

Introduction

In 1973, the Civil Service had its first experience of industrial action on a national scale. It was evident from this and other events that there was considerable unrest in parts of the Service. Pay was the immediate cause; there was also trouble about understaffing; but it was apparent that there were deeper and more complex reasons as well. The National Staff Side, and the Civil and Public Services Association in particular, made it clear that whilst they were primarily concerned about pay and other conditions of service there were aspects of the discontent in the Civil Service that were more intangible. Accordingly, with the co-operation of the National Staff Side, the Civil Service Department, which had already undertaken a preliminary study of its own, put in hand a review of these wider issues. In July 1973 the Wider Issues Review Team was set up

- to identify the factors which increasingly affect the attitudes to work and the sense of satisfaction derived from it of the staff, particularly in the middle and lower grades of the Civil Service;
- where improvements are found to be necessary, to consider remedies in conjunction with departments and the National Staff Side; and
- to report its findings.

We have carried out the review accordingly, and this is our final report.

2. The Review team has reported to a Steering Committee drawn from the senior management of CSD and departmental Establishment Officers. The Steering Committee and the Review team have had eight meetings with representatives of the National Staff Side.¹ The Review team have also had discussions with permanent and elected officials of the staff associations; with departmental Establishment Officers and with some Departmental Staff Sides. We have paid nearly forty visits to working units all over the country,

1. The names of the Steering Committee's members, of the representatives of the National Staff Side and of the Team's members are given in Annex 1.

and have attended five staff association annual conferences as observers.² Throughout the review, the team has been greatly helped by the frank and constructive suggestions and criticisms that have been put to it on these occasions, and also on paper.

3. In March 1974, we made an interim report which gave a provisional and diagnostic account of the problems of the Civil Service. The two Sides of the Civil Service National Whitley Council issued a joint statement on it,³ and the statement and report were circulated together by the staff associations for discussion and debate at their annual conferences in May. In the House of Commons the Prime Minister welcomed the joint statement and also the full involvement of the staff themselves in the review through the staff associations.⁴

4. Later in the summer, in the light of their annual conferences and other consultations, the General Secretaries of the main staff associations were able to say that in general they endorsed the diagnosis in our interim report. It was also similarly endorsed by departmental Establishment Officers. This has given us the basis for our final report which is set out in three Chapters:

Chapter 1 which describes the Civil Service as it is today;

Chapter 2 which discusses the present needs of the Civil Service; and

Chapter 3 which points to the action arising from this Review, and summarises our findings.

-
2. Annex 2 lists the visits that the Team has paid, the Departmental Staff Sides with which it has had discussions, and the staff association conferences which it attended.
 3. The National Whitley Council's joint statement is reproduced as Annex 3.
 4. The Prime Minister's statement is reproduced as Annex 4.

1. The Civil Service today

5. The Civil Service employs almost 700,000 people. This Review is concerned with the 500,000 non-industrial civil servants, who make up two per cent of the country's working population; and in particular with the workaday problems of the middle and lower grades who form the great majority. The more senior grades have some of the same problems, and indeed some others as well. This report also concerns more senior staff – and indeed Ministers – in another way, in that Ministers and senior management are responsible for the major decisions that affect the service, and for the way it runs.

6. For practical purposes, the civil servant's employer is the department in which he works. The management of staff is primarily the responsibility of each department, and so is the organisation of work. However, the Civil Service Department (CSD) is responsible for pay, pensions and other conditions of service; it has central control of the total number and grading standards of civil servants in departments, and is responsible for overall recruitment policy. It controls expenditure on administrative services. Accommodation and stationery services are supplied to departments by the Property Services Agency (PSA) and Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). In all the areas under the CSD's control, employing departments do the front-line work which directly affects the individual or the working unit.

7. About sixty per cent of non-industrial civil servants are employed in four departments, namely:

- the Ministry of Defence (130,000);
- the Department of Health and Social Security (85,000);
- the Inland Revenue (72,000);
- the Department of the Environment (including the Property Services Agency) (43,000)

Nine other departments employ another thirty per cent of non-industrial civil servants. The remaining 50,000 belong to over fifty smaller departments.

