

The Ability to Plan and Administer: Recent Developments in Korean Public Administration*

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Introduction

Korean public administration in the last decade has enjoyed a *stable political leadership*. The major goal of the government was the country's economic development which was attained with unprecedented record. Various reforms in public administration were undertaken for the attainment of this goal. Central planning organization, the Economic Planning Board (EPB), was given budgetary functions in addition to the long-range planning function. It has been able to gear annual budget review and examination process to the five year economic development plans. Within the executive arm of the government the leaders of the EPB have been the most powerful men next to the nation's president, and could exercise directive leadership over the ministries more or less directly concerned with economic development.

Differentiation of government structure including public enterprises, was carried out most

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extensively compared to the previous decades, and these reorganizations were aimed at successful implementation of the economic development plans. Various measures to induce foreign investments, to increase the export of domestic products and earn hard currencies were carried out vigorously through many agencies and multiple channels. It was like a warfare in which *the sense of emergency and mission* has governed the behavior of participants.

Because of this atmosphere and *strong and determined political leadership*, these efforts were relatively well coordinated and integrated.

Nation's president and prime ministers, through the new *system of planning, programming, review and analysis*, could check, guide and facilitate the implementation of economic development plans.

New Challenge: Unexpected Sources of Disintegrative Pressure

With the rapid advancement in economic development, a new challenge appeared in the conduct of public administration in the past few years.

Dimensions of substance in the new policies and plans have rapidly changed. Economic development brought about new desires and expectations among the populace. New interests, both organized and unorganized, have appeared and presented themselves as the potential sources for consultation and representation in the policy formulation, planning and administrative process. Existing interests were divided and disappeared, and those which survived have strengthened themselves.

Economic planners and policy formulators who formerly were able to plan based on monolithic, static, simple and hierarchical model and therefore, relied on relatively simple and vertical processes, are now being forced to go through multiple, complex and dynamic processes of planning and implementation. The need to adapt themselves to the pressures arising out of the various sectors both in the society and the bureaucracy is increasing. However, bargaining and conciliation are likely to cause disintegration in the content of a plan. On the other hand, the difficulty to make a really integrated and coherent plan easily induces the planner either to level down his aspiration or to rely himself on vertical dictation.

To take into account the new kinds of effects and expectations which the planners have not been accustomed to expect in the previous plans and make a feasible and integrated plan is a challenge to the administrators in Korea.

Planners of the present day should possess well-balanced knowledge of politics, social dyn-

amics, economic phenomena and human behavior, and be mature enough to command the tacit knowledge of reality of political and administrative life. Being a man of high motivation toward achievement of tasks, he should also be able to negotiate, persuade and bargain with the clients and colleagues in the bureaucracy. Futuristic in his orientation, he should be creative in ideas and imaginative of the various long-range effects of the intended and unintended nature the plan will bring about.

Recently, many agencies of the central government of Korea have developed various long-range plans independent of the second five year economic development plan of the EPB. The following is the table of the number of plans in various substance areas extending over five to thirty years together with the names of agencies which formulated and adopted these plans.

Ministry of Agriculture.....	9
Office of Forestry	3
Ministry of Construction	3
Ministry of Public Health and Social Affairs	2
Ministry of Education	1
Ministry of Science and Technology.....	3
Ministry of Commerce and Industry.....	6

One can find neither horizontal coordination between these plans, nor the effort to integrate each of these plans with the five year economic development of the country. What Korea currently needs is the plan of plans, in which the plans of each agency are mutually coordinated and all of these are in turn geared to the five year economic development plan.

Under such circumstances the economic planners of the EPB, for example, should negotiate with the other power centers such as the ministries and potential multiple interests of the society in order to make their plan really feasible and integrative one. This will also apply to the planners, for instance, of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in that the designation of industrial site and inducement of factories to this location frequently created the problem of air and water pollution which brought about the street demonstrations of farmers and fishermen. The legislators and the Ministry of Agriculture stood against the Ministry of Commerce and Industry because the objective to increase the income level of the agricultural sector was seriously damaged.

Recently, each agency of the central government was reorganized to free certain positions in the middle and top management levels from daily routines of administration and to let them

concentrate on the policy issues and plans of the agency concerned and serve as staff aides to the high level line officers. However, the measure seems to have not attained the intended results other than the change of formal structure, because the persons assigned to these new posts from within the bureaucracy did not possess the qualities the planners should possess under the new challenge the Korean bureaucracy is facing.

Fact Orientation in Planning and Administration

A really good plan requires not only the true integration of various interests but also strong fact orientation on the part of the planners and administrators. Informations on the relevant facts should serve as a major governing criterion in the making of decisions. *Especially the systematic, scientific collection and analyses of the data as a part of the decision making process greatly contributes toward the development of fact orientation on the part of administrators. The stronger the fact orientation, the less the likelihood of decision process being easily disintegrated because of the need to co-opt the pressures arising out of heterogeneous interests.*

Concrete data on facts and especially the quantitative analysis of the data have the effect of dramatizing and clarifying objectives of a plan and thus focusing the attention of the politicians and administrators upon concrete events. Quantitative data will provide common ground for united action and thus contribute toward the legitimation of policies and integration of plans. Factual orientation will certainly let the decision makers base their judgement on factual data and thus will let them understand the role and boundary of judgement where norms and values are conflicting against each other.

