrated on routine administrative matters of the missions for which it should not be necessary for a team of officers to go all the way from the Headquarters. Most of the matters, like rates of allowances, pay scales, purchase of office equipment etc. could be attended to without spot inspection by a team of officers from Headquarters. The Committee, therefore, suggested that the terms of reference of the Inspectorate be re-defined and priorities of its functions redetermined so that it was required to concentrate more on making an overall assessment of the performance of the Missions in the political, economic, cultural and consular spheres and the degree of success achieved by them in their public relations. While making such an assessment, the Inspectorate should go into the performance of individual officers including Heads of Missions, the number and deployment of staff, the staffing pattern and administrative procedures and make suggestions for the more efficient and economic working of the missions.

1.9. The Ministry in their reply (Nov., 1979) stated that "they have examined in depth the comprehensive recommendation of the Committee on the role of Foreign Service Inspectorate. In accordance with the Committee's recommendation the Ministry is trying to work out, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance, alternative ways of fixing allowances, pay scales etc. without spot inspection by team of officers from Headquarters." The Ministry also stated that "they accept the conclusion of the Committee to concentrate on functional effectiveness, and overall performance of the missions and its officers. The Ministry have accordingly proposed to the Ministry of Finance that terms and targets of the Foreign Service Inspectorate be re-defined taking into full account the recommendation of the Committee."

1.10. The Ministry in their further reply (September, 1980) have stated that they have already sent a proposal to the Ministry of Finance suggesting an alternative way of fixing foreign allowances as had been recommended by the Estimates Committee. The Ministry had suggested to the Finance that a

panel of experts may be appointed to examine every aspect in detail so as to work out comprehensive and feasible system. The appointment of the panel was not agreed to earlier but they expect to make further progress during the current financial year. The Ministry have further stated that in consultation with Finance, implementation of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee on the re-definition of the tasks and responsibility of the Foreign Service Inspectorate is being undertaken on a phased basis.

1.11. The Ministry have accepted the recommendation of the Committee that the Foreign Service Inspectorate should concentrate on functional effectiveness and overall performance of the Missions and their officers and the implementation of this recommendation is being undertaken by the Ministry in consultation with Finance on a phased basis. The Committee would like to emphasise that the redefinition of the tasks and responsibilities of the Foreign Service Inspectorate should be finalised expeditiously and the Foreign Service Inspectorate going abroad on inspection visits hereafter should concentrate more on making an overall assessment of the performance of the Missions in the political, economic, cultural, and consular spheres and the degree of success achieved by them in their public relations. While making such an assessment the Inspectorate should also go into the performance of individual officers, including heads of Missions, and make suggestions for more efficient and economical working of the Missions.

Evaluation of the Performance of Missions

Recommendation Sl. No. 17 (Paragraph 2.81)

1.12. The Committee was informed by the Foreign Secretary that there was no institutionalised system of evaluation of the performance of Heads of Missions or the missions though Secretaries in the Ministry tried to evaluate their performance and the Foreign Minister also formulated some impression during his visits abroad and shared his assessment with the Secretaries. The Committee felt that the system should be institutionalised to make for a more systematic and regular evaluation of the performance of each mission. The overall assessment of the performance of the missions in the political, economic and other fields may be made by visits to the missions by the Secretary/ Additional Secretary incharge of the region. All the Secretaries in the Ministry should then meet in a body to make an appraisal of the performance of diplomatic missions in the light of the reports of Foreign Service Inspectorate, annual, monthly and special reports of the Heads of Missions, reports received from all other sources and place their assessment of the achievements made by each mission in various fields and deficiencies noticed in their working before the Foreign Minister and thereafter, communicate the considered views of the Ministry to the Heads of Missions concerned for their guidance in future. Such an exercise should done atleast once-a-year.

1.13. The Ministry in their reply (November, 1979) stated that "procedures that would ensure once-a-year evaluation of each mission's performance are being considered so as to fulfil the letter and spirit of this recommendation. However, whether this evaluation should necessarily be tied up with inspection of missions by Secretaries and Additional Secretaries, deserves further consideration. However, in this context the Ministry foresees a number of logistical and other problems."

1.14. In their further reply (September, 1980) the Ministry have stated that they have considered the suggestion on whether once-a-year inspection of the missions by the Secretaries and Additional Secretaries would be feasible and practicable or not. In order to be meaningful the inspections should not be hurried affairs. It is not practicable for Secretaries and Additional Secretaries to make prolonged visits abroad each year.

1.14. The Ministry have evolved a system of brief daily meetings of Secretaries and Additional Secretaries, where the officers have the occasion to consider the various developments relating to specific stations and exchange views and ideas on problem stations.

1.16. The Committee note that procedures that would ensure once-a-year evaluation of each Mission's performance are being considered by the Ministry so as to fulfil the letter and spirit of their recommendation. The Committee would like to make it clear that what they had recommended was once-a-year evaluation, not once-a-year inspection, of the Indian Missions abroad. In pursuance of this recommendation the Ministry, it is seen, have evolved a system of daily meetings of Secretaries and Additional Secretaries where the officers have the occasion to consider the various developments relating to specific stations and exchange views and ideas on problem stations. This new system is no doubt an improvement but instead of stopping at mere exchange of ideas and views on problem stations, the system should be developed to make a systematic and regular evaluation, at least once a year, of the performance of each Indian Mission abroad in the light of available information and reports for the consideration of the Foreign Minister. The considered views of the Ministry should thereafter be communicated to the heads of missions concerned for their guidance.

Selection of Heads of Missions

Recommendation Sl. No. 24 (Paragraph 3.24)

1.17. The Committee noted that proposal for appointment of career officers as Heads of Missions were framed by Foreign Secretary after informal consultation with the other Secretaries of the Ministry. These were placed before the Foreign Minister who places such proposals with his recommendations before the Prime Minister for his approval whereafter the proposals were formally submitted to the President for approval before issue of orders. The Committee recommended that the system of selection of Heads of Missions at the Ministry's level should be institutionalised and a formal Committee consisting of all the Secretaries of the Ministry should be constituted for considering and recommending names of suitable officers for consideration of the Foreign Minister.

1.18. The Ministry in their reply (30 Nov., 1979) have stated that they have taken note of this recommendation. The Ministry have further stated that it is "impossible and would even be unwise (?) in these matters to circumscribe or curtail the flexibility of response of the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister to specific situations."

1.19. Nowhere had the Committee suggested any measure to "circumscribe or curtail the flexibility of response of Foreign Minister and Prime

Minister.” What the Committee had desired and what they still feel necessary is that the views of all the three Secretaries should be placed before the Foreign Minister when the question of appointment of a Career Diplomat as Head of Mission is to be considered. This would enable the Minister to have the benefit of considered opinion of all the Secretaries without in any way “circumscribing or curtailing” the flexibility of his response

Recommendation Sl. No. 25 (Paragraph 3.26)

1.20. The Committee, while agreeing with the Ministry that the Government should have the freedom and right to appoint non-career officers and public men of eminence as Heads of Diplomatic Missions, observed that there should be a fair mix of public men and career diplomats in these appointments. The Committee also suggested that care should be taken to see that only persons of eminence, experience and ability were appointed Heads of Missions abroad and those selected were capable of representing this great country.

1.21. The Ministry in their reply (30 Nov, 1979) have stated that “this has been brought to the attention of the Foreign Minister.”

1.22. The Committee hope that their observation would be treated as a standing guideline in the matter of appointment of Heads of Missions.

System of Studying/Analysing Reports from Heads of Missions

Recommendation Sl. No. 28 (Paragraph 3.43)

1.23. The Committee had noted that the monthly reports sent to Headquarters by the Heads of Missions, which were stated to be “extremely useful” were not even acknowledged. Nor from the account of action taken by the Ministry on such reports did the Committee find any evidence of a dialogue being held with the Ambassadors concerned on the basis of their reports. The Committee had opined that this flaw in the system of work should be removed without delay and all reports, monthly as well as special, should not only be carefully studied and analysed but also acknowledged and used as a basis for a meaningful dialogue with the Ambassadors. The dialogue should cover not only matters of particular concern or interest to the mission concerned but also issues of global concern which affect our national interest. Instead of leaving it to the discretion of individual officers in the Ministry the system of studying and analysing the reports and taking follow-up action thereon should be institutionalised to achieve the best results.

1.24. The Ministry in their reply (Nov., 1979) stated that the Committee’s recommendations have been received with great benefit by all Heads of Divisions in the Ministry and Heads of Missions abroad. It must, however, be clarified that a dialogue between our missions and the Ministry, as also with Ministries of Government has been taking place on a continuing basis, as a matter of course.

1.25. On being asked to indicate the concrete action taken on the specific recommendation of the Committee, to institutionalise the system of studying and analysing reports of Heads of Missions and taking follow-up action thereon the Ministry in their further reply (September, 1980) have stated that the Ministry have taken up additional arrangements for ensuring that their comments, analysis and advice are fully utilised. Firstly, the senior officers of the

Ministry, who form the Committee of Secretaries meet with the Foreign Secretary every day to discuss all important developments and to coordinate India's reaction and response to these developments. All this naturally takes into account the comments, reportage and analysis for all our missions. Secondly, a coordination meeting, invariably chaired by the Foreign Secretary, attended by all Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries and Directors in the Ministry is held every month. As these methods, when fully evolved will optimise the interaction between Headquarters and missions abroad, it is not considered necessary at this stage to issue on this specific recommendation any separate circular. The text of the recommendation was circulated to Missions abroad, along with the texts of other recommendations in a comprehensive circular letter.

1.26 The Committee are informed that this recommendation has been received with great benefit by all heads of Divisions in the Ministry and heads of Missions abroad. The Committee are also informed that a dialogue between Indian Missions and the Ministry as also with other Ministries of Government has been taking place on a continuing basis as a matter of course. The Committee note that in pursuance of their recommendation to institutionalise the system of studying and analysing the reports received from heads of Indian Missions abroad the Ministry have now made certain additional arrangements like daily meetings of Committee of Secretaries and coordination meeting every month of all senior officers chaired by Foreign Secretary for ensuring that the comments analysis and advice received from the Missions are fully utilised while discussing all important developments and coordinating India's reactions and responses to these developments. The Committee hope that the new arrangements will be developed fully to optimise the inter-action between headquarters and Missions abroad to achieve the best results.

Strength of Senior Officers at Headquarters

Recommendations Sl. Nos. 29 and 103 (Paragraphs 3.45 and 10.38)

1.27. The Committee had taken a serious note of the fact brought to their notice that the Senior officers at headquarters of the Ministry had "no time to critically examine all the reports" sent by the Heads of Indian Missions. They recommended that an immediate study be undertaken to correct the situation so that there was a rational distribution of work and responsibility among the senior officers like Secretaries/Additional Secretaries and Joint Secretaries so as to provide adequate number of senior officers to do justice to the "extremely useful" reports, which the Ambassadors so painstakingly draft and which have "a significant, vital and meaningful role to play" in the formulation and shaping of India's policies and reaction towards other countries and events. The frequent changes and shifting around of officers in the Ministry or in the Missions should not be encouraged so that there is some continuity in the Foreign office and the dialogue envisaged between the Heads of Missions and the Headquarters. The Committee also suggested that the need for augmenting strength of Heads of Divisions and appointment of Economic Adviser might also be examined in the course of this study.

1.28. The Ministry in their reply (30 Nov., 1979) have conceded that "its manning table for Territorial, Political, Economic, XP and Public relations and other functional divisions has been rendered obsolete by developments of the last few years." The Ministry have added that it will be their

effort to correct the situation to the extent the other branches of the Government permit them. Financial constraints, and the inability of other concerned Ministries and Departments to release resources for this work have been and will remain an inhibition in this.

1.29 The Committee regret that the Ministry have side-tracked their specific recommendation for undertaking an immediate study of the organisation and structure of the Ministry with a view to bringing about a rational distribution of work and responsibility among senior officers like Secretaries/ Additional Secretaries and Joint Secretaries so as to provide adequate number of senior officers to critically examine and do justice to the reports sent by Heads of Missions. They reiterate that such a study be undertaken now and follow-up action taken without delay.

Regional conferences of heads of missions

Recommendation Sl. No. 31 & 32 (Paragraphs 3.62 to 3.64)

1.30. The Committee were informed that there was no regular procedure for arranging conferences of heads of Indian Missions in different regions. Such conferences, it was stated, were organised when ever it was so decided by the Foreign Minister and were normally held if the Foreign Minister was visiting that region on an official business. The Committee suggested that it would be useful both to the Ministry and the Heads of Missions in a region they could be brought together formally or informally, at least once in two years for mutual consultations. The Committee also expressed the view that it should not be difficult for the Ministry to convene such conferences in regional centres on the occasion of the visit of the Foreign Minister to these regions as such conferences when held in the region provide the right atmosphere and could be far more meaningful than in Delhi. The Committee also held the view that business like conferences of shorter duration in the regions concerned, without the large entourage accompanying Heads of Missions would neither be expensive nor difficult to organise.

1.31. The Ministry in their reply (30.11.79) have recognised the efficacy of regional conferences of Heads of Missions and have stated that though these conferences have been taking place, they have added that international as also internal political developments would always make it difficult for them to adhere to any rigid periodicity in this context. The Ministry have also stated that by holding these conferences in India they ensured that Heads of Missions were exposed to much wider spectrum of people and organisations involved in decision making in a variety of fields.

1.32 From the lukewarm response shown by the Ministry, the Committee cannot but conclude that the Ministry have not been able to appreciate fully the usefulness of holding regional conferences of Heads of Missions at regular intervals. While the Committee have nothing against holding of such conferences in India, the Committee would like to reiterate that heads of Missions should hold short-duration conferences in their regions also without large entourage accompanying them, at least once in two years or when the Foreign Minister or Secretaries happen to visit that region, for mutual consultations and exchange of ideas. Such business like conferences, as already observed by the Committee, would neither be expensive nor difficult to organise

*Promotions of Personnel from IFS(B) to IFS(A)***Recommendations Sl. No 33. and 34 (Paragraphs 4.16 & 4.17)**

1.33. The Committee were informed that, under the existing rules, the officers of Indian Foreign Service (B), at a late stage in their careers, were eligible for promotion to Indian Foreign Service(A) at Senior Scale level on the basis of merit against 15% quota earmarked for such promotions. After considering a suggestion made by a former top level Civil servant and a former diplomat that bright and promising members of the IFS(B) should be encouraged by promoting them to IFS(A) at an early stage of their careers, with which the Foreign Secretary agreed, the Committee recommended that the Ministry of External Affairs should introduce a system of promotion from IFS(B) to IFS(A) through a competitive examination to be conducted periodically through UPSC and fix a certain percentage of posts in IFS(A) (Junior scale) to be filled up through this method. The Committee had also desired that the question of increase in promotion quota for appointment of IFS(B) officers to IFS(A) (stated to be 15 per cent at that time) which was under study by the Ministry, should be finalised expeditiously.

1.34. The Ministry in their reply (30.11.79) have stated that the recommendations of the Committee were under detailed examination in consultation with other relevant authorities of the Government, including the UPSC.

1.35. The Committee desire that the Ministry should finalise the major expeditiously and introduce at an early date the system of promotion of IFS (B) officers to a certain percentage of posts in IFS(A) through competitive examination at an early stage of their careers.

*Appointment of a public relation consultant in Washington***Recommendation Sl. No. 62 (Paragraph 5.71)**

1.36. The Committee were informed that a Public Relations Consultant was appointed in Washington sometimes during 1964-65 on a salary of US dollars 70,000 per year, to promote public relations and create a climate for cooperation with and interest in India. The Committee were informed during evidence that notice of termination of his services after the end of 1978-79 had been given but sometime after the evidence, it was brought to the Committee's notice that, as a result of certain subsequent developments, the notice had been withdrawn. The Committee were unable to appreciate the need for engagement of a private consultant in the USA. They had, therefore, desired that the entire matter relating to the need for appointment of the consultant and his continuance for 13 years, his performance from year to year in concrete terms, if possible, service of termination notice and subsequent withdrawal thereof etc., should be examined by an independent authority outside the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Finance and the Committee informed of its finding within six months.

1.37. The Ministry in their reply (30-11-79) have stated that after a recent review of the performance of this Public Relations Firm, and in the light of experience acquired by the Embassy personnel in public relations work, the Ministries of Finance and External Affairs have agreed to terminate the contract of the firm and notice of termination has been served

on the firm as a result of the review. The Ministry have added that against this background, it was hardly then necessary to assess the public relations firm's performance.

1.38 The Committee take note of the fact that notice of termination has been served on the firm. They hope that now the Ministry will be able to handle public relations work in USA and elsewhere competently through their own officers.

Digest from Indian press for circulation amongst the Foreign Media.

Recommendation Sl. No. 65 (Paragraph 6.65)

1.39 The Committee had recommended that the External Publicity Division of the Ministry should bring out a digest from the Indian Press weekly or fortnightly for wide circulation amongst foreign media through our missions.

1.40. The Ministry in their reply (30-11-79) have stated that they are examining in depth the administrative and financial aspects of bringing out from headquarters a weekly or fortnightly digest of the Indian Press.

1.41 The Committee would like the Ministry to expedite a decision in the matter.

Co-ordinating the working of external publicity division of the Ministry, ICCR and External services division of air etc.

Recommendation Sl. No. 68 (Paragraph 6.68)

1.42 Taking note of the "lack of coordination" between the Ministries and public sector undertakings in the field of external publicity, as pointed out by Chenchal Sarkar Committee, the Estimates Committee strongly supported the suggestion made by that Committee for "setting up a working body at a high but not rarefied level to coordinate the working of the External Publicity Division, Indian Council of Cultural Relations, the External Publicity Division of the AIR, Indian Tourism and Development Corporation and Air India's Public Relations Division."

1.43 The Ministry have stated in their reply (30-11-79) that the recommendation has been engaging their attention and serious consideration is being given to problems in this matter.

1.44 The Committee desire expeditious finalisation of the matter by the Ministry and early follow-up action to bring about effective coordination in the matter of external publicity among the various Government Departments and public sector units.

System of Eliciting Opinion of Public Sector Organisations on performance of Economic and Commercial wings of missions.

Recommendation Sl. No. 78 (Paragraph 7.43)

1.45 After studying the working of Economic and Commercial Wings of Indian Missions, the Committee had observed that it could not be said that these wings were doing their jobs to the complete satisfaction of all concerned. The Committee had recommended that the Ministry should

evolve a system whereby they could periodically elicit the views of trading, commercial and industrial organisations in India on the functioning of our missions abroad and invite their suggestions in effecting improvements. Unless such a feedback was arranged, the Ministry would not be able to know the weaknesses of our missions.

1.46 The Ministry in their reply (Nov., 1979) stated that greater and more frequent feedback material from the various Export Promotion Councils in India and Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Industry would be organised even more than what they had been doing heretofore.

1.47. Asked whether any system had been evolved by the Ministry to elicit the views of trading commercial and industrial organisations on the functioning of our missions abroad, the Ministry in their further reply (September, 1980) have stated that in pursuance of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee a circular has been issued to all missions abroad and private and public sector undertakings/organisations to elicit their views on the performance and possible improvements of our missions both from organisational as well as functional aspects.

1.48 The Committee are glad to note that in pursuance of their recommendation the Ministry have issued a circular to various private and public sector organisations to elicit their views on the performance and possible improvement of Indian Missions abroad both from organisational as well as functional points of view. The Committee would like such an exercise to be done periodically on a regular basis.

Co-ordination among public sector agencies operating in USA.

Recommendation Sl. No. 81 (Paragraph 7.46)

1.49 The Committee noted that in New York City there were seven commercial and quasi-commercial bodies from India, viz., State Trading Corporation, Jute Development Office, HHEC, Office of the Trade Promotion, Office of the Trade Development Authority, India Investment Centre, Shipping Corporation of India, Air India, State Bank of India and Tourism Office etc. The Committee expressed the view that if all such organisations could be accommodated in the same premises or in close vicinity and in the same locality, they could pool resources and services not only to provide efficient services at less cost but also set up a "little India" abroad to make such better projection of Indian goods and services and thus give a much greater boost to Indian trade and industry. The Committee desired that the Economic and Commercial Wings of the Indian Missions in New York/Washington could play a leading role in making this possible.

1.50. The Ministry in their reply (30.11.79) have stated that the comments of the Indian Missions in Washington and New York have been invited and the matter will be examined in consultation with other Departments of the Government of India.

1.51 The Committee attach great importance to the question of pooling of resources and services by public sector agencies abroad with a view to making a better projection of Indian goods and services. They would like the Ministry to address themselves to this task more seriously and more vigorously and bring about the necessary coordination among the agencies situated in New York to start with, without delay.

Induction of experts into the Economic and Commercial wings of missions.

Recommendation Sl. No. 82 (Para 7.50)

1.52 Dealing with the functioning of Economic and Commercial wings of Diplomatic Missions, the Committee came to the conclusion that for competent handling of economic and commercial work a certain degree of specialisation was necessary among officers manning these wings in the Missions and such a specialisation, for which a proper aptitude and a certain background were necessary, could not be and have not been developed among all the IFS officers. The Committee were of the view that the complexities of economic and commercial work had increased considerably since the Government decision of 1946 on Pillai Committee Report of 1966 according to which IFS officers were also to man the Economic and Commercial Wings of the Missions and a time had come when the Government should undertake an objective and independent review of the situation. The Committee expressed the view that it was necessary to strengthen the Economic and Commercial Wings of the Missions by selecting from time to time the most qualified persons from outside the Indian Foreign Service for a certain percentage of posts in these wings.

