

N. R. PILLAI,
CHAIRMAN,
I.F.S.COMMITTEE.

Ministry of External Affairs,
NEW DELHI.

21st July, 1965.

Dear M. Masani,

The Committee appointed by the Government of India to review the organisation and working of the Indian Foreign Service has now started on its work. The Committee's terms of reference are set out in a Press Note issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on June 15, a copy of which is enclosed.

2. The Committee has, through a Press release, invited views and suggestions from members of the public on matters falling within the scope of its enquiry. This general invitation cannot necessarily ensure for the Committee full access to informed and authoritative opinion in the country, and the Committee is, therefore, anxious to obtain, by direct approach, advice and guidance from persons whose knowledge of international affairs and diplomacy and whose known interest in India's foreign representation lend weight and authority to their judgment. Accordingly, as Chairman of the Committee, I am writing this letter to enlist your support and co-operation, and I very much hope that you will be good enough to give the Committee a full measure of assistance.

3. The basic question before us is: Has the Indian Foreign Service proved, and is it likely to prove in the changing conditions in India and abroad, an effective instrument for the execution of our foreign policy? If not, where exactly do the defects and deficiencies lie, and what can be done to remove these and improve the quality and efficiency of the Service? To study this question in the requisite degree of detail, it is necessary to investigate the present position in relation to each of the different well-recognised groups of functions which the Service is required to perform. These are:-

- (i) Diplomatic: This is traditionally the best known function of a diplomatic representative and consists in the furtherance of his country's policies and interests, in general and in particular, by the diplomatic methods of discussion and negotiation with the government of the country where he serves. What, in your opinion, has been the standard of performance of the Foreign Service in this respect?
- (ii) Representational: A Foreign Service Officer is expected, at all times and in his contacts with people at all levels in the country where he serves, to conduct himself as a worthy representative of his country, his people and his government. How far has our Foreign Service lived up to this test? Perhaps I should add that a representative of any country should be one who is known, above all, to be a "decent man", for, as

Jules Cambon says, " the best instrument at the disposal of a Government wishing to persuade another Government will always remain the spoken words of a decent man."

- iii) Economic and Commercial: The functions of the Foreign Service in this field are today of paramount importance, and it is in the highest degree desirable that the Service should be fully trained and equipped to discharge these functions. It would be of great help to the Committee to know (1) whether you consider that there has been sufficient awareness, both within and outside the Service, of the importance of this branch of work of the Service, (2) whether, in your opinion, the Service possesses the necessary expertise, and, if not, what steps should be taken to give members of the Service special training and (3) in what other ways the diplomatic apparatus should be strengthened and the organisational and procedural arrangements at Headquarters improved to secure the object in view.
- iv) Consular: This branch is mainly concerned with the issue of passports and visas and with looking after the interests of resident and visiting Indian nationals. How well, in your view, are these duties now being performed?
- v) Information: Information work consists of both political and cultural publicity, but mainly the former. It is a measure of the importance of this work and of the public interest in it that there has been so much criticism, over the years, of our publicity machine and its working both at headquarters and in Missions abroad. The Committee is anxious to arrive at a proper appreciation of the defects and shortcomings of the present system and to be able to make proposals for reform. Nowhere is expert advice more valuable than in this field, and the Committee would welcome such advice.

4. In compartmentalising the functions of the Service, as I have done above, my purpose has merely been to help identify and trace to their proper source any deficiencies which an examination of the working of the Service may reveal. It is, of course, the total performance that counts, and I should be grateful if you would indicate in your reply your general assessment of the quality of the work being done by the Service as well as the impressions you may have formed of our Missions abroad, with particular reference to the standard of courtesy and the spirit of helpfulness shown by them to visiting Indian nationals.

5. A common complaint against Civil Services in general is that they fail to respond to social and other developments in the country. It is said that Indian

Foreign Service Officers do not have an adequate background of our domestic problems and tend progressively to lose contact with developments in the economic, social and cultural fields. Do you agree with this, and, if so, what remedial measures would you propose?

6. This brings me to the related questions of recruitment and training. The sole method of entry to the Service now is through an open competitive examination held by the Union Public Service Commission which ensures a fair field for all. Would you suggest any other method? A proposal has been made that recruitment to the Service should be from among members of other Services who have completed four or five years of service and can be presumed therefore to have a good knowledge of conditions in the country and of our problems. This would have the effect of postponing by some years the specialised training to be given to IFS Officers, including language training, which is best undertaken when one is young. What are your views on this proposal?

