

Society for Advancement of Mgmt

From the Office of  
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For Release: Tuesday a.m.  
April 2, 1957

on "Improvement of Decision Making"

GOOD GOVERNMENT HINGES ON CAREER SERVICE, SENATOR HUMPHREY SAYS

Good government "begins and ends" with career service people, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) declared last night in an address before the Society of Personnel Administrators at the Hamilton Hotel in Washington, D.C.

"All the talk about good government, efficiency, and economy is useless if we neglect the basic force needed to achieve these goals -- the people who dedicate their lives to working in government," Senator Humphrey declared.

Security Program

"Good government begins with a competent career service, properly compensated both financially and with public respect.

"It is undermined and crippled to the extent such a career service is weakened by favoritism, political patronage, or morale-destroying disrespect.

"The sooner we learn that, and accept it as fact, the better off we will be.

Economy -  
Budget  
Services -  
Personnel  
Cost of Personnel

"The greatest waste in government today is not the numbers of people employed in public service, but the loss of trained personnel through heavy turn-over caused by a breakdown in employee morale as a result of inadequate compensation, abuse instead of respect, and an unfair 'ceiling' on opportunity by limiting top posts to political appointments instead of recognizing and making good use of the experience and training of career personnel."

Scientists  
Engineers  
Doctors  
Teachers  
Statisticians

There can be "bad economy" as well as "good economy" in trying to slash government personnel, Senator Humphrey cautioned.

90 cuts

"Some shortsighted economy advocates of across-the-board percentage cuts in government personnel actually result in less efficiency rather than more, through rewarding the office with 'padded' budgets and penalizing the honest administrator trying to do a good job at a minimum of cost in dollars and people," he declared.

Lack of job security and lack of public respect, he declared, lessen a government employee's zeal "for doing his best".

Job Security

"If government employees are deprived of a secure future and reasonable opportunities for advancement in career service, if they are disrespectfully treated as 'feeders at the public trough' instead of men and women dedicating their lives to the public service, they are less likely to do as good a job as they are capable of doing and more likely to say 'what's the use?' and fall into the very kind of work habits a good administrator wants them to avoid."

Protect Rights

Senator Humphrey said a good government personnel officer "has a responsibility to protect the rights and interests of employees and to speak up in their behalf, instead of just being a spokesman for his own superiors to such employees"

"If you really believe in the career service, you are the people who are going to have to make it work by having the courage to resist invasions of employee rights," he declared. "It is going to take courage to do that, when even personnel officers are sometimes victims of politically-inspired firings.

"We in the Congress, in turn, have a responsibility to uphold you and give you backing when you exercise your leadership toward what is best for government in the long run -- good morale of our public servants, and the security they deserve for good performance of their work."

Senator Humphrey is Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Government Reorganization.

Competition for Talent (50/4-57) 7% of 12,000  
He Rank Hi-Sch. Seniors

## THE PERSONNEL OFFICER AS PITCHMAN

I feel sure that my subject, THE PERSONNEL OFFICER AS PITCHMAN, has some of you wondering.

Before the more professional minded personnel people among you become too startled, let me hasten to explain.

First, I don't want the term "pitchman" to detract in any sense from the truly professional stature which quite appropriately belongs to personnel officers today. It is obvious to more and more top executives in business and educational fields as well as in government, that a true profession or at least a fine art is rapidly emerging and assuming its proper place among other professions of longer standing.

Second, I want to use the term "pitchman" to describe a fundamental responsibility which I think is rightfully an important obligation of a personnel officer. Or stated another way, the term "pitchman" describes what I want to say in a word that is understood even though it may be "unprofessional." It seems to me that the use of down to earth words might be good for us because you know, we're criticized a lot in personnel work for having developed a terminology peculiar to our profession. We're supposed to be experts on government gobbledy-goop. For example, I remember when we were all so proud of our training program. Well, training to me is a very descriptive word. But, you very seldom hear it used today. The term "employee development" has almost made it obsolete. We used to talk about our job of SELLING top management on personnel administration. Then, we got scared somebody would think the only things that required salesmen were gimmicks. So, we switched to using the term "education" or "staff liaison" or "idea communication" and ad infinitum. It seems impossible for us to stop the trend toward what I call "high-falutin" words.

Recently I had the honor to attend a two week Civil Service Commission - sponsored Personnel Officers Executive Training Course.

It was really a wonderful program and very stimulating. But, after listening to some of the outstanding educators and management experts in the country expound, I think I know now where we get our gobbledy-gosp. Listen to a few of the terms not rarely - but frequently - used by my teachers.