1.53 The Ministry in their reply (30 November, 1979) have stated that after the Pillai Committee Report was accepted by Government, both the Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce, have made every effort to promote the national interest by pooling their efforts and experience. The Ministry have added that if facts and figures of India's export performance in the period since the Pillai Committee Report are studied, it would be readily conceded that they have spearheaded national export effort satisfactorily, perhaps commendably. What sort of further cross-fertilisation of experiences and ideas (as reflected in the sources from which the Ministry should draw personnel for economic and commercial work) will help the country, is a point on which adjustments keep taking place. In a dynamic situation like ours this is inevitable.

1.54 As our industry, commerce, foreign trade and shipping keep expanding the commercial and economic work, required to be done by our Missions, too will expand. Diversification of personnel according to the Ministry is neither desired nor should it be considered desirable. The Ministry have further stated that clearly the focus of this work must be kept within the duly constituted foreign service, as indeed was the case with most countries which have a growing and expanding economic role in the world.

1.55 The Committee do not agree with the Ministry's view which is largely a restatement of the position taken by them earlier that officers belonging to IFS should handle the economic and commercial work in the diplomatic missions abroad. The Committee had gone into the matter thoroughly before coming to the conclusion that for a certain percentage of posts in Economic and Commercial wings, the most qualified persons from outside the Indian Foreign Service should be selected. They reiterate their recommendation.

Heads of India supply Missions

Recommendation Sl. No. 85 (Para 7.67)

1.56. The Committee had found that the Supply Wing of the High Commission of India in London which is essentially concerned with purchase of

defence stores and electronic items was headed by an IFS officer who had no technical or professional background. The Committee had strongly urged that the Heads of the Supply Missions (London and Washington) should be men with professional background and intimate knowledge and experience of matters required to be handled by these wings.

1.57 The Ministry in their reply (30 November, 1979) have stated that "only once, at each of these places, this job was done by an IFS Officer. Missions all along these posts were held by IAS officers. By and large the performance of the two IFS officers was somewhat better."

1.58 The Committee feel that the Ministry have side-tracked the crux of their recommendation. The question is not whether the heads of Supply Wings belong to IFS or IAS but that whether they have technical or professional background to handle purchase of sophisticated equipment and defence stores. The Committee are not satisfied with the Government's reply. They reiterate that heads of the Supply Wings should be men with professional background and intimate knowledge and experience of matter required to be handled by these wings.

Working of Consular Sections Missions.

Recommendation Sl. No. 87 (Paragraph 8.27)

1.59 The Committee had desired the Ministry to study the working of Consular Sections in the Missions and also to keep a constant watch, through periodical statements, on the efficiency of the Consular Sections and take necessary measures to tone up the working of the Missions in this regard. They also desired to be informed of the specific measures taken to streamline the working of Consular Sections within six months.

1.60 The Ministry in their reply (30 November, 1979) have stated that all Heads of Missions and Posts abroad were specially instructed to tone up the working conditions in their Consular Sections. The proposals in regard to additional staff and facilities required in Consular Sections sought from the Heads of Missions, have since been received and are being processed in consultation with the other concerned authorities of the Government.

1.61 The Committee desire the Ministry to finalise the matter without any further delay and inform them of the concrete measures taken to streamline the working of Consular Sections of Missions.

Implementation of Recommendations

1.62 * The Committee would like to emphasize that they attach the greatest importance to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by Government. They would, therefore, urge that Government should ensure expeditious implementation of the recommendations accepted by them. In case where it is not possible to implement the recommendation in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee in time with reasons for non-implementation.

1.63 The Committee regret to note that, even though about two years have elapsed the Ministry have not so far, been able to a final decision on a large, number of their recommendations (numbering 17) most of which relate to issues of importance and only replies of interim nature have been sent in respect of them. All these recommendations have been included in Chapter V of the report. The Committee desire that final replies in respect of these recommendations may be furnished to the Committee within 6 months.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation Sl. No. 1 (Para 1.12)

The Committee would like to emphasise at the outset that the subject of diplomatic relations among nations has assumed great importance in the world today. The inter-play of conflicting political and economic ideologies in the international arena has put onerous burden on the country. India with its ancient cultural heritage and fast developing economy has acquired a new international identity and relevance. This obviously places a great responsibility on our diplomatic missions abroad and their success lies in playing a positive role for bringing about a synthesis between our national interest and international amity, without in any manner compromising the dignity of our nation and people.

Reply of Government

The observation is an important as it is self-evident. Indeed our Diplomatic Missions abroad function within the overall perspective expressed in this observation.

The observation has nevertheless been brought to the specific attention of all Heads of Missions/Posts abroad and officers at the Headquarters who have been advised to constantly keep in mind that their functioning must mould along the lines of this observation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 2 (Para 1.13)

The Committee would impress upon each functionary of the Indian diplomatic missions abroad, irrespective of his position and status to consider himself/herself to be an envoy of this great country and make all out endeavour to project true image of India, the great achievements of her people individually and collectively, the challenges-social as well as economic-that lie ahead and the people's determination to face them, and the significant contribution India has made in the promotion of peace and friendship in international field. The Missions are expected to make consistent efforts to correct all erroneous impressions about India and Indians which might be created or might have been created at certain points of history. They should ceaselessly work to earn and maintain a place of honour for India in the comity of nations and look upon their posting abroad as a valued opportunity not only to serve and look after Indians living, studying or travelling abroad but also to render all possible assistance and guidance to foreign nationals evincing interest in any aspect of our country.

Reply of Government

The Committee's various important observations, which are in line with the broad directions in the Ministry, have been brought to the specific attention of all officers at Headquarters and abroad. The officers have been advised to keep in view these observations.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation (Para 1.14)

The Committee have examined the working of Indian Diplomatic Missions from the above angles and have made suggestions and observations in succeeding chapters for their more efficient functioning and fulfilling the role assigned to them.

Reply of Government

The observation has been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 3 (Para 2.11)

The Committee note that the Missions/Posts have been classified into 'A', 'B' and 'C' stations, based essentially on local living conditions. The classification as also the criteria on which the classification is based is subject to review from time to time depending on the changes in the political and economic conditions in the countries concerned. It is of relevance only in the context of duration of the postings of officers and rotation between different categories of stations. This classification, it is stated, has nothing to do with the importance of the mission from the point of view of India's national interest.

Reply of Government

The observation has been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation (Para 2.12)

The Committee are informed that Indian Missions have been evaluated on the basis of national interest and "the categorisation on the basis of the importance of the missions is evident from the level and experience of officers who are posted there". The Committee are glad to know that importance of mission and not the living conditions there is the principal criterion for posting of officers to the Missions and that normally a senior officers is posted to an important mission though sometimes for administrative or other compelling reasons an officer of a certain grade may happen to be allowed to continue in a mission which is normally to be manned by higher grade officer. This flexibility, it is stated by the Ministry, enables them "to fit in people a little better".

Reply of Government

The observation has been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 4 (Para 2.13)

The Committee would like the Ministry to bear in mind that exceptions to the normal practice of posting senior officers to important missions should not become common and should be resorted to only in national interest and where an officer of junior grade is allowed to head a mission which should normally be manned by a higher grade officer for some time in special circumstances, the position should be rectified at the earliest opportunity. The Committee appreciate that, as stated by Foreign Secretary, it may so happen in the course of posting of officers to Missions, abroad that, at some place, there may be "a square peg in a round hole". The Committee suggest that as soon as "a square peg in a round hole" is discovered, corrective steps should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

Reply of Government

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation and agree that as a rule senior officers should be posted in important missions. Any departure from this norm should be only in special or exceptional circumstances.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 5 (Para 2.14)

There are some missions and places which are important and would continue to be so from the point of view of our national interest for long time to come while importance of other missions and places may vary from time to time. In the opinion of the Committee, therefore, it is very necessary that inter-se-gradation of missions and places from the angle of national interest is reviewed and redetermined from time to time with the approval at the highest level and posting of officers done keeping in mind the changing importance of the Missions.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agree that inter-se-gradation of Missions deserves to be reviewed from time to time, preferably every 2 years. While posting of officers altered importance of specific missions must be borne in mind.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 6 (Para 2.15)

The Committee have seen the four lists of missions drawn in the order of national importance and showing the grades of officers (Grade I, II, III or IV) who are normally required to head them. The Committee feel that in the case of certain missions which, the Committee would not like to name here for obvious reasons, there is need to re-determine the gradation of the missions in terms of national importance and post officers of appropriate grade to head the missions. The Committee would suggest that the Ministry should undertake this exercise at an early date.

Reply of Government

The exercise recommended by the Committee has been completed.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 7 (Para 2.33)

The Committee are informed that beside the Heads of Missions, other categories of diplomatic officers in our missions are Minister, Counsellor, First Secretary, Second Secretary, Third Secretary, Attache, senior Interpreters. The non diplomatic staff (India based) in the missions include Assistants, Personal Assistants, Cypher Assistants, Stenographers, Upper Division Clerks and Lower Division Clerks. In a number of missions security guards, class IV staff and Chauffeurs are also posted from the headquarters. Seeing the large number of categories of staff posted in missions abroad, the Committee have a feeling that the hierarchical set up obtaining in the Ministry has been needlessly duplicated in the missions.

The Committee agree with the suggestion made by a former career diplomat that with a view to improving the functional efficiency of diplomatic missions and achieving economy in expenditure, the traditional staffing pattern obtaining at headquarters should not be followed in Indian Missions abroad and a system of multifunctional officers (combining in themselves the function of cypher, stenography, interpreter etc.) be introduced progressively in the missions. In his evidence before the Committee the Foreign Secretary stated that "we do use this multi-purpose idea that a man must be able to do more than one kind of work. What we do is that a Cypher Assistant in a small mission is required to do other types of jobs like general Assistant's work or account Assistant's work etc.

Reply of Government

The observation has been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/
735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 7 (Para 2.34)

The Committee do not think there should be any difficulty in PAs or PSs to Ambassadors or even diplomatic officers doing cypher work except in large missions where the quantum of cypher work may justify posting of exclusive staff for this work. Nor should there be any difficulty for a security man or a messenger to act as Chauffeur or vice-versa. The Committee suggest that staffing pattern in each mission should be critically studied and re-determined from this angle. The posting of officers should be made for doing a 'job' which cannot be done otherwise and not for merely filling a 'vacancy' to conform to the traditional hierarchy at headquarters. The Committee are not oblivious of the likely resistance that this concept of multi-functional officers will have to face at the hands of traditionalists but they would urge that the system of work and pattern of staffing in Missions should be modernised in the interest of efficiency and economy. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken in the matter.

Reply of Government

The Ministry of External Affairs accept the recommendation that staffing pattern in missions abroad should be based on the concept of multi-functional officers. How rapidly the present system can be overhauled, is being re-examined, taking into account factors such as training of personnel, reassessment of workload. While we have already commenced implementation of this recommendation, the scheme is being put up to the concerned authorities for creation of training reserve posts which would be un-avoidably required to expedite implementation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.
I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 8 (Para 2.35)

The Committee are informed that besides India-based staff, Indian Diplomatic Missions also appoint local-based persons against manipulative posts like Messenger, Chauffeurs, Gardeners, Cleaners and against non-sensitive clerical posts like Clerks, Typists, Interpreters/Translators and marketing Assistants. As Interpreters/Translators must be serving as crucial link between Missions' officers and outsiders and translating all kinds of documents from one language into the other, the Committee wonder how posts of Interpreters/Translators could be called "non-sensitive" posts. The Committee would like the Ministry to consider whether the missions' secrets in the hands of local-based Interpreters/Translators are safe. In the Committee's opinion, local based Interpreters/Translators should not be allowed to handle classified matter or be present during discussions of secret or sensitive nature.

Reply of Government

Fresh instructions to all our Missions/Posts abroad, in line with the Estimates Committee's recommendations have been issued.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 9 (Para 2.36)

The Committee are also informed that while recruiting local based persons, Indian nationals living abroad are also selected wherever available. The Committee would like to recommend that, wherever available, Indian nationals possessing the required qualifications should be given preference while recruiting local-based persons for posts in the Missions. The Committee are very keen to ensure that there is absolute parity in salaries, allowances and terms and conditions of service between locally recruited foreigners and locally recruited Indians. If there is any discrimination anywhere it should be removed without delay.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agrees that there should be parity in salaries, allowances etc. between locally recruited foreigners and locally recruited Indian nationals. Also that preference should be given to Indians, other things being equal.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 10 (Para 2.37)

The Committee note that India-based Class IV staff have been deployed in some of the missions in neighbouring countries (Dacca, Jalalabad, Kabul, Peking, Islamabad). Amongst India-based Class IV staff are Peons, Farrashes, Sweepers and Gardeners. The Committee are not able to appreciate the necessity of posting Gardeners, Sweepers, Peons, Farrashes and Daftries from headquarters in Indian Missions abroad. They suggest that the question of posting of these categories of staff from headquarters should be re-examined.

Reply of Government

As regards recruiting personnel, as local recruits for class IV work in neighbouring missions, it has to be pointed out that due to the sensitivity

of many of these missions, in many cases we consider it desirable to employ Indians only. However, where there are no such sensitivities Committee's recommendations have been followed.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 12 (Para 2.45)

The Committee note that though the Ministry concede that "efficient functioning requires us to spell out objectives for each of our Missions. . . ." all that they appear to be doing is to issue instructions on various aspects of the Mission's work" and to keep a watch on their implementation. They have been informed by Foreign Secretary during evidence that since last year the Ministry "started the system of giving written briefs" to the Heads of Missions but still it appears they have not introduced any system of laying down specific objectives to be achieved by our diplomatic missions abroad. As the missions are set up for realisation of certain objectives, the Committee would like to recommend that the objectives for each mission should be defined in concrete terms (not in vague generalised like promotion of friendship etc.) and inter-se-priorities and broad guidelines regarding ways and means of achieving the objectives laid down by the Ministry. Each mission should be asked to report to the Ministry periodically the progress made in the realisation of these objectives and the Ministry should, in the light of these progress reports review the situation and if necessary, revise the objectives, priorities and guidelines from time to time.

Reply of Government

We have a system of briefing our Heads of Missions. We have, however, initiated action in redefining and improving the system, in accordance with the recommendations of the Estimates Committee.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 5—7 of the Report Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 13 (Para 2.72)

A view has been expressed by a former career diplomat that while there have been ad hoc attempts for introducing administrative reforms in diplomatic mission e.g. Pillai Committee, (1965) there has not been any comprehensive review which would specially indicate how the different elements of decision making and of administration could more closely and more effectively cooperate. In Government's view, the existing institution of the Foreign Service Inspectorate is adequate to undertake a review of the working of the diplomatic missions including their administrative set up. The inspectorate is expected to study administrative, financial and disciplinary matters of Missions and to assess the missions functional effectiveness, including that of officers.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation (Para 2.73)

Commenting on the activities of Foreign Service Inspectorate, a former Foreign Secretary and career diplomat has stated that the Inspectorate goes into only administrative questions like cost of living problems of the missions; it does not do anything significant to evaluate the working or effectiveness of the missions. This is borne out by the study made by this Committee of the latest reports of the Inspectorate in respect of our diplomatic missions/posts in New York, Washington, London, Tunis, Tehran, Algiers, Belgrade, Rome, Paris, Rabat and Cairo. These reports show that the Inspectorate has gone into only routine administrative matters like staff position, accommodation problems, house rent allowances, local pay scales, supply of office equipment, furniture and furnishings, medical expenses and children's education. In none of these reports the Inspectorate has made any comments about the functional effectiveness or overall performance of the missions.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation (Para 2.74)

The Committee agree with two former career diplomats that headed as it is by an officer of the rank of Additional/Joint Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, the Inspectorate cannot be expected, for obvious reasons, to do its job effectively or dispassionately in Missions which are headed by officers of higher grade or even by officers of equivalent grade but senior in service.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation (Para 2.75)

The Ministry have stated that periodicity of Inspectorate's visits is normally triennial but lately it has not been usually so due to administrative and financial reasons. The Committee have found that in the case of two of the eleven missions, referred to above, the inspection visits were paid after 5 years, in 2 cases (Tehran and Cairo), after more than 8 years and in 3 other cases (Rabat, Algiers, Tunis) after more than 13 years.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation (Para 2.76)

While the Committee do not agree to the view of a former diplomat that "we need not have an Inspectorate at all", they have come to the conclusion that the Inspectorate has failed to discharge its primary duty viz., to measure the achievements and deficiencies of missions or to evaluate their overall efficiency and performance with the desired degree of independence and objectivity. Its inspections visits are few and far between.

It concentrates on routine administrative matters of the missions for which it should not be necessary for a team of officers to go all the way from the headquarters. Most of the matters, like rates of allowance, pay scales, purchase of office equipment etc., can be attended to without spot inspection by a team of officers from the headquarters.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have examined in depth the comprehensive recommendation of the Committee on the role of Foreign Service Inspectorate. In accordance with the Committee's recommendation the Ministry is trying to work out, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance, alternative ways of fixing allowances, pay scales etc. without spot inspection by team of officers from Headquarters.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dt. 15-3-80]

The Ministry have informed that in accordance with the Committee's recommendation, the Ministry was trying to work out in consultation with the Ministry of Finance alternative ways of fixing allowances, pay scales, etc. of officers/staff at Missions abroad, without spot inspection by team of officers from Headquarters.

Please state the final decision taken in the matter.

Further reply of Government

The Ministry has already sent in a proposal to the Ministry of Finance suggesting an alternative way of fixing foreign allowance as had been recommended by the Estimates Committee. This Ministry had suggested to Finance that a panel of experts may be appointed to examine every aspect in detail so as to work out comprehensive and feasible system. The appointment of the panel was not agreed to earlier but we expect to make further progress during the current financial year.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80 dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation (Para 2.77)

The Committee feel that the most important, but hitherto neglected, functions of the Inspectorate are to assess the functional effectiveness of missions and to bring about optimum efficiency in their working consistent with the need for economy to enable them to fulfil the tasks assigned to them. The Inspectorate will do well not to fritter away its energy and time on routine matters. The Committee suggest that the terms of reference of the Inspectorate be redefined and priorities of its functions re-determined so that it is required to concentrate more on making an overall assessment of the performance of the missions in the political, economic, cultural and consular spheres and the degree of success achieved by them in their public relations. While making such an assessment, the Inspectorate should go into the performance of individual officers including heads of missions, the number and deployment of staff, the staffing pattern and administrative procedures and make suggestions for the more efficient and economical working of the missions.

Reply of Government

The Ministry accepts the conclusion of the Committee to concentrate on functional effectiveness, and overall performance of the Missions and its officers. The Ministry has accordingly proposed to the Ministry of Finance that the terms and targets of the Foreign Service Inspectorate be redefined taking into full account the recommendations of the Committee.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980]

The Ministry have informed that they had proposed to the Ministry of Finance that the terms and targets of the Foreign Service Inspectorates be redefined taking into full account the recommendations of the Estimates Committee.

Please state the outcome of the proposal made in the Ministry of Finance and final decision taken in the matter.

Further Reply of Government

In consultation with Finance, implementation of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee on the redefinition of the tasks and responsibilities of the Foreign Service Inspectorates is being undertaken, on a phased basis.

In December 1979, the FSIs visit to a country abroad had the benefit of the participation of the Head of the concerned Territorial Division of the Ministry. And a senior Ambassador who has served in that region was made the Head of the Team. FSIs were much more thoroughly grounded and in a better position to make an over-all assessment of the performance of the mission as a whole. The more urgent administrative problems were handled promptly and taking into consideration the local political realities.

In another recent FSI visit to an important neighbouring country, we included the Head of the Territorial Division in the Ministry as also the Desk Officer who had recently returned from that country. This inspection successfully resolved a large number of important issues, which included the study of the number and deployment of staff, the staffing pattern and administrative decisions, relating thereto. An important recent FSI visit was made to selected countries in East Africa to cater to problems of the increased number of Indian experts in those countries. The FSI included a senior officer from the Department of Personnel. The team was led by Additional Secretary incharge of the Africa Division.

In the course of organising FSIs visit during the current financial year it will be our effort to make further progress to implement the recommendations made by the Estimates Committee.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80 dt. 1-9-80]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 8—11 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No 14 (Para 2.78)

If the Inspectorate has to make a success of its mission, it should, in the opinion of the Committee, be upgraded and headed by an officer of the rank of Secretary in the Ministry as was the position in 1972 and 1973, at least when it visits missions headed by Grade II and Grade I officers.

Reply of Government

The new proposed Foreign Service Inspectorate will ensure that rank and status do not become an impediment to the effective functioning of the Foreign Service Inspectorate.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 15 (Para 2.79)

The Committee also feel that the Inspectorate's team which at present comprises Additional/Joint Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Financial Adviser, is not sufficiently broad based and cannot bring in freshness of approach in its work unless it is augmented by inclusion of a senior expert in organisation and management affairs from outside the service.

Reply of Government

The Ministry, broadly speaking, is grateful for the recommendations of the Committee; and is exploring the possibility of finding an expert who is knowledgeable about foreign affairs, organisation, and broader management issues that confront our major missions.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 16 (Para 2.80)

The Committee are of the opinion that it is too much of a job for an inspection team from headquarters to visit each and every mission once in three years. Besides being an expensive exercise, the headquarters team cannot do full justice to its work within a short stay of 2-3 days, as at present. The Committee feel that there is a need to decentralise this work on a regional basis. While there is strength in the Ministry's view that it will be "politically inexpedient to superimpose supervision of a senior Head of Mission in the region over the Head of another Mission, although he may be young", the Committee feel that the idea of regional exchange and coordination in administrative matters, which the Foreign Secretary has welcomed, should be given a concrete shape. The Committee suggest that the Ministry should evolve an informal system where under a senior head of mission in position in a region or just before the beginning or soon after the end his term is available to other heads of missions in the region, not for supervision, but for advice and guidance in administrative matters which, as has been recommended by them elsewhere in this Chapter, need not await the attention of Foreign Service Inspectorate. A designated head of mission in each region may go into the questions of cost of living and other allowances, local pay scales, medical bills, and all such day to day administrative matters and forward all such cases with his recommendation to the headquarters for final decision. The Committee hope that where proposals require Finance Ministry's approval before implementation, the Finance Ministry will view them in proper context and take early decisions in the interest of more efficient working of the Missions abroad. Such a decentralisation of functions will not only bring about uniformity and quicken the pace of decisions but also relieve the Foreign Service Inspectorate and the Headquarters of a lot of work of routine nature.