8. The names of departments only begin to indicate the variety of work

done by their non-industrial staff. Staff employed in general administrative work make up the majority; but civil servants belong to the widest range of professional, technical and specialised occupations too: they include architects, bailiffs, cleaners, and draughtsmen . . . machine operators, marine surveyors, messengers and nurses . . . office keepers, patent examiners, photoprinters and radio technicians . . . vets, yeoman warders and zoologists. We give in Figure 1 the categories of staff as they are defined for the purpose of pay and career management: but this classification too conceals the range of work that civil servants do; for instance, the science group includes scientists from nearly forty distinct disciplines.

9. Many civil servants are entirely engaged in local or regional case work – whether collecting income tax, placing people in employment, or administering social security benefits. Many, while contributing to the formation of national policy or providing services on the national scale, do their work a long way from London – for instance supervising military stores in Belfast, inspecting schools from Manchester, issuing driving licences from Swansea or running the National Savings Bank in Glasgow. Although some people tend to identify the Civil Service with Whitehall, in fact less than a fifth – about 92,000 – work in the headquarters of departments in inner London; 58,000 other civil servants work in the rest of London and 70 per cent of the Service works elsewhere (the location of civil servants is given by regions in Figure 2). Up and down the country, civil servants work in over 7,000 buildings or sites, some accommodating only half of dozen staff, or less; but at the other extreme there are sites accommodating up to 12,000.

10. The cartoon stereotype of a non-industrial civil servant shows a middle-aged man with a bowler hat, but in fact although men outnumber women by 3:2 overall, two thirds of the staff in the clerical grades are women. And there are few staff in the middle of their working lives.

- over a third are of an age to have started work before the end of World War 2;
- another third were born after the War;
- but the middle generation – those now between thirty and fifty years old, who might be expected to account for half the service, in fact account for less than a third.

All departments have this marked scarcity of people of the middle generation. But in some the younger generation predominates – for instance in the Department of Health and Social Security nearly half the staff are under thirty years of age; while in others the older generation predominates; nearly half the staff of the Ministry of Defence are over fifty. Some departments have seen a

distinct change in the composition of their staff in recent years and others will see the same sort of change in the next few.

11. The factual account of the Civil Service today indicates that it is much more widely dispersed through the country, much more involved in local rather than national affairs, and much more diverse in the work it does than is generally supposed – even by many civil servants. It is also, and will increasingly be, a young service. And socially it is much more representative of the working population than it may seem if you look down Whitehall.

The changing character of the Service

12. The facts and figures we have given, if compared with those of ten or twenty years ago, show that the Service has changed in several respects over the years. However, the main changes are only hinted at in the statistics, for it is the character and atmosphere of the Service that has changed most markedly:

- Older civil servants joined when recruitment was highly competitive; before the war some schools would inscribe on the honours-board the name of a boy who was accepted into the Civil Service as an executive officer; he had joined a small elite by open competition – in one year for example fourteen eligible candidates were turned away for each one who was accepted. But other jobs have become attractive and more widely available to those who meet the Service's recruitment standards, and today the very much larger numbers of executive officer entrants do not regard the Civil Service or themselves as very special.
- Over the years, the Civil Service has become increasingly a regional and local service and many, particularly in the lower grades, never move away from the area in which they were recruited; they retain their regional roots, and do not naturally associate themselves with the business of government in London.
- Today a large proportion of the staff in the Civil Service were born and brought up in the post-war world and naturally their values, assumptions and attitudes have been shaped by the existence of the welfare state and the security it provides, by the changes in our educational system which encourage a more questioning outlook, by the wider horizons of the television age and the greater awareness of what is happening in the outside world.
- The pay of office workers, outside the Civil Service as well as in it, compares less well with that of people in industrial or other manual employment. The earnings of a clerk or a technician have not increased in real value by anything like as much as those of a man who works at an assembly line or on a building site. This has also lowered the social standing

of civil servants.

- Seeing the material success of organised labour in industry, the Civil Service staff associations — like those of some white collar workers in other public services — have tended more to resemble other trade unions; for example, industrial action was unheard of in the non-industrial Civil Service ten years ago.

For all these reasons, the Civil Service has changed in character. In many parts of it, the majority do not have traditional white collar attitudes, and do not aspire to them.