1. Manager development
2. Unity of command
3. Variable span of control
4. Primary group concept (actually the full quote on this should be repeated. Here it is -- "span of control is no longer a valid principle of organization ... because of the emergence of the primary group concept.")
5. Participative leadership
6. High frustration tolerance (This sounds like something my wife claims she needs in order to put up with me)
7. Conceptual skill - this really means a "sense of balance"

Now, I happen to be a farm reared boy. Maybe this is why I can't follow that fancy talk. But, I sort of have a sneaky suspicion that we're a little too quick to think we can be equal with other professions if we develop technical words peculiar to our work so that no one outside of our ranks can understand what we're talking about. In this way, you see, no one can evaluate us.

Please believe that I don't mean to criticize these researchers and educators for using words I can't understand - because I'm sure they're doing a tremendous job. But, the think I worry about is that personnel officers seem all too eager to pick up that kind of lingo too and I'm a little scared of hiding the personnel light under a bushel basket of double talk. Or, as some of them tell me, maybe I'm just a little too old fashioned for this advanced

type of thinking.

So, all I'm doing tonight is using the old fashioned word "pitchman" to try to get us back down to earth and I'm going to stick my neck out and say that a big part of our job is to be plain old "pitchmen". You know what a "pitchman" is. He's the hawker with a line of patter designed solely to get the skeptical public to buy something. He's trying to talk you into paying to see the fat lady in the side show or to buy the 5-in-one kitchen tool that peels, mashes, shreds, grates, and makes coffee with only one slight adjustment for each operation. The thing that makes the "pitchman" tick is his interest in people. He's an expert in practical psychology and in people - the significance of details of dress, the fleeting expression - the unconscious gesture that reveals another's unspoken thoughts. He's able to establish contact with the people around him quickly and to enlist their interest in his wishes -- to sell his product.

What we need more of I think is more major league pitchmen in the major league profession of personnel administration. Because if you don't think you have to be a darn good "pitchman" to get some top management to buy some of our Civil Service "services" today, then believe me your type of top management and mine are different. And, I don't apologize for being a "pitchman" because in pitching the benefits of sound personnel administration to our top management, we're pitching a darn good product.

Also, if you don't think it takes all the gimmicks in the pitchman's book to sell potential federal employees throughout the country on the government as a good place to work - then you haven't been doing any active college recruiting lately.

In a recent survey of 12,000 top ranking high school students in the United States, only 2.1% expressed an interest in a career of public service. Fields

Fields such as Teaching (30.0), Engineering (16.7), Scientific research (10.7), medicine (9.4), business (7.0), nursing (3.9), communications (2.5), and law (2.2), were rates ahead of public employment and very few fields were ranked below it. I can't help feel that this is partly due to a distorted picture some people paint of the role of public employees in our American way of life.

Now, I think the public employees in this country have earned the right to a more accurate picture of the contribution they are making. Too, I think the personnel officer must accept a considerable share of the responsibility for doing a better job of being pitchman to the public on public employee performance. Because if personnel administration is the "development of people" we couldn't have a better group of people to be "pitchmen" for than employees in the public service. But, you know, there's a funny thing about employees in the public service. Even though their team has always won - or at least up to now they have (thank goodness) - the fans they thought they had are often booing instead of cheering.

It's a peculiar thing about booing. Have you ever been to a baseball game and seen one person start a whole section to booing? But, watch a little closer. One person starts to cheer and others around him get the drift and before you know it, there's quite a chorus of supporters. And then the really important thing happens - the team somehow begins to play better.

There are encouraging signs of an awareness of the need for more cheering on the part of people outside our profession. For example, Senator Richard Neuberger of Oregon recently said in a talk in Washington:

"When people talk about bureaucrats, I always challenge them. I say: 'Who do you mean by bureaucrats? Do you mean the man in the Public Health Service who inspects your water supply? Do you want to fire him? Do you mean the policeman on the beat who will see to it that your wife is not attacked and that you are not run over by an automobile? Do you want to fire him?'"

The teacher at the school down the street, the doctors, nurses and attendants who care for our disabled war veterans - is that what you mean by bureaucrat? The first men to carry the American flag to my state of Oregon - Lewis and Clark - were employees of the U.S. government. I think that when people, for selfish reasons, financial or political, talk about the men and women who serve the Federal Government as "bureaucrats", we should fight back."

Now, I am not suggesting tonight that we take the initiative and fight back as the Senator says. Fighting back while sorely needed, is probably best left to the politicians. But, let's start being "pitchmen" for the outstanding contributions so many of our co-workers are making to the American people. Let's see that the people in our community know of the GOOD things their employees in that community are doing. I wondered, as I heard the Senator's speech if we as Personnel Officers really know about the fine contributions most of the employees in our agency are making. I wonder if we really realize that we as public employees have received a heritage of accomplishment and stature from previous public employees that is probably unparalleled by no other group of employees in the world?