Reply of Government

As mentioned earlier, the Ministry have already taken up with the Ministry of Finance the proposal to do away with the routine aspects of the responsibilities of the Foreign Service Inspectorate. To the extent it is acceptable by the Ministry of Finance, the routine administrative and financial matters including allowances shall be handled by the Headquarters only. Where possible and feasible, it shall be our effort to follow the recommendation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 8—11 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 17 (Para 2.81)

The Committee are informed by the Foreign Secretary that there is no institutionalised system of evaluation of the performance of heads of missions or the missions though Secretaries in the Ministry try to evaluate their performance and the Foreign Ministry also formulates some impressions during his visits abroad and shares his assessment with the Secretaries. The Committee feel that the system should be institutionalised to make for a more systematic and regular evaluation of the performance of each mission. The overall assessment of the performance of the Mission in the political, economic and other fields may be made by visits to the Missions by the Secretary/Additional Secretary in charge of the region. All the Secretaries in the Ministry should then meet in a body to make an appraisal of the performance of diplomatic missions in the light of the reports of Foreign Service Inspectorate, Annual, monthly and special reports of the heads of missions, reports received from all other sources and place their assessment of the achievements made by each mission in various fields and deficiencies noticed in their working before the Foreign Minister and thereafter communicate the considered views of the Ministry to the Heads of Missions concerned for their guidance in the future. Such an exercise should be done at least once a year.

Reply of Government

Procedures that would ensure once-a-year-evaluation of each mission performance are being considered so as to fulfil the letter and spirit of this recommendation. However, whether this evaluation should necessarily be tied up with inspection of mission by Secretaries and Additional Secretaries deserves further consideration. However, in this context the Ministry foresees a number of logistical and other problems.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 12—16 of the Report—Chapter I.

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980]

The Ministry have stated that procedures that would ensure once a year evaluation of each Mission's performance were being considered. However,

whether this evaluation should necessarily be tied up with inspection of Mission by Secretaries and Additional Secretaries, deserved further consideration.

Please state the final decision taken in the matter.

Further Reply of Government

The Ministry has considered the suggestion on whether once-a-year inspection of the Missions by Secretaries and Additional Secretaries would be feasible and practicable or not. In order to be meaningful the inspections should not be hurried affairs. It is not practicable for Secretary and Additional Secretaries to make prolonged visits abroad each year. However, every time a Secretary or an Additional Secretary does go abroad on duty, he does utilise the opportunity for assessing and evaluating the Mission's problems and achievements.

The Ministry has evolved a system of brief daily meetings of Secretaries and Additional Secretaries, where the officers have the occasion to consider the various developments relating to specific stations and exchange views and ideas on problem stations.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 18 (Para 2.102)

The Committee note that in order to check enhancement in the Government's rental bill on account of increase in rents of buildings in several countries, Government have as a matter of policy, decided to acquire/construct property abroad for office as well as residential use of Indian missions. The Committee are informed that 16 Indian Missions and 31 Heads of Missions are housed in Government owned buildings and at 14 places members of the staff, though not all, are living in Government owned accommodation. In acquiring/constructing property, Government take into consideration importance of the place from political and commercial angles, economics of the proposal on the basis of outgo on rent, availability of resources etc., and thereafter determine inter-se priorities. While the Committee agree with the Government policy in this regard, they suggest that instead of considering proposals in an ad hoc manner, the Ministry should draw up a list of countries, in order of priority, where for political and other considerations it is desirable to acquire/construct property and formulate a perspective plan, in consultation with Ministry of Finance, to acquire built up accommodation or plots of land in these countries in accordance with clearly laid down guidelines. A perspective plan with clear guidelines and necessary delegation of powers will enable the Ministry of External Affairs to focus their attention only on priority countries and to strike the bargains at most favourable prices at the right time without the need to embark upon time consuming discussions ab initio on fundamental issues every time a new proposal is mooted.

Reply of Government

Broadly speaking action is being taken in the light of the recommendation. Ministry are consulting Ministry of Finance about delegation of powers as recommended by the Committee.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980]

The Ministry have stated that the action was being taken in the light of the Estimates Committee's recommendation and the Ministry were consulting the Ministry of Finance about delegation of powers as recommended by the Committee.

Please state the concrete action taken on the recommendation of the Committee and also the outcome of the proposal regarding delegation of powers, made in the Ministry of Finance.

Further Reply of Government

A comprehensive Five Year Plan is being prepared in consultation with Internal Finance. The Plan is with respect to acquisition and construction of property in selected places. Emphasis on the places where our rental liabilities are escalating rapidly.

In view of the preparation of this Plan and the resultant coordinated approach between the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Finance, the need for delegated powers in this field has diminished somewhat. However, the Ministry of External Affairs is in constant touch with the Ministry of Finance in order to bring about further delegation of financial powers in general.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 19 (Para 2.103)

The Committee find that while in 1976-77 the total allocation for acquisition of buildings for diplomatic missions was Rs. 1.40 crores, the amount actually spent was only a little over Rs. 91 lakhs; the under-utilisation of the funds was stated "to be solely due to the disharmony between the acceptance of proposals and the budget allocation". Similarly in 1977-78 out of an allocation of Rs. 4.86 crores a sum of Rs. 3.28 crores could not be utilised.

Under utilisation of funds to such a large extent as found in these two years reveals deficiency of planning and limited range of exploratory efforts of the Ministry and the diplomatic missions concerned. The Committee would like the Ministry to learn lessons from unsuccessful attempts to finalise deals in these years so as to avoid recurrence of such situations in future.

Reply of Government

The utilisation rate of funds ear-marked for acquisition of properties abroad has been improving. For the current financial year, a sum of Rs. 10 crores has been provided. The Ministry have every expectation to be able to utilise this sum properly, before the financial year is completed, provided the delegated powers as recommended by the Committee are given to the Ministry.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 20 (Para 2.104)

The Committee note that the Government have acquired land for constructing buildings at Kabul, Islamabad, Ankara, Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), Brasilia, Lusaka, Kuwait, Bangkok, Ottawa, Lilongwe (Malawi), Colombo and Canberra and construction projects are at various stage of implementation at all the places except at Port of Spain and Lilongwe. Construction projects are also stated to be underway at Kathmandu, Lagos, Dubai and Doha (Qatar). The Committee would suggest that the services of Indian Architects of standing should be utilised for construction of buildings for Indian diplomatic missions abroad. The buildings should project a glimpse of Indian culture and architecture in their design and elevation.

Reply of Government

The Ministry will make every effort to ensure that all our buildings abroad project the image of Indian culture and architecture.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/
735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 21 (Para 2.105)

It is a matter of public knowledge that Government had provided plots of land to foreign diplomatic missions in New Delhi at reasonable rates for the construction of their offices and residential quarters. When asked whether similar facilities were demanded on reciprocal basis from foreign Governments for the construction of buildings for Indian diplomatic missions abroad, Foreign Secretary stated during evidence that at places where Government did not own land, we had to be in the market to buy land and there was no question of reciprocity; in socialist countries, however, we try to ensure reciprocity. The Committee feel that when Government of India had decided to allot plots of land to foreign missions in New Delhi they should have simultaneously made sure that, where possible Indian diplomatic Missions were also given plots of land for construction of their buildings on a reciprocal basis. It appears that Government either did not moot this proposal then, or did not pursue it reciprocity. The Committee feel that when Government of India know, wherever in foreign capital, the Government of that country or any other public authority there owns land which is suitable for construction of building for Indian diplomatic missions, the Ministry of External Affairs should seriously explore the possibility of acquiring plot of land at Government level for the use of our missions there.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have already implemented a system of coordination between the different concerned Departments of the Government so as to ensure that foreign Governments proposing to acquire property for their Embassies in India grant reciprocal facilities to our Missions in those countries.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/
735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 22 (Para 2.106)

The Committee are informed that it is the Government's policy to supply from India important items of furnishings like curtains, carpets, sofa covers, bed covers, bed and table linen etc., not only because these are cheaper here but mainly to impart an Indian atmosphere to the representational area of residences of our officers abroad as well as offices of the

Heads of Missions. Only "in very rare exceptions" are the missions authorised to purchase such items locally. The Committee find that as against a total expenditure of about Rs. 28 lakhs on furnishings during the last 5 years (1973-74 to 1977-78), a sum of nearly Rs. 10.6 lakhs was spent in foreign exchange on purchase of furnishings from abroad. The Committee cannot accept the view that such a big chunk of expenditure on purchase of foreign made furnishings was incurred "in very rare exceptions". It is not merely the foreign exchange element of expenditure on these purchases but the loss of opportunity to impart Indian touch to our missions abroad that is objectionable. The Committee would like the Ministry to tighten control on purchase of furnishings by our diplomatic missions and ensure that furnishings for our missions are invariably supplied from India.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have always held that furnishings for our Missions should be invariably supplied from India, except in cases of urgency, or where local purchases are demonstrately cheaper.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated March 15, 1980]

Please state the expenditure incurred by the Ministry/Missions on purchase of furnishings from abroad during the year 1978-79 and 1979-80 (April to September).

Further Reply of Government

Expenditure on furnishings authorised by Ministry of External Affairs during the period 1978-79 and 1979-80 (April to September), for local purchases by Missions abroad, is as under :

Year 1978-79	Year 1979-80 (April to September)
Rs. 1,91,289.59	Rs. 21,919.39

[Ministry of External Affairs OM No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/80 dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 23 (Para 2-107)

The Committee regret to find that crockery, cutlery, and glassware used for representational purposes are still supplied from London. Only items meant for daily use are sent from India. The Committee are surprised that the crockery, cutlery and glassware manufactured in India are not considered fit for use by our missions abroad for representational purposes. In their opinion this approach which is a hangover of the past when India did not manufacture quality products calls for an urgent review and change.

Reply of Government

The Ministry too have over the years felt that crockery, cutlery and glassware supplied to our Missions should go from India; however, there have been problems inter-alia, of production schedules quality control and

delivery periods inhibiting us. We have to be able to continue our endeavours to overcome these problems.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-1980]

The Committee had expressed their surprise that the crockery, cutlery and glassware manufactured in India were not considered fit for the use by our Missions abroad for representational purposes. The Committee desired that this approach of the Ministry called for an urgent review and change. The Ministry in their reply have not indicated as to what action has been taken on the Committee's recommendation.

Please state the concrete action taken by the Ministry.

Further Reply of Government

This Ministry has explored all possible avenues for the purchase of crockery, cutlery and glassware manufactured in India to be used for formal representational functions abroad. The concerns in India are barely able to stick to production and delivery schedules due to frequent lock-outs and strikes. However, inspite of this, all representational crockery and cutlery except to the Head of the Mission is being supplied from India.

With respect to the glassware no firm in India manufactures and supplies glassware of the required specification and types, the most indispensable of which being the engraving of the crest in the glass and the various types of tumblers required to serve a variety of beverages abroad.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/80, dated 1-9-80.]

Recommendation Sl. No. 25 (Para 3.25)

As regards appointment of non-official or non-career officials as Heads of Missions the Committee are told that there are no hard and fast rules laid down for their selection. The choice of the non-officials is made by the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister and their suitability is judged at the political level. Before considering non-career diplomats for appointment as Heads of Missions, their "experience, ability and eminence" is taken into account by Government. The Ministry or the Foreign Secretary has no role to play in so far as appointment of non-official Heads of Missions is concerned.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

(Para 3.26)

The Committee agree that Government should have the freedom and the right to appoint non-career officers and public men of eminence as heads of Indian diplomatic missions, if, in the special circumstances, the

balance of advantage, in their opinion, lies in sending such persons to represent India's interests in another country. The Committee, however, feel that there should be a fair mix of public men and career diplomats in the appointment of Heads of Diplomatic Missions.

Reply of Government

This has been brought to the attention of Foreign Minister.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 20-22 of the Report—Chapter I.

(Para 3.27)

The Committee also feel that care should be taken to see that only persons of eminence, experience and ability are appointed heads of Missions abroad and those selected are capable of representing this great country.

Reply of Government

This has been brought to the attention of Foreign Minister.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 26 (Para 3.28)

The Committee feel that in the case of public men appointed as Heads of Missions who are generally new to the ways of diplomacy, the Ministry should have a special responsibility to see that they are given more than normal support at administrative and professional level to be able to settle down in their new roles with perfect ease and without delay and they are extended whole hearted cooperation in making a success of their assignments in the larger national interest.

Reply of Government

It has already been the Ministry's practice and effort to act in accordance with the spirit of this recommendation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

(Para 3.29)

The Committee also feel that where a new non-official is appointed as Head of Mission, his deputy should be an officer of adequate seniority and administrative experience to assist him in day to day tasks of administration.

Reply of Government

It has always been the Ministry's practice and effort to act in accordance with the spirit of this recommendation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 27 (Para 3.30)

The Committee do not think it is necessary to earmark any special missions for non-career diplomats. But they have no doubt that they will be appointed to head missions where their experience, background and stature in public life can be put to most profitable use.

Reply of Government

The recommendation has been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 28 (Para 3.42)

The Committee note that according to a latest decision taken by the Ministry, they are encouraging the Heads of Missions to send frequent despatches to them, containing analysis in depth of economic, political and military developments in the area. These despatches are acknowledged promptly and a dialogue is established between the Ministry and the Missions. Besides these despatches, monthly reports containing chronicle of events in the country are also sent by the Heads of Missions.

Reply of Government

The observation of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

(Para 3.43)

Former career diplomats including retired Secretaries of the Ministry have informed the Committee that "it is really one sided reporting from the Missions with very little questioning, queries and guidance from the Ministry". According to the Ministry "it would not be correct to say that there is only one-way dialogue between the Ambassador and the Foreign Office except in the limited case of monthly reports which, by convention, do not have to be acknowledged". Admittedly, the monthly reports, which are stated to be "extremely useful", are not even acknowledged. Nor from the account of action taken by the Ministry on such reports (para 3.39) do the Committee find any evidence of a dialogue being held with the Ambassadors concerned on the basis of their reports and this is borne out by the personal experiences of career diplomats who have an impression that these reports "are filed away". Even if lack of acknowledgement is overlooked (though all reports should be acknowledged as a matter of common courtesy), the lack of any reaction and lack of any guidance or reference to the Ambassadors on the basis of their reports, shows that the Ministry do not attach due importance to such "extremely useful" reports. Such apathy on the part of the Ministry is bound to discourage Ambassador in sending meaningful reports. In the opinion of the Committee this flaw in the system of work should be removed without delay and all reports, monthly as well as special, should not only be carefully studied and analysed, as is stated to be the practice now, but also acknowledged and used as a basis for a meaningful dialogue with the Ambassador. The dialogue should cover not only matters of particular concern or interest to the mission concerned but also issue of global concern which affect our national interest. Instead of leaving it to the discretion of individual officers in the Ministry, the system of studying and analysing the Reports and taking follow-up action thereon should be institutionalised to achieve the best results.

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendations have been received with great benefit by all heads of Divisions in the Ministry and Heads of Mission abroad. It must, however, be clarified that a dialogue between our Mission and the Ministry, as also with other Ministries of Government has been taking place on a continuing basis, as a matter of course. Its vibrancy and vigour has from time to time been conditioned by Characteristics of the individuals involved. The continuing inter-se dialogue between Missions themselves, specially on regional basis, has also gone on fairly satisfactorily. The Ministry naturally encouraged and welcomes it.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 23-26 of the Report—Chapter I.

(Para 3.44)

The monthly reports, if studied seriously, can become a useful instrument in the hands of the Ministry to keep a watch on the relationship of India with foreign countries besides enabling the Ministry to keep a watch on the working of Indian Missions abroad. These reports can give the Ministry a good insight into the quality of mission's performance and enable them to provide corrective and guidance, where necessary without loss of time. If the Ambassadors know that their reports are studied and analysed, it will go a long way in keeping them alert and will also give them satisfaction that their suggestions receive careful consideration at the highest level.

Reply of Government

Modern means of communications; impact made by the Indian media and press abroad makes and the continuing impact of media and press of other countries on India as also a very large number of VIP visits between India and other friendly countries, in today's world are all factors assisting this continuing dialogue.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-1980]

[Para 3.43 and 3.44]

The Committee had recommended that all reports, monthly as well as special sent by the Heads of Missions, should not only be carefully studied and analysed but also acknowledged and used as a basis for a meaningful dialogue with the Ambassadors. They had inter-alia further desired that the system of studying and analysing the reports and taking follow up action thereon should be institutionalised to achieve the best results. The Ministry's reply does not indicate what concrete action has been taken on the specific recommendation of the Committee.

Please state as to what action, in concrete terms, has been taken on the recommendation of the Committee.

Further Reply of Government

Apart from the fact that international developments of relevance to India are a subject of continuous dialogue between Headquarters and all our concerned Missions, the Ministry has taken up additional arrangements for ensuring that their comments, analysis and advice are fully utilised.

Firstly, the senior officers of the Ministry, who form the Committee of Secretaries, meet with the Foreign Secretary every day to discuss all important developments, and to coordinate India's reaction & response to these developments. All this naturally takes into account the comments, reportage and analysis for all our Missions. Secondly, a coordination meeting, invariably chaired by the Foreign Secretary, attended by all Secretary, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries & Directors in this Ministry is held every month.

As these two methods, described above, when fully evolved will optimize the interaction between Headquarters and Missions abroad, it is not considered necessary at this stage to issue on this specific recommendation any separate circular. The text of the recommendation was circulated to Missions abroad, along with texts of other recommendations in a comprehensive circular letter.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/80 dated 1-9-1980]

Recommendation Sl. No. 30 (Para 3.52)

The Committee note that the Indian Ambassadors in countries belonging to recognisable political and regional groupings are required by the Ministry of External Affairs to circulate important pieces of information and analysis to their colleagues in the area. Notwithstanding such an obligation on the part of Ambassadors, the Committee are informed by a former diplomat that "there is a serious lack of constant dialogue amongst the Ambassadors of various regions". The Committee were surprised to learn from the Foreign Secretary during evidence that he was "not able to say who does or who does not do it. But we do encourage them to pool their judgment and assessment."

Reply of Government

The observation of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.I/735/1/79, dated 30-11-79]

(Para 3.53)

The Committee note that the Ministry realise the importance of a constant dialogue amongst the Heads of Missions of various regions. The Committee desire that the Ministry should advise and urge the Heads of Missions to write to one another on regular basis to exchange views and pool assessment on important matters and keep the Ministry concurrently informed to their exchanges.

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendations has been received with great benefit by all Heads of Divisions and Heads of Missions. A continuing dialogue between the Ministry and the Missions and also the Ministries of Government has continuously taken place. It will be our effort to expand and intensify this dialogue.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-1980.]

Please furnish a copy of the instructions issued to the Missions in pursuance of the recommendation of the Committee.

Reply of Government

A copy of the letter forwarding, *inter-alia*, this recommendation of the Committee is attached. (Appendix I)

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts./735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 36 (Para 4.31)

The Committee are informed that the training programme of IFS probationers includes a 4 months basic programme of training at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie along with the officers of other All India Services, training in the various divisions of the Ministry of External Affairs, attachment to the economic Ministries, State Trading Corporation, Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation, Trade Development Authority, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade and Finally attachment to the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Indian Council of Cultural Relations and Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training. This training programme is completed within a period of 2 years whereafter the probationers are posted abroad for language training or given foundational course at Jawaharlal Nehru University prior to intensive training abroad.

Reply of Government

The Committee's observations have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

(Para 4.32)

An expert in international affairs has opined that "the kind of training of Indian Foreign Service Officers get is too sterile and too much oriented towards their career, rather than towards becoming important listening posts or initiators of policy". According to the Ministry the training of IFS officers is not oriented towards career planning in the narrow sense but towards professionalism. The Committee would like the Ministry to take note of the feelings of outside authorities in this regard and so orient the training programme that, instead of remaining obsessed with their career advancement, the IFS officers are motivated to play an active role in the evolution of the country's foreign policy and in advancing the country's interest abroad.

Reply of Government

The Ministry is grateful for the detailed thought that the Committee has given to the matter and will try to benefit from the idea.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Recommendation Sl. No. 37 (Para 4.33)

A former diplomat has stated that most of the IFS probationers who come with urban background and are educated through English-medium school have little knowledge of the history and culture of their country. He has suggested that during training the probationers should be given basic knowledge about history, principal religions and cultural streams, of India so that when abroad they can speak on these subjects with some knowledge. The Committee recommend that, as agreed to by the Ministry, the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration should be asked to enlarge the syllabus for the training of IFS/IAS officers in the light of this suggestion. The Ministry should also prescribe books on Indian History, Indian Culture and religions for compulsory study during their training period in India so that prior to their proceeding abroad they become fully aware of the Indian heritage and culture.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agree with the proposal and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations have been asked to draw up a list of suitable books which could be prescribed for compulsory study on Indian History, Culture and Religions.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980]

Please state whether the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration has been asked to enlarge the Syllabus for the training of IFS/IAS Officers in the light of the Committee's recommendation.