7. The programme of training now current is as follows: 4 months in the National Academy; 4 months at the School of International Studies; 6 months of district training; and 6 months in the Ministry of External Affairs, rounded off by an educational tour of the country lasting a month. Do you consider this adequate, taking into account the obvious objections to any unduly long period of probation?

8. There seems to be a growing feeling that the popularity of the IFS has waned in recent years. If you share this view, would you indicate what steps should be taken to attract to the IFS a fair share of the best among the youth of our country? One such step is clearly an improvement in the conditions of service of IFS officers (including their allowances and ~~their~~ concessions), if on examination this is found necessary.

9. No review of the Foreign Service would be complete without some consideration of the organisation at headquarters, mainly in the Ministry of External Affairs, to determine whether existing arrangements are adequate to ensure proper formulation, unified control and purposeful direction of our foreign policy. I should appreciate it if you would indicate your views on the following, in particular -

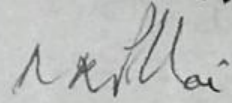
- (1) the degree of responsibility which the Ministry of External Affairs should have in relation to financial, commercial, publicity and cultural arrangements with foreign countries;
- (2) the need for a policy planning section in the Ministry of External Affairs;

- (3) the desirability of more frequent home postings for IFS officers and their temporary secondment to other Ministries such as Defence, Finance, Industry, Commerce and Information & Broadcasting;
- (4) the need for maintenance by the Ministry of External Affairs of contact with the Universities and with such bodies as Indian Council of World Affairs.

10. I have enumerated the major issues which the Committee has to examine, and I should be grateful if you would be so good as to let the Committee have the benefit of your views and advice on these and any other relevant issues which may occur to you. It would be an advantage if your reply could be sent as soon as possible.

11. Having made this considerable demand on your time, the Committee is averse to causing you further inconvenience. Should, however, the Committee find it necessary to seek a personal discussion with you, I very much hope that you will give us the privilege of such an opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Shri M.R. Masani, M.P.
57, Lodi Estate,
New Delhi.

P R E S S N O T E

The Government of India consider it desirable that a Committee be appointed to review the organisation and working of the Indian Foreign Service in the light of the experience gained since its inception and the changes that have taken place in India and in the world during this period. The object of such a review should be to bring about an improvement in the efficiency of the Foreign Service and in the working of Indian Missions abroad so as to make the Foreign Service better able to meet present and future needs of India's foreign policy and diplomatic representation abroad.

2. The Government of India have accordingly decided to appoint a Committee consisting of -

Chairman Shri N.R. Pillai

Members 1. Foreign Secretary
 2. Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
 3. Secretary, Ministry of Commerce
 4. Secretary, External Affairs (II).

Shri N. Krishnan in the Ministry of External Affairs will act as Secretary to the Committee.

3. The terms of reference of the Committee are -

"To review the structure and organisation of the Indian Foreign Service, with particular reference to recruitment, training and service conditions, and to consider any other matters conducive to the strengthening and efficient functioning of the Service at Headquarters and abroad, and make recommendations to Government."

4. The Committee should submit its report to the Government by 31st January, 1966.





N. Krishnan
Secretary,
IFS Committee

विदेश मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
NEW DELHI-11

Handwritten signature/initials

No. 298 /IFSC/Misc/65

December 2, 1965.

Dear Mr. Masani,

I write to confirm that the I.F.S. Committee looks forward to meeting you at 9.30 a.m. on Saturday, the 4th December. The meeting will take place in Room No. 161-B, 1st Floor, South Block (Ministry of External Affairs).

I should like to convey, on behalf of the Committee, sincere apologies for the inconvenience caused to you in shifting the date from the 6th to 4th /the and to thank you for having so readily agreed to the change.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of N. Krishnan
(N. Krishnan)

Shri M.R. Masani, M.P.
57 Lodi Estate,
New Delhi-3.

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MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
EXTERNAL PUBLICITY DIVISION
PRESS RELATIONS SECTION
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(6)

New Delhi, June 15, 1966
Jyaishta 25, 1887

PRESS NOTE

COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO REVIEW INDIAN FOREIGN SERVICE

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RB:ACB
1/15/306/65