As a matter of fact, Senator Neuberger's reference to the fact that Lewis and Clark were government employees came as a surprise to me. It gave me the idea to do a bit of additional research. What other public servants have made outstanding contributions and are they remembered as public servants?

We don't have to limit such people to our own public service. An Italian - Did you ever stop to think that Christopher Columbus was on the royal payroll of the Spanish Government when he discovered North America? The same government hired another young man - on a sort of "contract" basis. This young government employee set sail on what was perhaps the greatest voyage in history - the first one around the world. His name was Ferdinand Magellan.

Every school child is familiar with the fact that an employee of the Government of Cuba, Hernando De Soto, discovered the Mississippi River.

I learned that Washington Irving, author of the unforgettable Rip Van Winkle and Ichabod Crane stories and who, as a boy, used to sail up the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers of New York State was with the Foreign Service of the State

Department.

The Star-Spangled Banner was written by a government employee. His name was Francis Scott Key. While on a mission to obtain exchange of American prisoners held by the British Fleet, he saw the shelling of Fort McHenry from a British warship. This experience was the basis for our national anthem.

Samuel Pierpont Langley, the American astronomer, physicist, employee of the United States Government and early inventor in the field of aeronautics is probably a new name to you. His power-driven aeroplane had made three successful flights of half a mile in 1898 - five years before the Wright Brothers famous flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

Walt Whitman, whose wonderful poems such as "Leaves of Grass" sing the praises of America and democracy was with the Interior Department and with the Office of the Attorney General of the United States.

Did you ever stop to realize, when you hear that stirring march, Semper Fideles, that it's author, John Philip Sousa, was bandmaster of the U. S. Marine Band when he wrote the song?

An outstanding employee of the Navy Department, John Dahlgren, invented the world-famous Dahlgren guns. Another employee of the Navy Department from my adopted State of Virginia is noted as the world's leading explorer of the Arctic and Antarctic. His name is Richard E. Byrd.

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The Army produced a young explorer -- born in what is now New Jersey -- who followed the Missouri and Osage Rivers into what is now the State of Kansas, then south to the Arkansas River through the Royal Gorge to what is now Pueblo, Colorado, and subsequently to what is now called Pikes Peak. His name, of course, Zeb Pike.

Matthew Fontaine Maury was a new name to me. I find that this government

## PENICILLIN

Let me give you an example of a contribution by public employees which I am sure will be just as meaningful to those of you who have families as it is to me and my family.

How many of your children have had potentially serious illnesses "knocked out" in short order by penicillin? I suppose my four children together have had between 50 and 100 penicillin shots during their lives. Almost every time this occurred, they were sick with high fever and I was worried - as any parent would be. But, shortly after most every treatment, the kids bounced back like rubber balls. And, I've said two prayers of thanks - one to heaven- and the other to the public employees in the Department of Agriculture, Peoria, Illinois research laboratory who made the commercial production of penicillin feasible. This great accomplishment, incidentally, was made during World War II and among the thousands of our soldier lives which were saved by it, were members of my family as I can imagine were yours.

## YELLOW FEVER - MALARIA

While studying the cause and control of a cattle fever at the turn of the century, Department scientists, Dr. Theobald Smith - F.L. Kilborne - Cooper Curtis, discovered that ticks were carriers of the disease. To the average citizen this might seem to be a bit of routine information, but it was much more than that. It was the first positive proof that insects could carry a disease from one animal to another.

Dr. Walter Reed, famous Army employee followed up on this discovery and proved definitely that mosquitoes were responsible for the spread of Malaria and Yellow fever.

This discovery paved the way for later demonstration by medical research that mosquitoes were carriers of yellow fever and malaria. A Department scientist, Dr. L. O. Howard had already learned how to control mosquitoes by spraying kerosene on ponds and other small bodies of still water. These discoveries saved countless thousands of lives throughout the world.

### UNDULANT FEVER

How's this for an example of public service. Dr. Agnes Ellis, while working in the old Bureau of Animal Industry in the United States Department of Agriculture, exposed herself to undulant fever while working out the relation between this disease of humans and brucillous of livestock. She knew that she was almost certain to contract the disease, which she did. She proved definitely that brucillous and undulant fever were caused by the same organism and that if we would control brucillous in cattle we would control undulant fever.

Richard T. Whitcomb who lives in Hampton, Virginia and who is an employee of NACA, developed the "area rule concept" for supersonic aircraft.

The area rule is a principle that greatly reduced the sharp drag rise that occurs at transonic speeds. Whitcomb found that the drag rise is lowered substantially when the designer "pinches" the fuselage where the wings are attached. Application of his discovery resulted in increasing the speed of supersonic aircraft by as much as 25% without additional power. The dollar savings to the Government is incalculable.