Further Reply of Government

The Indian Council of Cultural Relations has recommended a list of 31 books which they consider suitable for inclusion in the syllabus for compulsory study of IFS/IAS officers in the Lal Bahadur National Academy of Administration, in the context of the recommendation of the Estimates Committee. This list has been forwarded with the Ministry's recommendations to the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussorie.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80].

Recommendation Sl. No. 38 (Para 4.34)

It has been suggested by a former diplomat that there should be examination and tests after each year of training and only after passing all of them a probationer should be confirmed in the service. The Ministry have stated that departmental examinations in accounts and Hindi are already prescribed for IFS officers and only on passing these examinations

also language examinations can an officer be confirmed in service. The Committee are informed that the Ministry are examining a proposal to introduce more departmental examinations which would be essential requirements before confirmation. The Committee would like that the proposal to introduce more departmental examinations should be finalised expeditiously and all the probationers should be required to pass the examinations before being considered for confirmation.

Reply of Government

The proposal to introduce appropriate departmental examinations during the course of training received by young IFS officers has already been implemented.

Earlier, there were three departmental examinations that the officers were required to clear, before being confirmed in the Service-Hindi, Accounts and in the compulsory foreign language. The 1978 batch of Foreign Service Officers have now to pass in addition to the above mentioned three examinations, six more departmental examinations. The subjects of these examinations are foreign trade, international relations, international law, administration, protocol and consular, passport & visa work. Moreover all Divisions/Institutes have been asked to make their assessment of the performance of each probationer, and to report their assessments to us.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Recommendation Sl. No. 39 (Para 4.35)

A former Foreign Secretary has suggested that the IFS probationers should be required to pay more attention to the study of international problems and initiated in analysing the domestic and international political developments. In the basis of day-to-day news, the probationers should be required to write reports on India's relations with her neighbouring countries, the policies of the super powers, major international problems and India's economic stakes with the individual countries and in the international fields in order to inculcate in them habit of applying their minds to political and economic problems. The Committee welcome this suggestion and desire the Ministry to give it a concrete shape and include it in the training programme of the probationers.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agrees with the proposal and have requested the Jawaharlal Nehru University, which is responsible for chalking out this part of the training course, to implement the proposal.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Recommendation Sl. No. 41 (Para 4.37)

The Committee note that at present the Ministry do not have any system of Refresher Courses for IFS officers though the Foreign Secretary has admitted the need for such courses. If a special training cell is set up in the Ministry itself, as suggested above, this cell can also organise Refresher Courses for the IFS officers.

Reply of Government

The recommendation is connected with the recommendation contained in para 4.36 of the Report, and the Ministry has taken note of it.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980].

The Committee desired the Ministry to ensure that as far as possible Missions should be headed by officers knowing the local language and where the Head of Mission did not know the main language, the next Junior officer must know that. The Committee also desired to be apprised of the action taken by the Ministry in the matter. The Ministry's reply is silent about the action taken by them for implementation of the Committee's recommendation.

Please state the concrete action taken/proposed to be taken for implementation of the Committee's recommendation.

Further Reply of Government

As far as possible, this recommendation of the Committee is kept in view while appointing Heads of Missions. For obvious reasons, its total implementation is not possible in our diplomatic service, or in any other, due to logistical, administrative, political and personnel reasons.

[Ministry of External Affairs OM No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80].

Recommendation Sl. No. 44 (Para 4.60)

The Committee feel that the Ministry have been following an irrational posting policy not warranted by requirement of the missions as is borne out by the fact that in as many as 44 countries, neither the Heads of Indian Missions nor the next junior officers know the languages of the countries, to which they are accredited. The list of these 44 countries includes important countries like Bangladesh, Cuba, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Soudia Arabia, Turkey, Vietnam and Yugoslavia. Out of 100 Heads of Indian Missions, only 27 know the language of the country concerned. Out of 26 officers of the rank of Counsellor/First Secretary in our Missions in West Asia, only 3 know the local languages; out of 4 such officers in Latin America, only one knows the language; and out of 5 officers in French speaking African countries also, only one knows the language. What surprises the Committee is that even when the lack of knowledge of the main local language is so widespread among Heads of Missions and other senior officers, the Ministry smugly think that "our missions are not very seriously being handicapped on account of want of linguistic expertise". The Committee cannot but strongly regret this complacent attitude on the part of the Ministry in this vital matter. The Committee would like the Ministry to remedy the situation without delay so as to ensure that as far as possible, Missions should be headed by officers knowing the local language and where the head of Mission does not know the main local language the next Junior Officer must know it. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in the matter.

Reply of Government

In principle and theory, the Committee's recommendation should be an objective for the Ministry. In practical terms however, to get an ideal solution of the problems involved in this regard will take considerable time, and much larger financial & manpower resources.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Recommendation SI No 45 (Para 4.61)

In the opinion of the Committee, proficiency in the language of the country of accreditation gives a tremendous advantage to the Heads of Missions and Senior Officers as then they can watch and serve the national interest in the country of their accreditation with much greater success. The knowledge of language should therefore be an important consideration while deciding postings of Foreign Service Officers abroad. As in the case of UK and as experienced by former diplomats who appeared before the Committee, officers with specialised language qualifications should spend quite some-time of their service in countries of the respective languages. The Foreign Secretary has also agreed that, even under the system of rotation in posting, the officers should, after sometime, go back to the regions whose languages they have learnt. The Committee strongly feel that there is need for the posting policy to be so modified that Foreign Service Officers are allotted to groups of countries according to the languages of their specialisation and rotated and kept within the same language region for maximum period. If it becomes necessary to post an officer for a particular language group to another region to enable him to have more broad-based experience or for some other compelling reason, it should be ensured that when he has moved out of mission, the mission is left with enough language expertise at equivalent level or he is succeeded by one who knows the language and that he comes back to his language region before long. Besides serving the national interest, this will help the officers to keep up their proficiency in the foreign languages learnt by them at great public expense.

Reply of Government

In nothing this recommendation the Ministry cannot but be impressed by its idealism. Our effort has to be to ensure that as the Foreign Service expands and grows this ideal is attained to the extent possible.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980]

The Committee had recommended that the posting policy should be so modified that Foreign Service Officers were allotted to groups of countries according to the languages of their specialisation and rotated and kept within the same language region for maximum period. The Ministry's reply is silent about the action taken by them on the recommendation of the Committee.

Please indicate the concrete action taken/proposed to be taken by the Ministry for implementation of Committee's recommendation.

Further Reply of Government

While the Ministry is entirely in agreement with the spirit of the recommendations, its satisfactory implementation would be possible only at a future date, once the Foreign Service has expanded sufficiently, making it possible to have greater specialisation in postings. To the extent practicable and possible, the Ministry hastens to add, it is already implementing this recommendation of the Committee.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80].

Recommendation SI No 46 (Para 4.82)

The Committee regret to note that there has been stagnation in promotions in the various grades of IFS(B) and this fact has been recognised by the Ministry. The Ministry are reported to have introduced selection scale in various grades of IFS(B), to mitigate to a very limited extent, the frustration resulting from stagnation. The Committee suggest that this matter should receive more serious consideration of the Ministry and ways found to remove stagnation wherever it exists in IFS(B).

Reply of Government

A Cadre Review of the entire IFS(B) Service has already been initiated on the basis of the general guidelines issued by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms to rationalise Cadre structures and reform cadre management. The Cadre Review Committee for IFS(B) was constituted in 1978 under the Chairmanship of the Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs, with representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms on the Committee. The terms of reference of the Committee include an examination of the structure and composition of IFS(B) Cadre's to project the personnel requirements in various grades over the next five years; to recommend remedial measures for streamlining the Cadre in order to eliminate stagnation at various levels. The Committee has had three sittings so far, and proposals based on its recommendations are in the process of finalisation for consideration and eventual approval of the Government.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-1979]

Recommendation SI No 47 (Para 4.83)

It has been represented to the Committee by the Staff Council that there are disparities in service conditions of IFS(A) and IFS(B) officers doing the same or similar types of jobs. It is stated that an officer of IFS(B) on appointment as Attache abroad is not given representational grant. An IFS(A) officer working as Under Secretary after 2 years service is reportedly posted abroad as First Secretary whereas an IFS(B) officer in similar position has to wait for 6 years for a similar appointment. There are disparities alleged in the matter of outfit allowance, foreign allowance, baggage allowance insurance, special home leave etc. From the reply given by the Ministry, it is seen that officers of Grade I of IFS(B) holding representational posts in Missions abroad enjoy 'almost similar' privileges as the members of IFS(A). The Ministry have also stated that the facilities enjoyed by officers of IFS(B) discharging representational duties abroad are also almost similar" to those admissible to officer of IFS(A).

The Ministry have not explained why the privileges and facilities of IFS(B) are "almost similar" and not "exactly similar" to those IFS(A) officers, when the officers of the two branches perform similar jobs. The Committee do not see any reason to discriminate allowances and facilities vis-a-vis IFS(A) officers. The rights, allowances and facilities of officers should be related to the duties discharged by the officers of the two services IFS(A) and (B) — and not to the category of service from which they are drawn. The Committee would like the Ministry to review all the discriminating rules and practices and ensure that officers performing similar duties and holding similar posts are treated equally in the matter of postings, allowances and facilities regardless of whether they belong to IFS(A) or IFS(B). The Committee would also suggest that IFS(PLCA) Rules 1961 may also be reviewed with a view to meet the requirements of the present situation.

Reply of Government

The disparity in these matters in the Foreign Service is of a much lesser & lower degree than in almost any other comparable service of the Government.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-1979]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-1980].

The Committee has recommended that the Ministry should review all the discriminating rules and practices and ensure that officers performing similar duties and holding similar posts were treated equally in the matter of postings, allowances and facilities regardless of whether they belong to IFS(A) or IFS(B). The Committee also suggested that IFS(PLCA) Rules, 1961 may be reviewed with a view to meeting the requirements of the present situation. The Ministry's reply does not indicate any action taken on the above recommendation of the Committee.

Please state the action taken/proposed to be taken on the recommendation of the Committee.

Futher Reply of Government

This Ministry would like to point out that officers performing similar duties and holding similar post are treated equally in the matter of postings, allowances and facilities, regardless of whether they belong to IFS(A) or IFS(B). In the Foreign Service, as in other service, certain discrepancies and disparities have crept in and exist due to historical reasons. A systematic efforts has been made by the Ministry to weed this out, and to streamline and improve its administrative and financial policies and targets, so as to reduce and finally eliminate such disparities. The Ministry feels that as of today in such matters it is ahead of all other comparable services of the Government. The Ministry would further like to assure the Estimates Committee that the spirit of this recommendation is being kept in mind before finalising any proposal/scheme or regulation seeking to rationalise the administrative and financial practices of this Ministry.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/80, dated 1-9-80].

Recommendation Sl. No. 51 (Para 5.57)

The Committee are informed that the facilities provided by Missions to Indian visiting a country depend on the requirements of various categories of visitors and the resources available to the mission. They render assistance to tourists, businessmen, exporters, students, experts and officials. In countries where large communities of Indians are settled, the Indian Missions have appropriately strengthened consular sections which keep watch over the general problems which Indians might face and give them all possible assistance in solving their problems and promoting their welfare. All the Missions have been instructed by the Ministry to extend all possible facilities to Indian visitors coming to the Missions and be courteous in their dealing with visitors.

Reply of Government

The Committee's observations have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79].

(Para 5.58)

The Committee are distressed at the very shabby treatment reportedly meted out to two of the leaders of a group of visiting Indian doctors to a country in Europe (para 5.38). That an Indian Ambassador could be so "arrogant" to the leaders, as to pack them off in unceremoniously and peremptorily is difficult to imagine. The behaviour of a senior official of the Mission was much worse. He not only refused to call a taxi for them to enable them to go back but added insult to injury by asking them to go out in the street in pouring rain and "hail a passing cab". He, however, condescended to offer a few newspaper sheet to the leaders to cover their heads in rain. There can be no justification whatsoever for such discourteous and unhelpful attitude as is alleged to have been displayed by the Heads of the Mission and the senior officer. What has pained the Committee more is that the Ministry have not expressed even a word of regret over these incidents nor offered to investigate the matter. The Committee cannot too strongly deplore the attitude of the Ministry and conduct of the Mission's officers. They would like incidents to be enquired into and action taken against the officers concerned.

Reply of Government

The Ministry wish to put on record their regret on any substantiated incidents of this type brought out to the attention of the Committee. The Ministry has already addressed all Missions, especially the Heads of Missions, in general way; they agree that it would be much better to send more specific individual instruction to erring missions. That could be done only if the Estimates Committee are prepared to share, on a confidential basis, the details of the alleged incidents. Such reports can be investigated only on the basis of specific information.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79].

Recommendation Sl. No. 52 (Para 5.59)

An association of Indians in UK has complained of discourteous behaviour of Officials of the Indian High Commission towards Indians. It has stated that when Indians "happen" to visit India House, they find the whole atmosphere disregardful, unconcerned, repulsive and hierarchical". The association has further stated that social relationship by the Mission in India is good with those Indians who are rich, influential and literate; it is bad with those who are "needy, unresourceful and illiterate". "Workers' Organisations", it is stated, "are very often ignored by the Mission". While denying all other charges, the Ministry have agreed to investigate the charge that workers' Organisations are ignored by the Mission. Another memorandum has referred to the "most discourteous" behaviour of reception staff (mostly local girls) to Indian Visitors who are not so well-to-do looking. The requests for renewal of passports etc., are "met with suspicion which reflects in their unfriendly behaviour". All this makes a very painful reading. The Ministry have denied these allegations. The Indian High Commission, London, has stated (1978) since the present High Commissioner took charge it has made very major effort to establish close contacts with the Indian community and the various Indian Organisations. The Ministry have invited the attention of the Committee to the instructions issued to Heads of Missions as late as September, 1977 to the effect that "our officials should demonstrably show greater courtesy and spirit of helpfulness in their dealings with Indians as well as foreigners". But mere instructions are not enough. These have to be observed in actual practice if good image has to be built up.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79].

(Para 5.60)

The Ministry should make it clear to all the Indian Missions in unmistakable terms that they are not there to serve only the affluent persons with influence or status; they are duty bound to show every Indian, regardless of status, in fact every visitor, equal respect and consideration. The Mission officials should not have two different standards of behaviour—suave and sweet for foreigners or affluent Indians and sour and stand of fish for others. Courtesy and hospitality are essential characteristics of Indian ethos and any officer who lacks these qualities is not fit to be posted abroad. That an Indian national should be slighted abroad by none other than the Mission of one's own country is too much to swallow. It is, the right of every Indian to be greeted with warmth and treated with courtesy and any lapse on the part of any mission official anywhere should be viewed seriously. It should be the personal responsibility of Head of Mission to inculcate a spirit of service and sense of discipline amongst the officials and spare no effort to build up a shining image of friendliness for his mission. Needless to say, this would be possible only if the Head himself sets an example to be emulated by his colleagues.

Reply of Government

As advised by the Estimates Committee, the Ministry has already made it clear to all Missions that courtesy and hospitality must characterise their dealings with all Indians. The need to give uniformly and consistently

continuous attention to be all Indian Nationals irrespective of their economic and social status has also been re-emphasised.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980.]

Please supply a copy of the instructions issued to the Indian Missions abroad, in pursuance of the implementation of the recommendation of the Committee.

A copy of the circular is attached. (Appendix II)

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80 dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 53 (Para 5.61)

It has been represented to the Committee that it is very rare that the Indian High Commission in UK comes to the rescue of Indians to save them from harassment and procedural delays at the hands of the British Immigration Officers. Indians, it is stated, are so disappointed with the High Commission that very few Indians take the trouble of contacting the mission at the time of difficulty. The Ministry have stated that the account of procedural difficulties faced by Indians and the alleged indifference of the Indian High Commission is "exaggerated". The High Commission, it is stated, has taken up with the British authorities every instance of harassment that has come to its notice. The Ministry have intimated that they would ask every aggrieved Indian visitor to send in a written complain with full particulars either to the Ministry or to the Indian High Commission for suitable follow-up action. This is good so far as it goes but Indians would feel encouraged to avail themselves of this offer only if the High Commissioner demonstrates its sincerity in actual practice. The Committee feel that there is a great need for the Indian High Commission in UK to build up a new image of friendliness amongst the Indian visitors and residents. This will be possible only if it promptly comes to the rescue of Indian visitors and settlers in their difficulties and makes it known to them publicly that it will do so. The Committee would like to be informed of the special steps taken by the High Commission in this regard.

Reply of Government

The High Commission were instructed on the lines of Committee's views. They have assured the Ministry that they have taken all necessary steps.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79].

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-80.]

Please supply a copy of the instructions issued to Indian High Commissioner in U.K. and indicate the steps taken by them in pursuance of the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

Further Reply of Government

The High Commission has already taken action to implement the Committee's recommendations as mentioned below :

- (a) The category of persons who can attest passport photographs has been broadened and the High Commission started authorising two top office-bearers of well established organisations to do such attestation. The procedure for the grant of passport has been further streamlined than in the past and expeditious grant of passport facilities in emergency cases has been made as a rule.
- (b) Verification of the non-acquisition of British Citizenship, which earlier required documentary substantiation from the British Home Office, is now being done by High Commission itself.
- (c) The procedure regarding the addition of surname in the passport has been liberalised and the High Commission has started accepting advertisements about changes of names in Indian language newspapers in U.K.
- (d) The practice of asking for stamped/registered envelopes from applicants has also been done away with. While rules and standing instructions have to be kept in view in processing applications, steps have been taken to reduce red-tapism. There is a regular system of sending acknowledgements of applications and interim replies. Internal supervision has also been tightened in order to ensure more courteous, quick and efficient service and minimise chances of harassment and corruption. In the recent past many Indians had expressed appreciation of these measures and their impact.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80, dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl: No. 54 (Para 5.62)

In referring to the Indian High Commission in U.K. and a country in Europe, the Committee do not suggest that these two Missions are singularly poor in dealing with Indians visiting those countries or residing there. They have referred to the Indian High Commission in U.K. and the Embassy in a country in Europe merely because instances of ill-treatment, lack of courtesy that came to their notice in these cases were more poignant. Other Embassies/High Commissions also suffer from such lapses and the Committee would like them also to improve.

Reply of Government

The Committee's general comments have been noted and brought to the attention of all other Missions too.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79].

Recommendation Sl. No. 55 (Para 5.63)

A feeling seems to prevail that senior Mission Officers are not easily accessible and meeting with a Head of Mission is extremely difficult. The Ministry have admitted that "..... it is very difficult for the senior officers in our Mission abroad to see each and every individual who approaches the Mission for various types of assistance." This is unfortunate. The Committee strongly feel that the Head of a Mission should himself see a visitor if he receives a request to that effect and it should not be left to the Private Secretary to the Ambassador, to decide as to who can or cannot see the Ambassador. This should apply to other senior officers in the Missions also with greater force. The Committee note that instructions already exist providing for easy accessibility to Heads of Missions and other Members of the Missions. But if these are not being followed in letter and spirit, something more concrete is required to be done by the Ministry to salvage the reputation of the Indian Missions.

Reply of Government

All steps are being taken to ensure that Indian Missions abroad act in accordance with the observations and advice of the Committee; and wherever they are being unfairly blamed their reputation should be safeguarded.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi. D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 56 (Para 5.64)

The Committee are informed that normally Heads of Missions and other diplomatic officers meet Indian students and Indian Associations in the course of their local tours. The Committee endorse the suggestion made by a former diplomat that the Heads of Missions and other diplomatic officers should, at the end of each tour, submit a report to the Foreign Office on the problems of the Indians and how these can be solved.

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendation has been noted and action on it is being initiated.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79].

Recommendation Sl. No. 57 (Para 5.65)

The Committee welcome the suggestion made by a former diplomat and recommend that the Heads of Missions should invite leading Indian Scientists, engineers, Professors, businessmen etc., to an informal meet at the Embassy once a year and make arrangements for similar meets in various centres. As there is concentration of Indian experts and schools only in a few countries, it should not be difficult for the Ministry to evolve a mechanism to put this idea into practice. It will be a short sighted view to resist this suggestion just because it will involve a little expenditure.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have taken note of this recommendation and brought it to the attention of all Indian Missions. By and large, the Ministry believes, most Indian Missions are doing this except in those capitals where numerically the concentration of Indian scholars is a very large one. There instead

of a once-a-year meet we find that Head of Mission and other officers entertain them all-round the year, often ignoring the locals, in view of limited resources.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 58 (Para 5.66)

It has been suggested to the Committee by a former diplomat that each of our Missions should prepare a booklet for the guidance of Indian Visitors stating therein the nature of assistance available from the Missions, local Customs and manners, special features of the country and information on other important topics. The Ministry have stated that our Missions abroad have prepared fact sheets which contain information useful for Indian Official and Non-Official delegations going abroad and that Indian Visitors going abroad on their own as tourist may obtain "information" of tourist interest from the Missions. In the opinion of the Committee, supply of 'oral' information to Indian tourists is not enough. The Missions should supply to Indian tourists, on demand, copies of "Fact-Sheets" containing all kinds of useful information required by a tourist in Foreign Country.

Reply of Government

This is a very useful suggestion. The Ministry have already a sample ready, and intend to implement the Scheme at an early date.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 59 (Para 5.67)

The Committee would also commend the suggestion made by a former diplomat that our Missions abroad should have for free distribution handy brochures on India in local languages giving factual information on different aspects of Indian life alongwith a good and handy map of India. The Ministry appear to think that this is a job which should primarily be done by the Department of Tourism through their Tourist Offices abroad. While Tourist Offices abroad should no doubt supply such brochures to foreign tourists, our Missions abroad also have a duty towards tourists in this regard. The Indian Missions abroad would do well to arrive at an arrangement with the Tourist Offices to keep copies of such brochures in the Missions also and supply them to the tourists on demand.