Korea in the last few years established the agencies such as the Science and Technology Information Service Center and the Export Information Center. These two centers which are placed outside of the traditional structure of government bureaucracy are serving as data banks both to the administrators and the businessmen. The service activities by these two centers will gradually induce those relevant decision units to utilize facts to a greater extent than before.

Similar development is also found in the study, analyses and formulations of long-range economic development plans. The Korean cabinet has just passed a law establishing Korean Institute of Development, which is also to be placed outside of the existing bureaucratic structure. This institute will be staffed by high level experts on economic planning, will

engage, in cooperation with universities and government agencies, in the systematic collection, analyses of data, long-range forecasting, and examination of various economic policies of the government, and thus will be able to serve relevant decision units including the Economic Planning Board.

Still another development is the introduction of high-speed computers in the Korean society and the government. Around fifteen systems of second and third generation computers are in operation in the business sector, universities, computer companies and the government. Various agencies of the government are scheduled to introduce computers to their operations. Some agencies are already utilizing the computers possessed by computer companies.

Though most of the computerization programs are mainly for demographic, statistical and clerical operation, a significant exception is the *computerization of budget documents*. This program is being pushed by the Budget Bureau of the EPB and contracted to the Computer Center of the Korean Institute of Science and Technology. When completed, this program will facilitate the budget review process of the budget bureau in the time taken, depth of analysis and degree of rationality. Certainly politics of budgeting will remain for long time to come. Yet the area of factual agreement will gradually increase because of this program.

Final example which will also have the effect of increasing fact orientation is the *application of PERT technique to budget review process* by the EPB.

For the FY 1972 budget the EPB requested the agencies concerned to submit PERT networks and related data on the following thirteen projects.

1. Construction of National Assembly Building.....National Assembly
2. Express Highway ConstructionMinistry of Construction
3. River Dam Construction "
4. Dock Construction "
5. Industrial Water System "
6. Free Port Construction.....Ministry of Commerce and Industry
7. Petro-Chemical Factory Construction.....Ministry of Commerce and Industry
8. New Campus Construction for Seoul National University.....Ministry of Education
9. Construction of National Cultural Center...Ministry of Culture and Public Information
10. International Air Port Construction.....Ministry of Transportation
11. Railway Construction.....Office of Railroad
12. Construction of Railway Cargo Terminal.....Office of Railroad

13. Steel Factory ConstructionMinistry of Commerce and Industry

The PERT networks and related data provided the administrators in the budget review side of the EPB with the tools for the examination of rationale of the activities, sub-activities, their sequences, and costs involved. The reviews were conducted with the help of the technicians placed in the EPB and were followed by field observations. The EPB is planning to coordinate the timing and amount of budget allocation in order to let the agencies observe the networks mutually agreed upon. Consequently, *the agencies concerned are gradually being forced to reorient themselves in favor of more rational planning of each project.* To make easier the scheduling of complex PERT networks, the EPB will eventually attempt to utilize computer programs.

Technicians, Scientists, and the Civil Service

Economic development which was mainly geared to the development of the secondary industry in Korea, brought about the increasing demands for technicians and scientists in the business sector. Business companies have always been paying higher salaries to their employees than the government. With such rising demand for technicians in the companies, these jobs in business have advanced most conspicuously in their salary scale.

The government established a few years ago an enclave of scientists called Korean Institute of Science and Technology also outside of the umbrella of the existing bureaucracy of the government. The Korean scientists who had been trained and employed in the western countries returned to join this institute. The institute is now the center of service to the business community and the government bureaucracy in the solution of technical and scientific problems.

In spite of this measure, *business companies are constantly draining the scientists and technicians out of the civil service.* Fresh graduates of colleges and universities in this field tend to choose business rather than civil service as their career. Consequently, the government bureaucracy is facing a new problem, which it did not foresee in the initial years of the last decade. A by-product of this phenomenon is *the changing relationship in the government between scientists and technicians on the one hand and administrators on the other.* Under the traditional culture which conferred highest status to the administrator of Chinese literati type and degraded technicians and engineers, the generalist administrator had superior power in the dynamic processes of intra bureaucratic conflicts. However, in a few agencies nowadays, we can already

observe that this *relationship is being changed drastically in favor of the technicians and scientists.*

Need for Urban Planners

With the rapid urbanization process going on with all of its concomitant problems following the trend especially in a few cities of the country, the need to breed a new force of urban planners were envisioned both by the Korean government and foreign aid agencies. *The Graduate School of Public Administration started the Master program* in urban and regional planning in 1968 and produced twelve planners with master degree in this year. Though it is a small venture in scale as of now, the Department of Urban and Regional Planning will eventually grow to become a new graduate school and will provide the needs both of the central and local governments.

Conclusion

Korea has made various attempts to develop and strengthen factual orientation of planners and administrators in the last few years. Such attempts were expressed structurally as to place the new institutes of this nature outside of the government bureaucracy, which tends to be rigid in structure, operation and closed to new bloods.

On the other hand, the ability to negotiate and conciliate for the accommodation of conflicting interest and make a qualitative judgement has not been systematically cultivated with any notable institutional arrangement. Besides the formal training using simulation, game, case study, policy exercise, sensitivity cultivation techniques, the development of this ability might have to rely, for some time to come, on the natural process of self-learning through accumulation of experiences.