The fire season was at its height on the Deschutes National Forest in Oregon when a lookout discovered a wisp of smoke on the horizon, later designated as a "lost" fire. Howard LaDuke, fire guard, was given three days' food supplies and dispatched on his motorcycle with instructions to find the fire and stay with it until it was trenched. Four days passed; no word came from Howard and nothing more was seen of the smoke. The fire dispatcher, fearing an accident, sent a man to investigate. Finally on the fifth day the motorcycle was found but there were no traces of the boy except footprints leading further into the forest. Suddenly, the officer came upon a sight of a bureaucrat in action that caused considerable amazement. Here before him was a fire covering some two acres, but well under control, though still being tended by a half-starved, wall-nigh exhausted youth, who, singlehanded and with food sufficient for little more than half that time had struggled with the flames day and night for five days. He explained that he had been unable to leave for help because the wind continually carried sparks which started new fires.

(From R-6 Bulletin 1929)

DR. WM. B. McLEAN, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR OF THE NAVAL ORDNANCE TEST STATION, CHINA LAKE, CALIFORNIA, PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE "SIDEWINDER" - NAVY'S NEW AIR TO AIR GUIDED MISSILE WHICH IS SO SIMPLE IT HAS NO MORE ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS THAN A TABLE RADIO. THE MISSILE IS HIGHLY RELIABLE AND EFFECTIVE AGAINST HIGH SPEED AIRCRAFT FROM SEA LEVEL TO ALTITUDES WELL OVER 50,000 FEET AND HAS SAVED THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER \$46,000,000 IN ONE YEAR.

The missile will be widely used by both the Navy and Air Force. Incidentally, here is an account of the effectiveness of the "Sidewinder" I happened to see in a recent local newspaper.

"A crimson World War II Helcat fighter roared over the Mohave Desert under high clouds, heading for a rendezvous with destruction, less than 60 seconds away.

Out of the clouds, screaming, came a Navy delta wing Demon jet fighter. For a few moments it swallowed up the intervening distance. Then - two miles from its prey - it unleashed a pencil-shaped missile and banked away.

A brief streak of fire and smoke showed the missile driving like a javelin at the fleeting drone. It moved so fast it literally vanished. Only a small ball of orange fire and a wavering shriek marked its passing.

In two blinks of an eye the ball of fire caught the obsolete fighter. There was a puff of smoke and an explosion like a sonic boom. Then the plane swirled to earth in a flat spin and struck the desert with another explosion.

This was the Sidewinder, the Navy's newest and most deadly air-to-air guided missile. It was like watching a championship fight that ended in a knockout in the first minute."

Now, I have not done a thorough job of research to get names like these. These are not necessarily the "few best". Rather, they are typical of outstanding work being done by public employees everywhere everyday. I'm sure that you could give me equally striking examples of people you know in government jobs who are showing imagination, courage and unusual patience and industry in the performance of their jobs. Many of the contributions are not as dramatic perhaps as the ones I've mentioned but I know in my own mind that nowhere - in any country - or industry or in any other general work situation - does any group of employees match the magnificent record being made by public employees.

But, we Personnel People - representatives of these employees - are letting them down. We are concerning ourselves more with problem employees than with producing employees. We are concentrating on negative rather than positive aspects of personnel administration. We're in this position in my opinion because of one main reason. That is, we wait for employees to come to us rather than going out to them - where the work is done. While many who come to us have significant problems which we can and should help them on, lets also seek out the producers and give them recognition. Lets get positive about producers in the public service and do a better pitch job for them.

All of this adds up to two main points which summarize what I've been trying to say.

The first is that we Personnel Officers in the Public Service have people worth making a pitch for -- in every line of work and in every government agency. My examples are drawn from many grade levels - different races - creeds - men - women. They include clerks, scientists, inspectors, laborers, and officials at policy making levels. Remember there are average government employees.

The second point is the way you folks outside of Washington, D.C. fit in. The majority of our federal employees are at field installations located in cities

and towns, large and small, in all parts of the country. The citizen's opinion of his Federal government, or of the employees in it, in many cases is influenced by his reaction to a local Federal field establishment.

An active program of employee recognition produces ideal occasions to effectively support your agency's community relations objective. In order to do this you must make sure that the local community is fully aware of notable employee achievements in your agency.

So, the challenge I would leave with you is this. Lets become "pitchmen" and improve our arts of salesmanship with every technique at our command. Lets learn the gimmicks that have worked for others. Lets dream up some good ones of our own. Lets put them to work ... in gaining support for our program of employee recognition ... in convincing the employees of our agency that their best efforts do not go unnoticed ... and in demonstrating to the people of our community that public servants render a public service above and beyond the call of duty.

I feel this deeply and sincerely and wanted to say something about it. That's why I chose the topic, "THE PERSONNEL OFFICER AS PITCHMAN".



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