Reply of Government

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation and appropriate action is under way.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 60 (Para 5.68)

In regard to the suggestion for supply of a printed list of our Missions with telephone numbers of passport seekers at the time of issuing passports the Ministry have stated that as nearly 2 million passports are issued every year, the acceptance of this suggestion would involve considerable expenditure to the Government. The Ministry have further stated that lists of India's representatives abroad can be kept in the Regional Passport Offices

for consultation by the passport holders and this would meet the requirements of Indian visiting abroad. The Committee agree that it may not be necessary to give a printed list of our Missions abroad to all the passport seekers in India as, first, all of them may not need it and secondly, it will cause a heavy drain on national exchequer. The Committee, however, feel that the Ministry may examine the feasibility of making such a list available on sale to those passport holders who may be ready to pay for it.

Reply of Government

The Ministry are examining the feasibility. The guidebook drawn in pursuance of the recommendation made under para 5.66 of the Report will contain this information.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 60 (Para 5.68)

The Committee feel that the suggestion that the Indian Missions abroad should have some liaison committees with leading selected from among Indian citizens abroad to acquaint the Heads of Missions about day-to-day problems faced by Indian merits consideration. It will be wrong for the Ministry to resist this suggestion on the ground of financial constraints. This is an idea which can, in the opinion of the Committee, be put into practice without much difficulty.

Reply of Government

All Heads of Missions are being requested, in the spirit of this recommendation, to assess the feasibility, according to local situation, of getting the local Indian Association to provide such a liaison group and to use it for the purpose outlined.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 63 (Para 6.62)

The Committee are informed that the External Publicity Division in the Ministry of External Affairs is responsible for projection of India's true image abroad through the diplomatic missions all over the world by coordinating all publicity activities of concerned Ministries of the Government of India. The External Publicity Division keeps in constant touch with the designated officers in every mission who have been assigned publicity work. These Officers, under the direction of Heads of Missions, maintain liaison with mass media organisations like newspapers, radio and television etc. and issue news bulletins and feature articles to keep the mass media channels fully informed about India's achievements and developmental activities.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 63 (Para 6.63)

In the opinion of a former diplomat "far too much of the material (issued by the Ministry) contradicts or is at variance with what these countries obtain through their own missions or agencies in India—". The former diplomat suggested that "Instead of trying to peddle official handouts of this nature, we would do better to concentrate on spreading circulation of our regular non-official papers, journals, periodicals etc. and on sponsoring visits of Indians chosen for their knowledge and capacity to act as spokesman of various aspects of our national life." The Ministry have stated that while a limited number of non-official newspapers are circulated to those who express a desire to receive them there has not been any scheme under which lecture visits by knowledgeable Indians to selected areas to project a better image of India could be arranged. The Committee feel that this is an area in which the Ministry should pay more attention. The Ministry should draw up a scheme in consultation with ICCR, to sponsor special lecture visits and to avail of the services of knowledgeable Indians, who may happen to go abroad on their own, to create better understanding of Indian view point; the later arrangement would not cost much.

Reply of Government

Action on the same lines is already being taken on a continuing basis by the I.C.C.R., Diplomatic Missions etc. It is our expectation to refine and improve upon the system.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 64 (Para 6.64)

An Indian settled in America holds the view that "the stereotype that is repeated again and again is of India that is a land of hungry, illiterate masses that used constant help." He has suggested that "the dignity and quality of life of the average Indian must be shown to be as of equal importance as India's many other achievements." He has stated that official communication channels of Indian missions lack in making an adequate, proper and timely presentation of India to refute the negative comments of the foreign media. The Ministry have claimed that though Indian publicity posts abroad make continuous efforts to project a correct image of India, they have "no control over the foreign media which goes invariably for the sensational." The Committee have no reason to doubt that our missions must be doing their best in the field of publicity abroad but the question is whether their best is good enough to create an impression on foreign media. The Committee feel that there is need and scope to intensify the publicity efforts and change the style and substance of our presentations so as to convincingly project a correct image of India abroad. Our publicity material should be specially prepared and designed not only to the foreign media but also for the people and institutions who matter, including the younger generation who are free of old prejudices and can be much more receptive and responsive.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79, Dt. 30-11-79.]

Reply of Government

The Ministry is fully aware of the fact that external publicity is a highly competitive business and that our missions should spare no effort in projecting abroad a balanced image of our country.

Through their regular printed publications, the Missions do attempt to present the various aspects of Indian life and society, the country's economy and politics, its rich cultural heritage, its industries and democratic institutions. Through the news bulletins, foreign readers are informed of the latest political and economic developments in the country.

These and the publications brought out from headquarters are being constantly improved so as to make them more attractive for a larger leadership.

The External Publicity Division of the Ministry of External Affairs is preparing a booklet *India-An Introduction*, comprising information of a general nature on Indian history, culture, art development planning, agriculture, and various other facts of our national life. It is hoped that this book will meet the requirements of young readers abroad.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 66 (Para 6.66)

The Committee also welcome the suggestion made by a former Foreign Secretary that a pictorial magazine containing information and illustrations on cultural, social, political and economic aspects of Indian life should be regularly brought out and supplied to Members of Parliament, important journals and other media, universities, public libraries, Chambers of Commerce etc.

Reply of Government

The Committee's suggestion/recommendation has been noted. The Chanchal Sarkar Committee had made the same suggestion. The production. The production cost of such a magazine is bound to be pretty formidable, but the suggestion is being examined in detail.

The Ministry has in the meantime been revamping the Indian and Foreign Review with superior printing paper, colour photographs and excellent reproductions of paintings and articles on a variety of subjects from literature to industry and poetry to international affairs. The print order has been recently increased to cope with the growing demand for this journal.

The French language version of the journal is also intended to be revamped. Necessary steps are being taken in this regard.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 69 (Para 6.69)

The Committee are informed that out of more than one hundred Missions and Posts abroad only a few bring out regular printed magazines/periodicals. The other Missions/Posts bring out cyclostyled bulletins. Publicity material in a particular language is printed at one or two places and distributed to the Missions in countries speaking the same language. The External Publicity Division produces publicity material of general nature while individual Missions bring out publications having special interest and appeal to the people of each country or region. The Committee are informed that the Ministry are examining the question of overlapping and duplication in printing magazines/periodical in an overall perspective to consider how far this can be avoided and economy effected. The Committee would like that an early decision to be taken in the matter and the steps taken to avoid duplication and over-lapping intimated to the Committee.

Reply of Government

As many as 20 missions and posts regularly bring out printed magazines and periodicals. Most of the periodicals are printed in languages other than English, that is in local language. The material in the periodicals is tailored to the needs of the particular country where the periodicals are distributed.

The Ministry is examining the possibility of setting up regional production centres which would be provided facilities for undertaking productions in selected languages. The production centres will orientate the material in the publications according to the needs and special interest of the people in the region.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M No 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-80.

Please state the result of the examination by the Ministry on the question of overlapping and duplication in printing Magazines/periodicals etc.

Further Reply of Government

24 publications are already being brought out by 20 of our Missions and Posts. Production of material naturally is according to local needs, compulsions and requirements. Of the 24 publications, 2 are weeklies and the rest either monthlies or quarterlies.

2. The Ministry is trying to organise a Special Editorial Board with staff, equipment and translators at Headquarters itself for producing publicity material in languages which are printed in the Roman Script and Urdu. This will ensure central coordination in the publication of journals suitable, for different regions of the world. The production of journals in Arabic and Russian will continue abroad under improved staff supervision and facilities.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 70 (Para 6.70)

The Committee feel that to keep our Missions informed concurrently of the developments in India and also in view of the great demand for Indian newspaper in Foreign Capitals, Indian newspapers should be sent to all Indian Missions and posts abroad without delay. The Ministry should make an arrangement with the Air-India that Mission which are located at places covered by Air-India flights, should receive daily papers daily or at the latest on the following day. If the newspapers cannot reach a place on the same day of the following day, these will lose importance and the Missions and others may also lose interest in them.

Reply of Government

Many of our neighbouring missions and those in the Gulf get, through local agencies, Indian dailies the same day or the next. In respect of our Missions located far-away and where Air-India flies only once or twice a week, our diplomatic bag is the most convenient and quickest service for

sending Indian newspapers and journals to our missions. Our dailies reaching a number of our missions a few days late, is unavoidable, as the Air India services do not so far cover the entire globe.

Every effort is being made to utilise the transport channels available to despatch Indian newspapers to destinations abroad. In some capitals, where there is a sizeable number of Indian students and expatriates, special arrangements have been made to send and supply a variety of Indian newspapers and magazines.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 71 and 72 (Para 6.71)

The Committee are informed that the External Services of All India Radio broadcast programmes which are heard in some areas where our Missions tune in to the broadcasts for knowing about the developments in India and filling in information gaps. The Ministry have admitted that "the External Services broadcasts are not clearly audible in quite a few areas for want of powerful transmitters." From a report of audibility condition from a cross section of our Missions abroad, it is seen that out of 32 places covered by this report, in as many as 28 places our external broadcasts are admittedly "poor" "not satisfactory", "not clear", "not audible", etc. The Foreign Secretary admitted that "if external service cannot be heard, it is not worthwhile". The Foreign Secretary stated that setting up of more powerful transmitters was under the consideration of Government. The All India Radio would require about 10 to 12 powerful transmitters. Tenders have been invited for two such transmitters and the purchase will be completed very soon. The entire project would require a financial outlay of Rs. 230 crores and the Planning Commission are having some difficulty in sanctioning expenditure of that order for this project. The Committee would like that the Ministries of External Affairs and Information and Broadcasting should draw up a phased programme to instal powerful transmitters for external broadcasts and implement them according to the programme. In the opinion of the Committee, the Government have an obligation towards millions of Indians scattered all over the world who remit huge amounts of foreign exchange but starve for radio news and programmes from India and this obligation should be discharged, sooner than later. The Committee were told by the Ministry that the External Service broadcasts also beamed to certain areas newscasts at dictation speed which can easily be taken down by our Missions abroad for further use. Subsequently the Ministry state that the External Services Division of All India Radio have clarified that they do not broadcast dictation speed news bulletins in their external broadcasts. These two contradictory statements show the lack of coordination of the Ministry of External Affairs with the All India Radio. This is regrettable.

Reply of Government

The Ministry is conscious of the fact that for a country like India, it is essential to have a comprehensive and effective external service in its broadcasting system. The AIR External Services are not everywhere heard all that satisfactorily simply because our transmitters are not as powerful as they ought to be. It is understanding that, following a Cabinet directive, two 250 Kw transmitters are in the process of being installed shortly, and that installation of a few more powerful transmitters is under active consideration. All this falls within the purview and responsibility of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Ministry of External Affairs has already indicated to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting the countries/targets in order of importance and priority and also the prime listening hours for these countries/targets. Ministry of External Affairs too is in constant touch with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regarding the orientation and content of AIR's external broadcast.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-80]

Please state whether the phased programme, to instal powerful transmitter for external broadcasts, has been drawn up by the Ministries of External Affairs and Information and Broadcasting, as recommended by the Committee. If so, what are its details?

The Ministry is conscious of the fact that for a country like India it is essential to have comprehensive and effective external service in its broadcasting system. We understood from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting that following a Cabinet directive, two 250 KWS transmitters are to be installed soon and further installation of a few more powerful transmitters is under active consideration.

2. This Ministry has already indicated to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, the countries/targets in order of importance and priority as also the peak listening hours of these countries. A high level inter-ministerial group is organising the thrust of overseas broadcasting and taking decisions about allocating priorities for the further acquisition of transmitters in a phased manner.

[Ministry of External Affairs OM No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 73 (Para 6-72)

The Committee note that the External Publicity Division was created with all its information personnel drawn originally from the Press Information Bureau. Later, professional journalists were recruited to fill the expanding vacancies. Subsequently, the Government held the view that the requirement of external publicity were quite distinct from those of publicity at home and that the information officers recruited for the Central Information Service could not be suitable for external publicity. It was then decided to stop recruitment to information posts from the open field and future vacancies were filled by Officers of Indian Foreign Service. The Pillai Committee held the view that "it is the duty of the Foreign Service to develop this expertise (publicity and public relations) within its own rank through careful and sustained programme of training and career planning." Foreign Secretary welcome the suggestion that in Indian Foreign Service itself a separate specialised sub-branch should be thought of right from recruitment and training stages and officers should be trained for special disciplines within the range of Indian Foreign Service. He added that "that is what we are trying to do. People who have that kind of professional capability, potentiality and that kind of personality which makes them suitable for such work, they are being chosen as it were for this sort of assignment." But from the Chanchal Sarkar Committee's report, it appears that the training being imparted to IFS

Officers to handle information work is not at all satisfactory. The Chanchal Sarkar Committee has come to the conclusion that "there is no recognition of the special nature of skill in information work and of the indispensable need for special training. A general IFS training spiced with a few days at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication is totally inadequate. Even that now has been discontinued." This shows how half-heartedly the Ministry are dealing with this matter. While it is a good idea to train IFS Officers for information work, the Ministry should remember that not every officer may have in him the makings of an information officer. If the Ministry wish to succeed in their experiment to man the Information and Publicity Wings through IFS Officers they would have to select the right type of persons from the Foreign Service with suitable aptitude and background right from the beginning and give them special training to equip them to do this work in international field. Not only this. As the information work may be much less glamorous and prestigious than the other assignments within the reach of Foreign Service Officers, the Ministry would also have to think of some incentive scheme to attract good officers for information work and hold them on to the information wing without letting them feel frustrated.

Reply of Government

The Ministry recognises the need for adopting a professional and intensive training programme for IFS officers in the field of information and publicity work. Admittedly this is an important field of work, and Government are now engaged in working out the mechanics, duration, content and cost of such a training programme.

Nobody concerned with diplomacy can make the error of regarding Information work "less glamorous and prestigious than other assignments." The Ministry is aware of the need to encourage those members of the service with special flair and aptitude for publicity work to opt specific call for this. More and more members of the service are now handling such work and both at headquarters and in missions abroad the proportion of IFS Officers doing information and PR work has been steadily growing.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 74 (Para 6.73)

The Committee further suggest that, having received specialised training at public expenses, the IFS Officers specially selected for Information Work should be kept on information and publicity desks for sufficiently long period which may not be less than eight years, as suggested by Chanchal Sarkar Committee, to enable them to make an impact and full use of their training.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agrees in principle with the observations of the Committee and has been trying to work in this spirit. However due to the small size of the service, it may not always be possible to ensure its implementation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 75 (Para 6.74)

The Committee have a feeling that in places of highly competitive environment like Washington, New York, London, if the impact has to be created on foreign media and opinion moulders the information desks may better be headed by professional and experienced journalists at least for sometime more till IFS Officers are able to acquire the necessary skill and experience. The Committee would like the Ministry to examine this matter dispassionately in the larger interest of the country.

Reply of Government

Fairly senior IFS Officers who have had a long background of Public Relations work in different Indian Missions abroad, are now looking after information and publicity work in the places mentioned by the Committee. Their performance has been found satisfactory; and they have been quick to establish useful contacts with all layers of the social and political spectrum in these places. Their functioning is being made more effective with support from headquarters to the extent required and possible within the available financial resources.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 76 (Para 6.75)

An important qualification of the Information and Publicity Officers is knowledge of the local language. Pillai Committee had also recommended that "Information Officers should concentrate on effective public relations; they should know the local language." The Foreign Secretary, conceding essentiality of this requirement, stated during evidence that "gradually we are trying to revert to sending Foreign Service Officers who have an aptitude for information work and who know the language of the country concerned." But the Committee regret to find that out of 65 Information Officers working in Missions abroad (1978), as many as 32 do not know the main language of the area in which they are posted. Four of the Officers know no foreign language and are posted in non-English areas. Even when Arabic and Persian knowing officers are available, the information desks in certain Arabic speaking countries and Tehran are manned by officers not knowing the local languages. The language inadequacy of Information Officers in certain areas is, according to the Chanchal Sarkar Committee, "outrageous". The Committee cannot but express their unhappiness at this utterly unsatisfactory state of affairs in Information Wings abroad, which is due, in large measure, to unimaginative deployment of trained officers by the Ministry. The Committee would like the Ministry to remedy the situation without delay.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agrees with the observations of the Committee that the posting of Information Officers to areas where they do not have a working knowledge of the language should be discouraged, especially when officers with language of those languages are available. Subject to administrative constraints, the Ministry would make every effort to post to those Missions only

such Information Officers who have a working knowledge of the language of the country.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 77 (Para 6.76)

The Chanchal Sarkar Committee has gone in depth into various aspects of the work relating to the external publicity by the External Publicity Division of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Information and Publicity Wing of the Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad. The Committee note the meaningful observation made by the Chanchal Sarkar Committee in their Report (Dec. 1978) that "The foreign information work is at a low ebb, waiting long for reformation and revitalisation". The Chanchal Sarkar Committee have made suggestions regarding doing away with dichotomy of IFS and ISI, training programmes, Rewrite desk, step-up in budgetary allocations, language proficiency among Information Officers publication of weekly anthology from Indian press and an illustrated monthly magazine, minimum duration of posting of IFS Officers on information work, setting up of coordinating body etc. The Committee would like the Government to finalise the line of action on these suggestions expeditiously and start implementation work without delay. They would like to be informed of the progress made in this regard within 6 months.

Reply of Government

The recommendations of the Chanchal Sarkar Committee have been examined by a Special Officer, who has throughout his career had first-hand knowledge and experience of external publicity. Action has also been initiated to implement this recommendation and the Ministry has accepted and is already carrying out the principle of interchangeability between members of the IFS and the remaining members of the ISI. For example, officers of ISI have been considered and accepted for being posted as Heads of Mission as also for political and commercial work. The Ministry hopes to continue to encourage this.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-80]

Please state that the action taken by the Ministry on the various recommendations of Chanchal Sarkar Committee in concrete and precise terms.

Further Reply of Government

After the General Elections earlier this year, the recommendations of the Chanchal Sarkar Committee were reviewed. It was felt that it may not be necessary to formally accepted and/or processed a number of these recommendations. Appropriate action to process and consider certain of the recommendations of the Committee, is being taken.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/80, Dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 78 (Para 7.42)

The Committee are informed that promotion of India's Commercial and Industrial interests abroad is one of the prime functions of our diplomatic mission. Missions disseminate latest commercial and industrial information among foreign business interests and function as 'eyes and ears' of our trade and industrial interests in public and private sectors. Missions maintain upto-date information on developments in India as also in the countries of their accreditation e.g. lists of exports and imports, names of leading exporters and importers, and other relative policies etc. Missions also maintain liaison with economic Ministries, public sectors organisations, consultancy bodies, Chambers of Commerce and Industry Export Promotion Councils, private sectors business houses etc.

Reply of Government

The observation of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 78 (Para 7.43)

The Committee have received representations from a number of commercial and industrial concerns expressing their dissatisfaction with the working of economic and commercial wings of our diplomatic missions abroad. An exporting concern from Madras has informed the Committee that it had written several letters to our Missions for supply of names and addresses of importers of certain items in their respective countries but it has 'invariably' received out-date lists. The proprietor of an exporting firm of Ahmedabad is stated to have come back disappointed with the treatment and performance of our missions in Copenhagen and Frankfurt. He has also complained of inordinate delay on the part of our Mission in Cuba in replying to his letter while an Allahabad concern requested our Mission in Nigeria for information about suitable parties who could act as agents for electronic computers and instruments, it is stated to have been supplied with list of dealers who dealt in "auto parts" and not "Electronic". The same concern spoke highly of the help and guidance it got from the Department of Trade and Industry of New Zealand whom it had approached direct. The Ministry, to whom all these complaints were referred, have tried to explain them away but their explanations are not very convincing. The Committee would not like to judge the efficiency of the Economic and Commercial wings of our Missions only by what the Ministry claim but also what the industrial and trading interests feel and say. Seen from this angle it cannot be said that the economic and commercial wings of our missions are doing their jobs to the complete satisfaction of all concerned. The Committee would be like to suggest that the Ministry should evolve a system whereby they can periodically elicit the views of trading, commercial and Industrial organisation in India on the functioning of our missions abroad and invite their suggestions for effecting improvement. Unless such a feedback is arranged the Ministry would not be able to know the weaknesses of our Missions. The Committee also suggest that regional meetings of heads of Commercial wings in our Diplomatic Missions should be held to enable them to take stock of the situation in each region and to benefit from one another's experience.

Reply of Government

The Observations of the Committee have been noted Greater and more frequent feedback material from the various Export Promotion Councils in

India and Chamber of the Commerce. Federation of Industry will be organised even than what we have been doing heretofore.

It may be mentioned that Ministry of Commerce over the last several years have, as a matter of policy, been holding regional meetings.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for from the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O. M. No. 19|2|EC|79 dated 15-3-1980.]

Please state whether any system has been evolved by the Ministry to elicit the views of the trading commercial and industrial organisations on the functioning of our Missions abroad, as recommended by the Committee.

Further Reply of Government

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee a circular has been issued to all Missions abroad and private and public sector undertakings organisations to elicit their views on the performance and possible improvement of our Missions both from organisational as well as the functional aspect.

A copy of circular is attached (Appendix III)

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/80, dated 1-9-80]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 45—48 of the Report - Chapter I

Recommendation Sl. No. 79 (Para 7.44)

Certain associations of Indian settled in Malaysia and Afghanistan have suggested creation separate trade and commercial wings in our missions in these countries to deal with the problems of Indian traders there. The Ministry have admitted that the Missions in these countries are under staff and the staff strength in economic and commercial sections requires to be augmented. The Committee would like the Ministry to review the working of economic and commercial sections in these and other similar missions and take necessary action to strengthen these sections in the interest of Indian International trade.

Reply of Government

The staff position of all our Missions is being reviewed so as to determine the optimum staff levels in each Mission. The requirements of the economic and commercial wings of the Missions are also being studied in depth. A study in this context is being carried out in consultation with the Missions as well as the Heads of the concerned Divisions at Headquarters. After the review is completed, appropriate action will be taken to provide adequate staff within the resources available, to all economic and commercial wings of our Missions.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 80 (Para 7.45)

Certain associations of Indians in Afghanistan and New York have suggested the issue and circulation of periodical trade bulletins in foreign countries to disseminate latest information about trade and other allied matters with a view to promoting Indian trade. The Committee comment this suggestion for the consideration of the Ministry.

Reply of Government

A circular letter has been sent to all our Missions (Commercial Wings) requesting them to let us have their suggestions on the issue and circulation of periodical trade bulletins.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O. M. No. 19|2|EC|79, dated 15-3-1980]

Please supply a copy of the circular letter stated to have been sent in the Commercial Wings of the Indian Missions on the issue and circulation of the periodical trade bulletins.

In this connection Ministry's circular (Appendix III) Recommendation No. 78, Paragraph 7.42 refers.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80 dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 86 (Para 8.23)

The Committee are informed that each Indian Diplomatic Mission/post has a Consular Section which processes applications for grant/renewal of Passport/Visas, etc. The prescribed time limit for issue/renewal of passports by mission is 24-48 hours and by and large missions adhere to this time limit. They have been informed that the maximum time taken by missions has not exceeded 72 hours except in a small number of complicated cases which required references to Central and State Governments in India. In such cases, the maximum time generally did not exceed 6 months. In the case of visas, the applications, are processed the same day and endorsements are issued in 2-3 hours.

Reply of Government

The observation of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

(Para 8.24)

The Committee have received a number of Complaints from Indians at home and abroad about the unsatisfactory nature of services rendered by Consular Sections of our Missions. According to one complaint the visas are not issued in time and requests for passports/visas "are met with suspicion which reflects in their unfriendly behaviour". Another complaint received from an association of Indians abroad speaks of "red tapism of intolerable extent" in Consular Sections which, in some cases, have taken "many Weeks" even to send acknowledgement. It has also been alleged that at certain places people have been forced to use the services of outside "agents" who have free access to Missions' officials.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

(Para 8.25)

An Association of Indians in USA has complained that the reception at the Consular Section of the Missions is "cold" and there is "bias in favour of non Indian visitors as opposed to Indian visitors" a former Diploma stated during evidence that "our visas and passport sections are not as well manned as they should be and that many of our Consular officers do not go out of their way to be very helpful". Even according to the information supplied by the Ministry themselves, missions at Dacca, Brussels, Vancouver, Paris, Accra, Bonn, Frankfurt, Tehran, Baghdad, Mozambique, Kuala Lumpur, Jeddah, Singapore, Dar-es-Salam, Dubai, New York and Thimpu, the time taken for issue and renewal of passports/visas has exceeded 72 hours in a number of cases. Even a former Foreign Secretary held the view that "visas have been a problem everywhere" and that the set up of the consular Section in various missions was 15 years old. He, however added that the situation had improved during the last 2 years. The Ministry have admitted that "facilities are inadequate in terms of physical dimension and appearances". They have stated that Indian missions in various countries have taken steps to simplify and appearances", streamline the procedure for the grant/renewal of passports and visas.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

(Para 8.26)

The Committee note that the Ministry have denied most of the allegations made against the Missions. But a mere denial by the Ministry is not enough to prove that all that the Indians at home and abroad have said about the efficiency and behaviour of the Consular Sections of our Missions abroad is untrue. What the Ministry may consider to be a "Warm" reception or a reception free of "bias in favour of non-Indians" may not actually be so to those who stand on the other side of the counter. In the opinion of the Committee the efficiency of the Consular Section is to be judged by the speed with which they issue or renew passports and visas and not by what the Missions' officials claim or smugly believe. The Committee would like the Ministry not to be carried away by the one-sided reports sent by the Missions but to find out independently what the Indians and non-Indians think of our Consular Services. Besides advising heads of Missions to take personal interest in the working of consular sections to ensure efficiency with courtesy in their dealings with visitors. The Ministry will do well to evolve a system of periodically inviting on a selective basis opinion of those persons, who have got passports visas issued through our Missions abroad, on the working efficiency of the Consular Sections and then take measures to improve consular services in the light of the replies. Unless it is done, the Ministry, the Committee fear, may never know the true picture.

Reply of Government

The Estimates Committee's comments and recommendations have been forwarded to all our Missions abroad for fashioning their future conduct in this matter in line with the Committee's recommendation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-80]

Please state the action taken by the Ministry in specific terms on the Committee's recommendation regarding evolving a system of periodically inviting on a selective basis, opinion of the people who get their passport/visas issued from our Missions abroad.

Reply of Government

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee PV Division have issued circular letter to all Heads of Missions/Posts with a proforma devised for the purpose of inviting comments from the general public who approach the Mission for consular services. This is being handed over twice a month. Missions are regularly forwarding to the Ministry the comments received by them.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/80, dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No 88 (Para 8.28)

According to an association of Indians in Hongkong the rules governing issue of passports to Indians in India should not be applied literally to overseas Indians and passport applications or renewal forms for overseas Indians should be revised as many of the questions which apply to Indians in India are not applicable to Indians abroad. The Ministry have stated that the rules, and applications forms are prescribed under the Passport Act, 1967 and Passport Rules 1967 and the rules and forms prescribed therein are applicable alike to all Indian citizens at home and abroad, implying thereby that it is not a correct approach to the problem. In the opinion of the Committee, the Ministry should not on technical grounds, turn down the suggestion to review the application forms and the procedure in-so-far as they relate to overseas Indians. The Committee expect that the Ministry would go into the matter and if necessary change the rules and rationalise the application forms and simplify the procedures for overseas Indians at an early date.

Reply of Government

The Government of India have agreed in principle to introduce a different passport application form for Indians residing abroad. Necessary modalities for early implementation are being worked out.

After studying Committee's recommendations and with a view to ensure better results the Ministry have streamlined the procedure concerning the passports etc. for overseas Indians to ensure that responses of Missions can be quicker and more in line with the Committee's recommendations.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 89 (Para 8.29)

The Committee are informed by a society of Indians in Malayasia about the difficulties faced by Indian students in obtaining re-entry permits of sufficiently long duration to cover their courses of studies in India. The Ministry have stated that the system of re-entry permits has been prescribed under the Malaysian regulations. The Committee hope that Indian Mission in Malayasia would not hesitate rendering such assistance as is permitted under the regulations to those Indian students who may need it in the event of any difficulty.

Reply of Government

The recommendations of the Committee have been brought to the attention of the Mission for its implementation.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 90 (Para 9.34)

The Committee are informed that with a view to reflecting Indian culture abroad, Government have taken various steps such as, entering into bilateral cultural agreements with about 50 countries; opening of cultural centres in Guyana, Fiji and Surinam (there is a proposal to open three more centres—one each in Malayasia, Peru and Thailand/Indonesia) setting up of a school of Indian Music at Kabul; establishing Mahatma Gandhi Institute in Moka (Mauritius); deputing of a dance teacher to Port of Spain (Trinidad). Besides chairs of Indian studies are being maintained in Poland, German Democratic Republic, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Senegal, Bulgaria, Mexico, Indonesia, Trinidad, etc.

The Ministry have stated that through cultural wings in a large number of our missions abroad would enable a more comprehensive projection of different aspects of Indian culture abroad, "our foreign policy interests do not necessarily require cultural wings in each and every mission/post". Within the limitation of resources, in Ministry's view, Indian Missions are "doing their best" in this regard.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

(Para 9.35)

The committee are of the opinion that there is a great interest in Indian Culture abroad. Library facilities, reference material, feature films and documentaries, new literature in various Indian Languages, art, dance and music are very much in demand and it should be the responsibility of Indian Missions to rise to the occasion and fulfil the demand. The Committee are not oblivious of the constraint of resources but they feel that it would be unfortunate if on this account, the people of the world are denied facilities to have glimpses of Indian culture.

Reply of Government

The observation of the Committee has been noted. Every effort shall be made, within the constraints of financial resources, to meet demands for material on Indian culture in our Missions abroad.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 91 (Para 9.36)

The Committee agree with a former diplomat that in various regions of the world, there are different aspects of Indian culture that find attraction, e.g. films and music in one region, dancing, music and yoga in another, and so on. The Committee would suggest that for using the meagre resources most profitably, the Ministry should make a study to determine the likes and preferences in each region and then concentrate only on those aspects in that region, to start with.

Reply of Government

Specific comments and suggestions of all our Missions have been invited so that programmes can be drawn up after taking into account the special preferences of different regions and different countries.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 92 (Para 9.37)

The Committee regret to note that even though a decision was taken in 1970 to open 10 cultural centres abroad, such centres have so far been opened only at 3 places (Fiji, Guyana and Surinam). The need for Indian cultural centres abroad to project the spiritual and cultural heritage of India, her arts and literature cannot be over-emphasized but, according to a former Foreign Secretary, "We are doing precious little to project India's great heritage approach in these areas". The Committee strongly feel that the implementation of the decision taken in 1970 should not be delayed and further. They would like the Ministry to identify places of importance from the point of view of India's national interest and draw up a pragmatic programme to set up cultural centres at the selected places in a systematic manner. Each cultural centre should ultimately have a library and arrangements for showing Indian films teaching music and dance, holding discourses and seminars on spiritualism and religion affording facilities for comparative study of Eastern and Western thoughts. It may start on a widest scale by setting up facilities for which there is an immediate demand and progressively it may extend its activities in other fields in due course.

Reply of Government

The Ministry agree with the suggestion that more cultural centres should be opened to ensure proper projection of India's cultural heritage. The present financial constraints, however, do not permit the opening of additional cultural centres. However, priorities have been drawn up for implementation at a future date when financial resources are within our grasp.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 93 (Para 9.38)

The Committee see great force in the suggestion made by a former diplomat that Indian Missions can involve various schools of orientalist and indologists existing in Western Europe, North America, even in Latin America, private enterprise in dance and music operating in foreign countries and Asia study centres in foreign universities wherever they exist, to project Indian culture in the countries of their accreditation. This would cost little or nothing. All that the heads of Indian Missions have to do is to take initiative and stimulate all such organisations and persons who have on their own developed interest in India's culture and arts.

Reply of Government

This important recommendation of the Committee has been brought to the special attention of all Heads of Missions. A beginning in this regard is being made in some of the Missions. It is hoped that there will be further extension in the involvement of orientalist etc. in the cultural projection of India in foreign countries.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 94 (Para 9.39)

The Committee are of the opinion that overseas Indians and people of Indian origin settled abroad have great cultural potential which has not been fully tapped so far. With a proper approach and the right kind of leadership Indian Missions can draw upon a wealth of talent and numerous sources abroad and make use of a host of local organisations of Indian and people of Indian origin to organise cultural activities at no or little cost. These are some of the ways in which the constraint of resources can be overcome by resourceful heads of Missions.

Reply of Government

Our Heads of Missions have once again been reminded of the great cultural potential that overseas Indians and people of Indian origin have in this context.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 95 (Para 9.40)

The Committee are surprised to be told by the Ministry that "no precise information is available on whether any evaluation was undertaken to determine the extent to which our missions have been able to present India's cultural image . . .". If the Ministry do not have this information, who else will have? The Committee cannot but conclude from this statement of the Ministry that no evaluation worth the name has been done so far through, they say, there is "a continuing system" of assessment of missions' work at the headquarters. As recommended elsewhere, the Committee attach great importance to a systematic and regular evaluation of the Missions' performance in cultural field, as in other fields, so as to assess their achievements and shortcomings and take timely remedial action to tone up their working in areas of weakness.

Reply of Government

Indian cultural centres abroad have been instructed to change the content of their reporting. They have been asked to make an in depth assessment of the appeal of programmes and activities to the people of the territory in which they are located.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 97 (Para 9.42)

The Asoka Mehta Committee have dealt with various aspects of our cultural relations including role of Indian Missions and organisational arrangements abroad. This Committee have observed that "our cultural activities abroad should not be confined to the initiatives of our Heads of Missions alone or left to be carried out as a part-time activity by our Information Officers or Educational Advisers. The Asoka Mehta Committee have recommended appointment of separate cultural representatives to be called cultural advisors on contractual basis in certain specified countries to be selected from amongst experts in the field in consultation with ICCR. The Estimates Committee would like the Ministry to examine this and other recommendations made by Asoka Mehta Committee and inform them of the decisions and action taken in the matter.

Reply of Government

The suggestion of appointing of eminent experts as Cultural Advisers in our missions abroad is valuable. The ICCR have already drawn up a priority list of countries and regions that should be covered in this matter early.

The proposal can be formalised, processed and implemented only after the present constraints due to the current financial stringency have been withdrawn.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-80.]

Please state the decisions taken by the Ministry on recommendations made by the Ashok Mehta Committee.

Further Reply of Government

The basic recommendation of this Committee concerns the transfer of work pertaining to International Cultural Relations from the Department of Culture to the Ministry of External Affairs. It is learnt that Department of Culture are opposed to this.

Meanwhile the ICCR in accordance with the spirit of the recommendations made by the Ashok Mehta Committee and the Estimates Committee, have made a detailed study of this report, and have defined priority areas/countries that should be covered early, once the basic decision on the reallocation of work is taken.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80, dt. 1-9-80.]

Recommendation Sl. No. 98 (Para 9.43)

From the information furnished by the Ministry, the Committee find that at 40 places abroad there are monuments/memorial in honour of eminent Indians. The Committee regret to note that at 12 of these places here are monuments statues of great Indian leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Rabinder Nath Tagore, but no celebrations are held there on a regular basis. The Foreign Secretary stated during his evidence that "in so far as the function relating to Mahatma Gandhi's birthday all missions celebrate the occasion the idea of celebrating a particular function is important. It may not be possible only around statue. In the opinion of the Committee it is not proper not to garland the statue or place flowers on the monument on the birthday or some other historical day connected with the life of the great Indian leader. The functions could be held in any appropriate place to celebrate the birthdays of distinguished eminent national leaders. The Committee feel that if there is any statue of monument that is located at a place where formal functions with large gathering cannot be held, the Head of the Mission accompanied by staff should garland the statue or place flowers on the monument on those occasions.

Reply of Government

All our Missions abroad have been advised of this recommendation of the Committee and to the extent feasible, they will implement it.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 99 (Para 10.15)

The Committee are informed that the Policy Planning Division forms the nucleus of the Policy Planning and Review Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs, Meetings of the Committee are attended by the Secretaries of the Ministry and other Departments and areas of competence are concerned. In pursuance of the Government willingness to have association of experts in the various fields with the Policy Planning Committee, the Policy Planning Division is already maintaining a close liaison with the concerned scholars and academicians of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, Institute of Defence Studies and analysis, Indian Council of World Affairs, Journalists in different fields etc. The Committee have been informed that the Policy Planning Division has conducted studies on various developments in international sphere concerning India's foreign relations.

(Para 10.16)

The Committee however regret to note that the Policy Planning Division which previously was headed by prominent personalities of high standing, has been gradually downgraded both in the level of officers heading and manning it as well as in importance. It has been suggested to the Committee by a former diplomat that this Division should be an independent Division to be headed by a very senior member of the Foreign Service, if possible, by an officer of the rank of Secretary, we should be directly answerable to the Foreign Minister and not to the Foreign Secretary. He was of the view that if Policy Planning Division is to be made answerable to the Foreign Secretary, the day-to-day view will dominate over the long term perspective view. The Foreign Secretary admitted during evidence that this Division needs to be "improved and institutionalised".

(Para 10.17)

The Committee visualise the role of this Division as a "Brains Trust" or "Think Tank" which may formulate long term foreign policy goals and projections in the light of our national interest and strategic objectives. This Division should be concerned not only with in depth study of international affairs and situations for the benefit of the Foreign Minister in his task of laying down the foreign policy but should also have a great role to play in assisting the Defence Ministry in the matter of assessment of threat to national security. This Division should not only draw upon the experience and report of Indian Missions abroad but also actively associate scholars, journalists, experts and Members of Parliament with the deliberations and hold seminars before drawing conclusions and preparing papers on various subjects, if it has to play the role expected of it effectively. This Division in the opinion of the Committee should be headed by a very senior officer, preferably of the rank of Secretary with deep knowledge and long experience of international affairs and given adequate supporting staff of the right type in keeping with its responsibilities. The Head of this Division should report directly to the Foreign Minister and the reports and papers prepared by this Division should receive the most careful consideration at all levels. The Committee recommend reorganisation and upgradation of this Division on the lines suggested above and inform the Committee within 6 months.

Reply of Government

The Ministry fully endorses in principle the Committee's view that the Policy Planning Division should assist in "formulating long-term policy goals and projections in the light of our national interests and strategic objectives". The Ministry have also taken note of the Committee's recommendation that the Policy Planning Division should play the role of "assessing the Defence Ministry in the matter of assessment of threat to national security". With a view to implementing this recommendation :

- (a) The Foreign Secretary has instructed the Policy Planning Division to lay greater emphasis on studies of international developments which would pose a threat to our national security, with a view to sharing this Ministry's assessment with the Defence Ministry;
- (b) The Policy Planning Division and some operational Divisions are being closely associated with the work of the Joint Intelligence Committee in the Cabinet Secretariat; and
- (c) A Committee presided over by the Cabinet Secretary on Defence Planning has recently been constituted which addresses itself to the assessment of immediate and long-term threats and appropriate responses to strengthen our defence capability. Foreign Secretary is a member of the Committee and has been actively associated with it.

2. The Ministry also accepts the view that it is desirable to draw upon the experiences of journalists, experts and Members of Parliament in connection with the work of the Division. With this objective in view, it seeks to maintain contact with scholars and other experts in international affairs. Views of Members of Parliament as reflected both in Parliamentary debates and in the proceedings of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on Foreign Affairs, are always closely followed by the Ministry and by the Policy Planning Division. It is, however, felt that as a rule it is more appropriate to encourage universities and other academic or semi-academic institution to hold seminars on international affairs than to arrange these under

government auspices. When such seminars are held the Ministry has been deputed officers to take active part in their deliberations. The Division itself would continue to follow the proceedings of these seminars and participate in them wherever possible.

3. The Ministry endorses the views of the Committee that the Policy Planning Process must involve officials at the highest levels and at the apex of its consideration it must report to and receive directives from the Foreign Minister.

4. The Policy Planning Division is under a Joint Secretary. The possibility of upgrading this level will be considered. However, in the present financial stringency creation of new posts and their elevation may not be easy.

5. The basic structure and procedures for the Policy Planning process envisages preparation of papers after due consultation within the operational Ministry and with other Ministries concerned. The process of consultation at working level below the Secretaries ensure detailed and expert preliminary data collection from other Divisions and other Ministries. The paper with their independent judgement and assessment are submitted to the Secretary concerned for scrutiny from the point of view of current policy and feasibility. This cross fertilisation of the independent policy appraisal of the operational level with higher level is envisaged in the Committee where Secretaries concerned are present. The considered recommendation with pros and cons are to be submitted to the Foreign Minister who, in turn, in his discretion could give directives or where considered appropriate bring up particular subjects to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.

6. It would not be appropriate for the Head of the Policy Planning Division to report directly to the Foreign Minister as his role is to service the Policy Planning Committee. Inter-Ministerial scrutiny and consultations are essential on all policy issues. The Policy Planning Division however is expected to exercise independent judgement.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 101 (Para 10.36)

The Committee are informed that the cadre strength of IFS(A) is reviewed every 3 years. It was last reviewed in 1977 by the Cadre Review Committee consisting of the Cabinet Secretary, Secretary (Expenditure), Secretary (Department of Personnel), Foreign Secretary and Financial Adviser of the Ministry and on the basis of their recommendations, approval of the Cabinet was secured to the revised cadre strength (590 officers) for the next 3 years. The Committee are informed that no cadre review of IFS(B) has so far been conducted although it is long overdue. The Foreign Secretary stated during evidence that the last cadre review of IFS(A) took 2 years to complete but between the time the proposals were made and finally accepted, these were already pruned down. He added that "the promises of personnel strengthening are not kept up, even to the extent of acceptance by the cadre review when it comes to actually filling up the posts. We have to go through sanctions and justifications once again. It looks as if the cadre review was not worthwhile". The Committee are unable to appreciate as to why the cadre strength recommended by a high power Cadre Review Committee which was headed by Cabinet Secretary and which had, among

others, Secretary (Expenditure) and Secretary (Personnel) as members, should at all be scrutinised and reviewed by individual officers down the line. The Committee feel that once cadre strength has been reviewed and recommended in their collective wisdom by the Cadre Review Committee it should not be questioned by any individual officer.

Reply of Government

The recommendations of the Committee have been noted. All future cases of implementation of any cadre review shall be in accordance with these recommendations.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 102 (Para 10.37)

The Committee would also like that the Cadre Review of the IFS(B) which is stated to be long overdue should also be undertaken without any loss of time and the Cadre strength determined in accordance with scientific norms.

Reply of Government

The proposals on the cadre review of the IFS(B) have been finalised and are under consideration of a high level Committee, including representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and the Ministry of Finance.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 104 (Para 10.46)

The Committee are glad to note that the Ministry have after-all decided to create the cadre of interpreters in ten foreign languages (Arabic, French, Spanish, Russian, Persian, German, Chinese, Bhasha Malay, Indonesian and Portuguese). The Committee have not been able to appreciate as to why Japanese and an important language like Swahili have been left out. It is a matter of great embarrassment for a country of our size and importance that we have to depend upon the interpreters accompanying the Foreign dignitaries when talks take place between the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and the Foreign dignitaries. The Committee would like the Ministry to select the most competent interpreters for this cadre without delay and end our dependence upon foreign interpreters at the earliest.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have noted the recommendation of the Committee; and Japanese and Swahili are being included in the list of foreign languages. Further arrangements in this context will depend on the availability of financial constraints.

Some progress has been made in the formation of the Cadre. In such matters, however, systematic and cautious progress has to be made. The Ministry is, therefore in touch with experts, Indian as well as foreign, on the early implementation of the decision of the creation of the Cadre that would provide competent Interpreters to Government of India.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 105 (Para 10.53)

The Committee note that the Ministry have got direct wireless communication links only with 3 Missions abroad. Links with two more missions will go on the air shortly. The Committee appreciate the view of the Ministry that Wireless network should have a wider coverage so that communications link up between Headquarters and missions could become more effective and speedy and independent of possible obstacles by local authorities abroad. The Ministry, it is stated, had drawn up a plan to link up other stations with the headquarters but the plan is stated to have been shelved for the time being. The Committee recognise the vital importance of countries in this field and recommend that a phased programme for expanding the wireless network should be kept ready and implemented in stages.

Reply of Government

While the Ministry have prepared a plan for further extension of wireless communications network, it has been decided by the concerned authorities that this plan should not be implemented in the immediate future because of financial constraints. As and when the financial situation improves, various stages of the plan will be activated.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 106 (Para 10.66)

The Committee are informed that the various offices of the Ministry at the headquarters are at present distributed over 6 buildings. Even in the South Block where the bulk of the Ministry is situated, the area occupied is not contiguous. A proposal of the Ministry to have a separate building—Videsh-Bhavan—for housing all the offices of the Ministry has been pending since 1961. According to the latest decision the question of constructing a building in which the Ministry of External Affairs also will be given accommodation would be considered in the Sixth Plan period. The Ministry strongly feel the need for the construction of a separate building close to the south Block so that foreign office could work as a homogenous entity and functional delays could be avoided. The Committee have not gone into the merits of the proposal to have a separate building for the Ministry. The Committee, however, feel that the dispersal of various units of the Ministry over 6 different buildings located far apart certainly handicaps the efficient functioning of the Ministry. The Committee feel that it should be possible to bring the various offices of the Ministry of External Affairs closer and together by readjustment and reallocation of office accommodation amongst various Ministries in the South Block and nearby buildings. Unless this is done the Ministry will be hard put to improve the functional efficiency of its various divisions.

Reply of Government

In principle the Ministry agree with the views of the Committee. It will be their endeavour to continue to explore all possibilities in line with this recommendation of the Committee that the various offices of the Ministry should not be dispersed over six different buildings.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT REPLIES

Recommendation Sl. No. 49 (Para 4.85)

A former diplomat has stated that the hierarchical levels (A) and (B) given to Indian Foreign Service are "very unfortunate". The Committee welcome the suggestion that the two Branches of Indian Foreign Service should be redesignated as Indian Foreign Service (Administrative Grade) and Indian Foreign Service (Executive Grade) in place of the present nomenclature of IFS(A) and IFS(B).

Reply of Government

The Committee's welcome of the suggestion of the former Diplomat has been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-1979]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980]

Please state the precise action taken on the Committee's recommendation that the two branches of Indian Foreign Service should be redesignated as Indian Foreign Service (Administrative Cadre) and Indian Foreign Service (Executive Cadre). The Ministry have stated in reply that "the Committee's welcome of the suggestion of the former diplomat has been noted".

Please state what concrete action is being taken to implement this recommendation.

Further Reply of Government

As observed in our earlier reply the Ministry had noted that the Committee has welcomed the suggestion of a former diplomat that the two branches of the IFS should be redesignated.

Change in nomenclature alone may perhaps not achieve the desired result. The Ministry is of the view that nothing precipitate in these matters of fundamental import should be attempted, without full consideration and thought.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80, dated 1-9-1980].

Recommendation Sl. No. 62 (Para 5.70)

The Committee are informed that a Public Relations Consultant was appointed in Washington sometime during 1964-65 on a salary of US dollars 70,000 per year. The appointment was initiated by the Indian Embassy in Washington but it has been funded from the budget of the Finance Ministry.

As per the Ministry the purpose for such an appointment was to promote public relations of India and to create a climate for co-operation with and interest in India. A view was expressed before the Committee that the functions of the Consultant were not commensurate with his salary. The Foreign secretary stated during evidence that ".....even if half these funds are made available to strengthen the capacity of the Embassy, we could do better." The Foreign Secretary also informed the Committee during evidence that "notice has been given for termination of this arrangement. It was upto the end of this financial year (1978-79)". Sometime after the evidence the Foreign Secretary met the Chairman and informed him that, as a result of certain subsequent developments, the termination notice had been withdrawn and that it had been decided to continue the appointment.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-1979]

(Para 5.71)

The Committee are unable to appreciate the need for engagement of a private consultant in the U.S.A. His continuance is a reflection on the Ministry's capability to handle their public relations work in USA or even elsewhere. The Committee desire that the entire matter relating to the need for appointment of this consultant and his continuance for over 13 years, his performance from year to year in concrete terms if possible, service of termination notice and subsequent withdrawal thereof etc. should be examined by an independent authority outside the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Finance and the committee informed of its findings within six months.

Reply of Government

In June 1965 our Embassy in Washington submitted a proposal to Ministry of Finance for utilising the services of a public relations firm to promote a public opinion, specially congressional climate favouring greater US aid for India's Third Five-Year Plan, and for India's economic development in general. This proposal was accepted by the Ministry of Finance; and they, on their own steam, started providing resources for this. The services of public Relations Firm were used by our Embassy in Washington for *inter alia*, contacts with members of US Congress eminent journalists and mediemen as well as public opinion makers in the United States. On the specific recommendation of successive Ambassadors the Ministry of Finance, which had provided the budget for this contract, went on renewing the contract from time to time.

After a recent review of the performance of this Public Relations Firm, and in the light of experience acquired by the Embassy personnel in public relations work, the Ministries of Finance and External Affairs have agreed to terminate the contract of the public relations firm, and notice of termination has been served on the firm as a result of this review. The Committee

will agree that against this background, it is hardly recessing to assess the public relations firm's performance, now.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 36—38 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 100 (Para 10.23)

It has been suggested to the Committee by a former diplomat of long standing that the time has come to think seriously of a parliamentary set-up on foreign affairs for maintaining day-to-day interest in the affairs of the foreign office. In this Context, Foreign Secretary drew attention of the Committee to the already existing Consultative Committee of Parliament attached to the Ministry. Another expert has suggested that India should have a foreign relations Committee on the lines of a similar Committee in the United States which should also clear appointment of Ambassadors. The Committee have given a careful thought to the suggestions. The existing consultative Committee of Parliament, in the opinion of the Committee, cannot serve the purpose in view of its limited role and jurisdiction. The Committee feel that there is an imperative need for a Standing Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs to enable Parliament to keep in constant touch with the international developments and to oversee and be associated with the evolution of India's Foreign Policy in relation thereto. It will generate interest of members of Parliament in Foreign Affairs leading to a better understanding of the problems faced by the Ministry in the conduct of Foreign Policy and also create a greater sense of accountability among our diplomats and foreign service officers towards Parliament. The Committee recommend that a standing Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs be set up by the House at an early date.

Reply of Government

The Ministry's views were conveyed to the Estimates Committee in 1978. Decision-making on the recommendation would naturally take place outside the Ministry.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15.3.80]

Please communicate the decision of the "Government" (not the Ministry) on the recommendation of the Committee regarding setting up of a standing Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs by the House.

In our earlier reply the Ministry had specified that decision making on this particular recommendation on the setting up of a Standing Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs cannot be taken by the Ministry, but will have to be taken outside the Ministry. The Ministry's own views on this subject had been conveyed to the Estimates Committee in 1978.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80, dated 1-9-80]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation Sl. No. 24 (Para 3.23)

The Committee note that posts of Heads of Missions are filled up by the Central Government at its discretion by appointment of members of the Indian Foreign Service (Grades I to IV) or other eminent persons from public life. Proposals for appointment of career officers as Heads of Missions are framed by the Foreign Secretary after informal consultation with the other Secretaries of the Ministry. These are placed before the Foreign Minister, which places such proposals, with his recommendations before the Prime Minister for his approval. After Prime Minister's approval the proposals are formally submitted to the President for approval before issue of orders.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-1979]

(Para 3.24)

The Committee are informed that though Foreign Secretary does have "consultation" with other Secretaries of the Ministry before proposing names of career officers for appointment as Heads of Missions, the system is not institutionalised.

The Committee feel that in the interest of fair play, it will be better to institutionalise the system of selection of Heads of Missions at the Ministry's level and to constitute a formal Committee of all the Secretaries of the Ministry for considering and recommending names of suitable officers for the consideration of Foreign Minister.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have taken note of this recommendation. However, it is impossible and would even be unwise in these matters to circumscribe or curtail the flexibility of response of the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister to specific situations.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 17—19 of the Report—Chapter-I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 29 (Para 3.45)

The Committee are concerned to note that senior officers in the Ministry are so hard worked that they have "no time to critically examine all the reports and formulate policies". In this context a former Secretary of

Ministry and an experienced career diplomat has stated that the strength of the Ministry has to be augmented but, in his view, "we have people in missions who can easily be pulled back. In all we should be able to get 40 people (from missions) back without in any way sacrificing the efficiency of the missions". Foreign Secretary stated during evidence that in the context of growing complexity of diplomatic work "our Foreign Office is small" and "by and large our missions are really small". He did not think there was "too much scope" to pull back officers from Missions abroad but he welcomed support to enable us to strengthen the Ministry." The Committee take serious view of the fact brought to their notice that the senior officers have "no time to critically examine all the reports".

The Committee would like an immediate study to be made to correct the situation so that there is a rational distribution of work and responsibility among the senior officers like Secretaries/Additional Secretaries and Joint Secretaries so as to provide adequate number of senior officers to do justice to the "extremely useful" reports, which the Ambassadors so painstakingly draft and which have "a significant, vital and meaningful role to play" in the formulation and shaping of India's policies and reactions towards other countries and events. The frequent changes and shifting around of officers in the Ministry or in the Missions should not be encouraged so that there is some continuity in the foreign office and the dialogue envisaged between Heads of Missions and the Headquarters. The Committee would like this study to be undertaken by the Ministry at the earliest.

Reply of Government

The Ministry concedes, in a spirit of candour that its manning table for Territorial, Political, Economic, XP & Public Relations and other functional divisions has been rendered obsolete by developments of the last few years. It will be our effort to correct the situation to the extent the other branches of the Government permit us. Financial constraints, and the inability of other concerned Ministries and Departments to release resources for this work have been and will remain an inhibition in this.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 27—29 of the Report—Chapter-I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 31 (Para 3.62)

The Committee find that the Pillai Committee (1965) had recommended that "personal contact with and among representatives abroad should be encouraged through regional conferences". The Ministry have stated that there is no regular procedure for arranging conferences of heads of Indian Missions in different regions. Such conferences are, however, organised whenever it is so decided by the Foreign Minister and these are normally held if the Foreign Minister is visiting that area on official business. The last such conference of Heads of India Missions in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Mexico City in May, 1975. Three conferences of Heads of Missions of various regions were held in New Delhi during the last 2 years in December 1976, January 1977 and August, 1977. A former Foreign Secretary has suggested to the Committee that regional conferences of Ambassadors should be held more often in the region concerned rather than in New Delhi. The Committee note that in the opinion of

the present Foreign Secretary such a conference of Heads of Missions of a region "is an expensive business Once in two or three years will be enough". He also stated that such a conference should preferably be held in Delhi and it should be for "10 days not for just 2 days".

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.
I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

(Para 3.63)

The Committee feel that it will be useful both to the Ministry and the Heads of Missions in a region if they can be brought together formally or informally atleast once in two years for mutual consultations. In the opinion of the Committee such conferences of Heads of Missions should preferably be held in the region concerned and not in Delhi and it should not be difficult for the Ministry to convene such a conference in a regional centre on the occasion of the visit of Foreign Minister to the region, when the Heads of Missions in that region may meet the Foreign Minister and also exchange ideas in his presence on matters of mutual interest and review their performance. Such conferences when held in the region, provide the right atmosphere and are far more meaningful than in Delhi.

Reply of Government

The Ministry recognises the efficacy of regional conferences of Heads of Missions. Of course these have been taking place. International as also Internal, political developments would always make it difficult for us to adhere to any rigid periodically in this context. By holding these conferences in India we ensure that Heads of Missions are exposed to much wider spectrum of people and organisations involved in decision making in a variety of fields. Even so we do hold such conferences abroad, whenever necessary and feasible.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.
I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 32 (Para 3.64)

The Committee feel that it should not always be necessary to hold a conference of such a nature for as long as 10 days as suggested by Foreign Secretary. It will be better to arrange more number of such conferences for shorter duration frequently than holding a conference for as long as 10 days after long interval. Business like conferences without the large encourage accompanying Heads of Mission may not be expensive no difficult to organise. If it is considered necessary, as Committee think it is, frequency of such conferences should be increased and may be held preferably in the regions.

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendation has been noted. Perhaps it is best not to be rigid in these matters.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts.
I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Recommendation Sl. Nos 31 and 32

Please see paras 30—32 of the Report—Chapter-I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 82 Para 7.47

The Economic and Commercial wings in our Diplomatic Mission abroad are by and large manned by the officers of the Ministry of External Affairs who it is stated, are given intensive training, to equip them with different aspects of economic and commercial work. Some non-IFS officers are also stated to have held economic posts in Western Europe, USA and other affluent nations. The Ministry have claimed that "the spectacular increase in trade and economic collaboration which has been witnessed in the past few years with countries in West Asia and the Gulf have largely been due to the efforts made by the Indian Foreign Service Officers serving in missions in the countries of this region. "But a high ranking officer, now retired, who has also functioned as a Commercial Counsellor, is of the view" that the Commercial side of our Embassies, probably in three fourths of the world, consists of those who are thoroughly incompetent and ignorant of what the commerce means. The officials of the Foreign Service detailed for commercial work are ill-equipped to deliver the goods..... "The Ministry have challenged this view".

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Para 7.48

It has been suggested to the Committee that in order to strengthen Indian Missions, experienced officials from the Ministries dealing with Commerce, industry and other economic matters should be constantly inducted into the Indian Foreign Service. A retired Foreign Secretary stated that "for commercial and economic posts, selection may be made from outside the service (Indian Foreign Service) to get the most qualified person for the job. Such jobs should be specified and their number need not exceed 25 per cent of the total posts". The Ministry of External Affairs have opposed this suggestion. They have stated that in the present post-independence diplomacy, political and economic work is closely integrated, and that commercial interests can be served better by an officer with the knowledge of language and diplomatic skill rather than by personnel inducted into the services on an ad-hoc basis. The Foreign Secretary emphasized during evidence that their Ministry had sufficient number of officers experienced in commercial work. The Ministry have, in this connection, drawn attention of the Committee to the Government decision of 1946 according to which "the new service (Indian Foreign Service) of our conception will man all India-based posts abroad whether diplomatic, consular or commercial in foreign as well as empire countries". This basic decision, it is stated, was endorsed in 1966 by Pillai Committee which also laid special emphasis on the commercial aspect of a foreign service officers work.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Para 7.49

The role of Commercial Sections of Indian Embassies abroad was recently studied by the Committee on Export-Import Policy and Procedures (under the Chairmanship of Dr. P. C. Alexander, Commerce Secretary) which submitted their report in January, 1978. According to the Alexander Committee, "A review of the existing network of the Commercial Representatives and the nature of the function as performed by them brings out the gross inadequacy of the present system and the wide gap that exists between the actual and the expected functions of the Commercial Representatives. The Commercial Representatives system of India and its functions are far below the quality of the efficient and commercially useful Commercial representatives system which many other successful export countries have developed". This Committee have gone on to recommend that "a separate cadre of commercial Representatives should be established providing a wide field of Choice".

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Para 7.50

After giving a careful thought to this matter the Committee have come to the conclusion that for competent handling of economic and commercial work the officers manning these wings in our missions must possess a certain degree of specialisation which may not always be possible without a proper aptitude and a certain background. It will not be correct for the Ministry to assume that a few weeks training in the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade and a short term attachment to Economic Ministries are enough to turn all Indian Foreign Service Officers into experts in economic and Commercial work. And here too, according to their own admission, out of nearly 400 IFS Officers who have put in more than 4 years service, the Ministry have not been able to provide an opportunity of work in Economic Ministries to more than 36 Officers which is too inadequate a number to man the commercial wings of the Mission. The Complexities of economic and commercial work have increased considerably since the Government decision of 1946 or Pillai Committee Report of 1966 and a time has come when Government should undertake an objective and independent review of the situation. In the opinion of the Committee, as suggested by a retired Foreign Secretary and diplomat of long standing, it is necessary to strengthen the Economic and Commercial wings of the Missions by selecting from time to time the most qualified persons from outside the Indian Foreign Service for a certain percentage of posts in these wings.

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendation has been noted. After the Pillai Committee Report was accepted by Governments both the Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce, have made every effort to promote the national interest by pooling their efforts and experience. If facts and figures of India's export performance in the period since the Pillai Committee report are studied, it will be readily conceded that we have spear-headed our national export effort satisfactorily, perhaps commendably. What sort of further crossfertilisation of experiences and ideas (as reflected

in the sources from which we should draw our personnel for economic and commercial work) will help the country is a point on which adjustments keep taking place. In a dynamic situation like ours this is inevitable.

As our industry, Commerce, Foreign Trade and Shipping keep expanding the Commercial and economic work requiring to be done by our Missions too will expand. Diversification of personnel is neither desired nor should it be considered desirable. Clearly, the focus of this work must be kept within our duly constituted foreign service, as indeed is the case with most countries which have a growing and expanding economic role in our world.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 52-55 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 85 Para 7.67

The Committee were surprised to find that the Supply Wing of the High Commission of India in London which is essentially concerned with purchase of defence stores and electronic items was headed by an IFS Officer who had no technical or professional background. The Committee do not agree with the view expressed by Foreign Secretary that "it does not require a technical man" to handle purchases of sophisticated equipments and defence stores. The Committee strongly urge that the Heads of the Supply Wings should be men with professional background and intimate knowledge and experience of matters required to be handled by these wings.

Reply of Government

Only once, at each one of these places, this job was done by an IFS Officer. Missions all along these posts were held by IAS Officers. By and large the performance of the two IFS Officers was somewhat better.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 56-58 of the Report — Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 103 Para 10.38

The Committee are informed that the present sanctioned strength of Joint Secretaries at Headquarters is not adequate to undertake in depth study of political and economic matters of various countries under their charge. In view of tremendous expansion in recent years in the activities and responsibilities of the Ministry in economic and commercial fields, the Ministry have also stated that there is need to strengthen the Economic Affairs Division of the Ministry by appointment of an officer as an Economic Adviser. The Committee have not been supplied with adequate data to be able to comment on the adequacy or otherwise of the officers at senior levels. Elsewhere in this Report the Committee have recommended a study into the deployment of officers at various levels with a view to rationalising their deployment. They would suggest that the

need for augmenting strength of Heads of Divisions and appointment of Economic Advisory may also be examined in the course of that study.

Reply of Government

The Ministry are keeping under review the question of augmenting the numerical strength of Heads of Division and for the appointment of an Economic Adviser. The further processing of the question will largely depend on the availability of financial resources.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 27-29 of the Report—Chapter I.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES ARE STILL AWAITED

Recommendation Sl. No. 11 Para 2.38

The Committee note that the structure, organisation and functions of the Foreign Service were examined in depth by a Committee set up by the Government in 1965 and are subjected to critical review by the Foreign Service Inspectors from time to time. They are informed that as a result of implementation of recommendations of the Foreign Service Inspectors and rationalisation of staffing, pattern, inspite of the increase in the number of missions from 100 in 1968 to 124 in 1978-79, the staff strength has not only been contained but also progressively brought down and it now stands at 3243 as against 3362 in 1968-69. While the Committee are glad at the reported rationalisation of staffing pattern and reduction in total staff strength in the missions, they feel that there is a need for a fresh study of the staffing pattern and systems of work in the light of what the Committee have recommended in the preceding paragraphs. The Committee would like this study to be undertaken by an expert at an early date and results communicated to them.

Reply of Government

The Ministry have started an internal study. After this, at an appropriate level a determination and judgement will be made as to whether a through and total review of the question can be made as was done in 1965.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 33 Para 4.16

The Committee note that there are two branches of Indian Foreign Service—Indian Foreign Service 'A' and Indian Foreign Service 'B'. Under the existing rules the entry point for the officers of IFS(B) to join IFS(A) is at the level of the senior scale of IFS(A). At this stage Grade I Officers of the IFS(B) i.e. officers of the rank of Under Secretaries who have rendered three years of service in that grade are eligible for promotion on the basis of merit to the senior scale of IFS 'A' (i.e. Deputy Secretary and Under Secretaries) against 15% quota earmarked for such promotions. A former top level Civil Servant and a former diplomat has suggested to the Committee that bright and promising members of the Indian Foreign Service 'B' should be encouraged by promoting them to the Indian Foreign Service 'A' at an early stage of their career before these officers get confirmed in their attitudes as junior officers. Agreeing with this suggestion two other former diplomats stated that the selection of such IFS(B) Officers for promotion to IFS(A) should be made through departmental examination and the officers who have put in 5 years' service or so should be made eligible to sit in the examination. During his evidence before the Committee, Foreign Secretary agreed to the idea of holding a

competitive examination through UPSC for officers working in the Ministry of External Affairs who have put in 5 to 10 years of service. He was, however, of the view that if this system of promotion from IFS(B) to IFS(A) is adopted in the Foreign Service only and a similar system is not adopted in the rest of the Government of India offices, there will be problems. Since the Committee are concerned with foreign service only which is a closed and elitist service, the Committee are unable to appreciate the apprehension expressed by the Foreign Secretary in regard to its repercussions in the rest of the Govt. of India's Ministries. The Committee do not see any valid reason to link this welcome suggestion with the practice in the Central Secretariat*. The Committee urge that the Ministry of External Affairs should introduce at a very early date a system of promotion from IFS(B) to IFS(A) through a competitive examination to be conducted periodically through UPSC and fix certain percentage of posts in IFS(A) (junior scale) to be filled up through this method. After induction in the IFS(A) the officers promoted should be treated at par in all respects with IFS(A) officers initially recruited through UPSC.

Reply of Government

This recommendation is under detailed examination in consultation with the other relevant authorities of the Government, including the U.P.S.C. The Ministry would like to assure the Estimates Committee that there is no discrimination between officers of IFS(B) promoted to IFS(A), and officers of IFS(A) initially recruited through U.P.S.C.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. O/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 33-35 of the Report — Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 34 Para 4.17

It has been represented to the Committee by Staff Council of the Ministry that consequent on the recommendation of the Administrative Reforms Commission, the Government of India had decided to increase the promotion quota to all Class I Services upto a maximum of 40%. The Council stated that the IAS and other services had already implemented the decision but the Ministry of External Affairs had not done so in respect of IFS(A). The Ministry have stated that they also propose to increase promotion quota for appointment of IFS(B) officers to IFS(A) which at present is stated to 15 per cent. The exact quantum of increase is stated to be presently under study. The Committee desire that this matter may be finalised expeditiously.

Reply of Government

The recommendation of the Committee is under consideration of the Ministry.

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 33-35 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 35 Para 4.18

The Committee find that so far only two officers originally belonging to IFS(B) have, on promotion to IFS(A), reached the level of Grade II of Heads of Missions (Additional Secretary level); nine have reached Grade III level (Joint Secretary) and 23 Grade IV level (Director). None from the IFS(B) has so far been promoted to Grade I of the service. In contrast the Committee find that during a short period of last 5 years one officer of the Central Secretariat Service has reached the level of Secretary and 6 officers have reached the level of Additional Secretary in the Central Secretariat. This shows that officers joining IFS(B) at the commencement of their career are at a disadvantage in the matter of career advancement in comparison to officers of Central Secretariat Service.

The Committee feel that promotion prospects of officers of IFS(B) need to be improved so as to enable them to reach the highest grade in the Indian Foreign Service on the basis of merit. This would be possible only if the IFS(B) personnel are inducted into IFS(A) at an early age of their career. The Committee would like the Ministry to remedy the situation at an early date.

Reply of Government

The Ministry are studying how the situation can be remedied.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 40 Para 4.36

The Committee note that the question of establishing a separate training school for the Ministry of External Affairs has been examined in detail but it has been felt that the present system is best suited to cater to the specialised needs of IFS officers. The Ministry also think that the number of officers being small, heavy expenditure involved in setting up a permanent and specialised institution for IFS probationers is not warranted. A former diplomat has stated before the Committee that there is some deficiency in the present system of training and that there is need for arranging special training of diplomats in order to prepare them to stand on their feet firmly in the face of temptations, flatteries and glitter to which they are exposed abroad. He has suggested that there should be a collegium of retired people, Ambassadors and other who can give them training in the field of culture, economics and international trade etc. The Committee also feel that the IFS probationers after having gone through training and attachments in various institutes and organisations should receive 'finishing' touch in the Ministry through special talks and discussion. For this purpose it will be necessary to have a small training cell in the Ministry of External Affairs itself which may, with the help of 'guest' speakers and others, take care of the special needs of the probationers.

Reply of Government

In the light of Committee's recommendation, the question of creating a 'Training Cell' has been taken up with the concerned financial authorities so that they provide us the necessary resources. Later on the question of establishing a Training Centre is intended to be taken up, as indicated in the Estimates Committee Report.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. 1/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 42 Para 4.44

The Committee are informed that all officers recruited to the Indian Foreign Service are required to attain proficiency to an advance level in one of the prescribed compulsory foreign languages and no one can be confirmed and appointed to a duty post abroad without passing his compulsory language examination. It has been brought to the notice of the Committee by a former Foreign Secretary that most of the young officers lose interest in their language after their confirmation. The Committee agreeing with a suggestion made to the Committee recommended that the Foreign Service Officers should be required to undergo language test every 3 years to ensure that they maintain an adequate standard of proficiency in the foreign languages allotted to them and that their further promotions should be subject to their passing the test. The tests should be held by a body independent of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Reply of Government

The Ministry has already issued appropriate instructions. As an experimental measure, to begin with the Ministry has introduced a new system of language tests keeping in mind the views of the Committee. We propose reviewing it with a view to refining and improving upon the system.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980.]

Please furnish a copy of the instructions issued by the Ministry and also the details of the new system introduced by them with regard to language tests of IFS officers.

Further Reply of Government

Work on building up a new system of language proficiency is being done. The Ministry is now in the process of collecting further detailed and comprehensive information and opinions from various sources including the experienced officers posted in our missions abroad, with a view to finalising a scheme that would be fully responsive to the needs of our country.

[Ministry of External Affairs, O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80 Dt. 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 43 Para 4.59

All Foreign Service Officers are liable to serve in any mission in any part of the world in public interest. In case of officers generally a policy of rotation between the different categories of stations is followed so that all officers are required to serve in different stations with different living conditions. A former civil servant and diplomat of standing stated that "no one relishes service in places where the climate is very trying and there is nothing very agreeable to eat" and that "every one tries to get out" of posting to "bad" station. The Committee feel that there is weight in the suggestion made by him that some sort of formula should be worked out to compensate officers for posting at "bad" stations and thus induce good officers to accept posting at such places without demur.

Reply of Government

Given the financial resources for implementing this recommendation, the Ministry would be happy to do their best to make special arrangements for giving appropriate allowances and facilities for Personnel Serving in such station. The Ministry would submit that there is need for further parliamentary action in this regard.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 Dt. 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79 dated 15-3-1980.]

The Committee had recommended that some sort of formula should be worked out to compensate officers for posting at "Bad" stations and thus induce good officers to accept posting at such places without demur. It has been stated by the Ministry that 'there was a need for further parliamentary action in this regard'.

Please elaborate and state what the Ministry propose to do in the matter.

Further Reply of Government

The attractiveness or unattractiveness of a particular station is determined by several factors; political and other relations between India and the country concerned; climate; medical facilities, facilities for children's education, law and order situation; financial and economic benefits; inflation; availability of goods and services of daily requirement; distance from India etc. To a certain extent administrative and financial support for what may be considered unattractive stations can balance the situation. The Ministry is hoping to be able to work out comprehensive schemes after the team of experts (referred to in the answer to recommendation of the 13th Para No. 2.76) has done its work.

This Ministry's proposal on the appointment of a team of experts has not yet been accepted by the other Ministries concerned. As is well known to the Secretariat, sweeping reforms would require the concurrence of a number of Ministries and Departments of Government. It is in this context that Parliamentary action could be most useful.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80 dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 48 Para 4.84

The Committee find that the Staff Council has very strongly represented against the grant of preferential treatment to IFS(A) officers in the matter of grant of special pay on appointment of headquarters. The Ministry of External Affairs have justified the grant of special pay on the analogy of the IAS officers getting similar pay on appointment in the Central Secretariat. There appears to be weight in the contention of the Staff Council that the analogy between IFS(A) and IAS Officers in this regard is not very correct. The Committee feel that this matter should be considered dispassionately in greater depth.

Reply of Government

The Ministry is considering this dispassionately and in greater depth in consultation with the Finance Branch of the Government.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 50 Para 5.86

It has been brought to the notice of the Committee that in the Ministry of External Affairs there are a few posts of officers which do not form part of either IFS(A) or IFS(B) or any other regular cadre. It has been stated that these officers who have been working in the same jobs for 8-10 years have no avenue of promotion as they do not belong to any cadre. The Committee strongly recommend that the non-Cadre Officers working in the Ministry for 8 to 10 years should be integrated in the main Cadre at an early date.

Reply of Government

Each of these non-Cadre posts seems to have a long and peculiarly individual history and background. The problem all along faced by the Ministry in this regard is to marry compassion for individuals with maintaining uniformity of approach and ensuring meeting special needs of various items of work. The Ministry is doing its best, but so far no solution appears either easy or simple.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Further information called for by the Committee

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 19/2/EC/79, dated 15-3-80]

The Committee had recommended that the non-cadre officers working in the Ministry for 8 to 10 years should be integrated in the main cadre at an early date. The Ministry have stated that they were doing their best but so far no solution appeared either easy or simple.

Please state as to what the Ministry propose to do in the matter.

Further Reply of Government

In pursuance of the Committee's recommendation a scheme for lateral entry of non-cadre officers working in this Ministry into Grade I of the IFS 'B' had been worked out by the Cadre Review Cell. However, the actual implementation is being opposed by officials belonging to the IFS (B) (Staff side). The Ministry is presently considering a broader proposal on Cadre Reforms, and it is hoped that the Cadre Reform, when implemented, will result in resolving all these specific Cadre problems. The Ministry is presently considering both the results of the individual cases as well as the broader proposals on Cadre reforms.

[Ministry of External Affairs O.M. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/80 dated 1-9-80]

Recommendation Sl. No. 65 Para 6.65

The Committee appreciate the suggestion of bringing out a regular digest of the Indian Press for circulation amongst the foreign media abroad, in order to counter the impression that the official handcuts are merely

Government propaganda material, such digest would naturally have to be prepared carefully. They would desire the External Publicity Division to bring out a digest from the Indian Press Weekly or fortnightly for wide circulation amongst the foreign media through our missions.

Reply of Government

The Ministry is examining in depth the administrative and financial aspects of bringing out from headquarters a weekly or fortnightly digest of the Indian Press. Meanwhile, the ISI daily transmission and the cable services for some 70 missions are carrying a one-page digest of the Indian press, and our missions have found it very useful.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 39—41 of the Report—Chapter-I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 67 Para 6.67

A suggestion has been made to the Committee that public sector enterprises like Air India, State Bank of India, Tea Board, State Trading Corporation etc., which are operating in the United States should pool their resources and help build a better publicity programme for India and the people of India in the United States. The suggestion has been considered laudable by the Ministry. The Committee also endorse the suggestion and are of the view that the autonomous character of these public sector organisations should not stand in the way of their being persuaded to pool their resources for organising a better publicity programme for India. The Committee would like the Ministry to take up this matter with the Bureau of Public Enterprises of Ministry of Finance and evolve a suitable scheme for the purpose.

Reply of Government

The proposal is being examined in consultation with the public sector enterprises and other organisations concerned. As far as our publicity is concerned in line with the Committee's recommendation, a certain amount of coordination has already been achieved.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 68 Para 6.68

According to the Chanchal Sarkar Committee's finding, the numerous Ministries and public sector organisations work in "near-isolation" in the field of external publicity and they have observed that "this lack of coordination is shameful". This is regrettable. The Committee would strongly support the suggestion made by the Chanchal Sarkar Committee for "setting up a working body at a high but not rarefied level to coordinate the working of External Publicity Division, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, External Services Division of All India Radio, Indian Tourism Development Corporation and Air India's Public Relations Division."

Reply of Government

The recommendation which has also come from another source has been engaging the attention of the Ministry. It has been found during our preliminary examination, that organising and maintaining continuing co-ordination with a variety of organisations is likely to be not all that simple. Serious consideration is now being given to problems in this matter.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 42—44 of the Report—Chapter-I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 81 Para 7.46

An enterprise in America has suggested a unified agency to bring together various public sector agencies of the Government of India currently functioning in the USA. The Committee are informed that in New York city there are seven commercial and quasi-commercial bodies from India, (Viz) State Trading Corporation, Jute Development Office known as Indian Jute Industries Inc., HHEC, Office of Trade Promotion, Trade Development Authority, India Investment Centre and Shipping Corporation of India. Besides, there are three other bodies, namely, Air India, State Bank of India and Tourism Office. The Bank of India also is stated to have got permission to open office in New York. Offices of the State Bank of India, Engineering Export Promotion Council, Tourism and Air India are also operating in other parts of America. The Ministry have admitted that a certain degree of coordination among these organisations is highly desirable. The Ministry of Commerce is reported to have already approved five organisations, viz. STC, Jute Office, Tea Board, Trade Development Authority and India Investment Centre, sharing the same premises. This is expected to create some coordination and rationalisation. The Committee feel that, if all Indian Organisations of the type referred to above can be accommodated in the same premises or in close vicinity to one another in the same locality, they can pool resources and services not only to provide efficient services at less cost but also set up a "little India" abroad to make much better projection of Indian goods and services and thus make a much greater boost to Indian trade and industry. In the opinion of the Committee, the Economic and Commercial wing of the Indian Missions in New York/Washington can and should play a leading role in making this possible.

Reply of Government

Comments of our Missions in Washington and New York have been invited. These will be examined in consultation with other Departments of the Government of India.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 49—51 of the Report—Chapter-I. •

Recommendation Sl. No. 83 Para 7.65

The Committee note that Indian Embassy in USA, has three different wings namely, Economic Wing, Commercial Wing and Supply Wing, each performing certain functions assigned to it. Each wing has a separate contingent of officers and staff. After going through the functions performed by these wings, the Committee had a feeling that if these wings could be amalgamated into one organisation, it will not only lead to economy but also avoid overlapping. The Foreign Secretary stated during evidence that these wings were manned by the officers of various Ministries and the Ministries concerned might not agree to have a unified control of these wings. The Committee feel that this question requires a more serious and a more critical study by the Government.

They would like to be informed of the outcome of this study.

Reply of Government

The serious and critical study suggested is being undertaken and the Committee will be informed of the outcome of this study.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 84 Para 7.66

A view has been expressed before the Committee by a former diplomat of standing that there was no need to maintain Supply Missions (Washington or London). In this opinion there might have been some justification for having supply missions in the past but there is none today. He stated that "if there are people who want to sell something to us, they should jolly well come to India." The Committee also feel that there is weight in this view atleast in-so-far as the purchase of non-sensitive commodities is concerned. The Committee would suggest to the Government to examine the need for continuation of these supply mission in their present size and strength in the changed circumstances.

Reply of Government

The serious and critical study suggested is being undertaken.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Recommendation Sl. No. 87 Para 8.27

The Committee would also like the Ministry to study the working of Consular sections in the Missions and also to keep a constant watch, through periodical/Statements, on the efficiency of the Consular Sections of (Indian Missions abroad and take necessary measures to tone up the working of the Missions. They would like to be informed of the specific measures taken to streamline the working of consular sections within six months.

Reply of Government

As desired by the Committee all Heads of Missions and Posts abroad were specially instructed to tone up the working conditions in their Consular Section. They were also requested to send comprehensive proposals on

additional staff, and facilities required in the Consular Sections. Proposals have since been received and are being processed in consultation with the other concerned authorities of the Government.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79 dated 30-11-79]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 59—61 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 96 Para 9.41

The Committee note that the Evaluation Committee on the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (Asoka Mehta Committee) has recommended that the Council (ICCR) should be the main implementing agency of Government's cultural promotion activities abroad. This recommendation has been accepted by Government and steps to open a Cultural Division in the Ministry to direct those activities are being taken. Government and ICCR are stated to be in the process of implementation of other recommendation of the Evaluation Committee also. The Committee welcome the proposed integration of the Cultural diplomacy in ICCR. It is a distinct advance in the right direction as compared to the past when the work relating to cultural activities abroad was divided between the Department of Culture (Ministry of Education) and ICCR. They hope that the proposed cultural Division in the Ministry would be able to draw up a policy objective and an integrated and comprehensive plan in collaboration with ICCR, to project India's cultural image and coordinate cultural activities in all Indian Missions abroad.

Reply of Government

The extent of implementation of the Evaluation Committee's recommendation shall be determined by Government in due course. For the present the Government are maintaining the existing arrangements under which the Department of Culture is responsible for India's external cultural relations.

[Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D.O. No. Q/Accts. I/735/1/79, dated 30-11-1979]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Paragraph 1.63 of the Report—Chapter-I.

NEW DELHI.

S. B. P. PATTABHI RAMA RAO,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

March 13, 1981

Phalguna 22, 1902 (S).

APPENDIX I

I. P. Khosla
Joint Secretary (AD-II)

Ministry of External Affairs
New Delhi

No. Q/Accts. I/735/3/78

My dear Head of Mission,

Please refer to our letter No. Q/Accts. I/735/3/79 dated 16th May, 1979, sending you copies of the Report of the Estimates Committee on the Working of Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad.

2. In their Report the Estimates Committee have made a number of proposals which require careful examination. Many of the proposals would require action by our missions in terms of implementation or feed-back to the Ministry before final decisions are taken. The Annexure to this letter gives brief comments of the manner in which these are to be handled and the kind of feed-back we expect. (Not enclosed).

3. The Report is critical, sometimes severely so, of some of the aspects of the working of the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Missions abroad. This deserves a response by us all of careful introspection to locate specific areas in which our responsibilities can be more effectively discharged and a more significant contribution made in the furtherance of our national external interests. In the training and deployment of our officers, both IFS and IFS 'B', the acquisition of the professional knowledge and skill essential for a foreign service officer, the inter-action between headquarters and missions abroad, the determination of objectives in our work and periodic assessment of how far these objectives are being achieved, we must recognise that continuous review and improvement is essential.

4. We shall be grateful to receive your comments on the views expressed by the Estimates Committee on these and other general aspects of our working, apart from the specific points on which action or feed-back is required from our missions.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sd/-
(I. P. KHOSLA)

All Heads of Mission/Post abroad.

Encl : As above.

APPENDIX II

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

New Delhi, the 17th April 1979

K. D. Sharma,
Joint Secretary (CPV)
No. T.735/1/79

My dear Head of Mission/Post,

As you may already be aware, the Estimates Committee of the Parliament has made a number of observations regarding the quality of consular services being rendered by our Missions abroad to Indian nationals. I enclose a copy of the relevant extracts, Paras 8.1 to 8.29 of 29th Report of Estimates Committee not appended here from the Estimates Committee report. There can be no two opinions that the present endeavours by the Indian Missions abroad to be friends, philosophers and guides to Indian nationals who approach our missions for any *bon fide* purpose will have to be kept up and, in fact, continually upgraded. I would, therefore, request that you may urge the members of the Consular Section of your Mission to look upon their responsibilities of giving full satisfaction to all Indian nationals who approach them for help or guidance of any kind as a challenging task of the highest importance. It is to be remembered that just a few persons, or, perhaps, even one individual, who not being fully satisfied with the response of the Consular Section can set in motion enough adverse publicity to undermine the creditable image that the Mission would expect to have earned as a result of good performance in the generality of cases.

2. We have received several communications from our Missions abroad stating that while in the last couple of years, the quantum of consular work handled by them has greatly increased as a result of a larger number of Indians travelling to and residing in foreign countries, the increases in staff strength have been of minimal proportions. It stands to reason that if we are expected to render courteous, efficient and speedy consular services to visiting Indian nationals, the Indian Missions concerned have to have adequate staff. I am, therefore, addressing this circular letter to those of our diplomatic missions where the consular work tends to be fairly substantial, with the request that an up-to-date appraisal may be made of the consular work in the Mission and suitable recommendations about augmentation of staff sent to me in the prescribed proforma devised by the O&M Section. The intention is to take up with the concerned authorities in the Government on a global basis the question of suitable increases in the staff of our Consular Sections in the Missions abroad.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/-
(K. D. Sharma)

All Heads of Missions & Posts.

APPENDIX III

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(Economic Division)

New Delhi, the 10th December, 79.

K. K. Bhargava,
Joint Secretary (ED).
No. B.125/31/79

Dear

The Estimates Committee of the Lok Sabha which recently reviewed the working of the Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad, in its Report dated 26th March 1979, *inter alia*, absorved that the Committee has received representations from a number of commercial and industrial concerns expressing their dissatisfaction with the working of the Economic and Commercial Wings of our Diplomatic Missions abroad.

2. In order to improve the performance of our Missions, both from the organisational as well as the functional aspects, we would be grateful to have your considered opinions/suggestions on ways and means of achieving effective improvement/response from our Missions abroad.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(K. K. Bhargava)

FIEO/FICCI/INDIAN INVESTMENT CENTRAL/ALL INDIA ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES /NIDC/MECON /PEC/EPI/EEPC /ETTDC/ BHELL/RITES/STC/TDA/IIFT/TC(SS).I).

Copy to :

1. All Indian Missions/Posts abroad, with the request to let us have their comments also on the above observation of the Estimates Committee and suggestions for improvements, if any.

2. Joint Secretary (East) for information.

Sd/-

Joint Secretary (ED).

APPENDIX IV
(*Vide Introduction*)

*Analysis of action taken by Government on the 29th Report of the
Estimates Committee (6th Lok Sabha)*

I. Total number of Recommendations	106
II. Recommendations which have been accepted by Government (Nos. 1 to 10, 12 to 23, 25 to 28, 30, 36 to 39, 41, 44 to 47, 51 to 61, 63, 64, 66, 69 to 80, 86, 88 to 95, 97 to 99, 101, 102, 104 to 106)	79
Percentage to total	74%
III. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply (Nos. 49, 62, 100)	3
Percentage to total	3%
IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee (Nos. 24, 29, 31, 32, 82, 85, & 103)	7
Percentage to total	7%
V. Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited (Nos. 11, 33, 34, 35, 40, 42, 43, 48, 50, 65, 67, 68, 81, 83, 84, 87 & 96)	17
Percentage to total	16%