13. Furthermore, the Civil Service has had a pretty unsettling time in the last ten years or so:

- Successive governments have tended more and more to adjust and change their predecessors' policies — and even their own. Sometimes the alterations are radical; they are always required quickly; and too often they are soon reversed. And a change in the system of taxation or social security can alter the everyday work of tens of thousands of civil servants.
- Departments have been created, merged and abolished, as illustrated in Figure 3. These changes undermine valuable traditions and old loyalties. The consequent institution of new working procedures and the assimilation of new people cut across ongoing efforts to improve a department's performance and they distract central and line management from what they see as their proper work.
- From time to time, staff shortages, higher turnover or the operation of manpower ceilings have made it more difficult to staff offices as the work requires, and to provide enough experienced staff to do it properly. The first major industrial action in the non-industrial Civil Service was due to undermanning.
- Successive governments have brought in incomes policies which civil servants feel have hit them first, and often hardest, of the working population.
- Other economic and social policies have had their effects: reductions in public expenditure have included cuts in the amounts spent on the upkeep and improvement of public buildings; as a result, in many places accommodation is now the most serious issue of all, apart from pay. Decisions to move Civil Service jobs from London and relocate them in the regions have had more regard to the needs of importing areas than to the efficiency of the Service, or the options which the staff have expressed through their associations in formal consultations.

Civil servants are there, of course, to serve the requirements of the public and the country, as laid down by Ministers and Parliament. They know they must be adaptable. They know the Service, like other organisations, must comply with the overriding requirements of government policies. Some of the changes have enabled (or will enable) the Civil Service to provide better what Ministers, Parliament and the public want. Some, too, have brought new opportunities to civil servants: thus the changes in personnel management systems and mergers of the Civil Service classes have given wider opportunities for civil servants to exercise their talents and to progress.

14. For all that, civil servants feel that they have been mucked about a lot in the last five or ten years. So there is an atmosphere of sourness in many parts of the Service, and we have found it at every level. The Civil Service is not unique in this respect. Other organisations — including many in the public sector — have had their own strains as they have had to adapt to a changing world. The objective indicators of malaise — such as they are — show that although the Civil Service has higher wastage rates and absence rates than of old, it still compares favourably with analogous employers who have also seen these indicators rising.

15. No employer, however, can rest content with the thought that other employers have some of the same troubles. Any employer, facing social changes and strains that have affected the character and atmosphere of the organisation, is bound to consider whether he is failing in his role as a good employer. He is bound to consider what lines of remedial action lie within his power. It was, no doubt, with this in mind that the Civil Service Department, with the approval of Ministers, with the encouragement of the National Staff Side and the help of employing departments put this Review in hand and directed its course.

2. The needs of the Civil Service

16. To attract, retain and motivate staff, an employer must ensure that he:
- offers satisfactory **economic rewards** – pay, pensions, security and so on;
 - provides a **worthwhile job** and the means to do it; so that in the short-term the individual can give of his best from day-to-day and in the longer term can have **opportunities** for advancement;
 - provides a good **working environment**
 - in other ways shows **fairness and consideration** towards the staff, and respects their aspirations and needs;
 - and provides a sense of **common purpose**.

If he is unable to meet these basic requirements it is bound in the long run to have its effect on the staff of the organisation. The quality of their work and the service they give the public will decline by degrees.

17. So far as the Civil Service is concerned, what the government, as an employer, can do for its staff is conditioned by the fact that it is the government:
- the economic rewards must be fair, but they will never be excessive;
 - the work is what Parliament has required;
 - in fairness and consideration towards its staff it should be in the forefront of good employers;

There will always be some people to whom the central government cannot be an attractive employer but for the majority of staff the Civil Service at its best is a congenial place to work and despite the many difficulties the tasks placed on it by successive governments are being tackled by staff at all levels with energy and enthusiasm. Despite these constraints, and provided that the needs indicated in the previous paragraph are met, civil servants can be expected to continue to work willingly and well for the government of the day. From this point of departure, the rest of this chapter discusses the present needs of the Service.

Economic rewards: Pay

18. In discussions with staff associations, and in the course of our visits, we have met many who recall that a civil servant once enjoyed pay and conditions of service which made him well-off compared with people in other employment who are now better off than he is. Many can accept that a generation ago miners or bus-drivers were underpaid, compared with themselves or with other white-collar workers. But they object strongly to being singled out for a decline which goes beyond the national trend for comparable occupations. It is for this reason that civil servants resent the fact that the agreed process for determining their pay has been so frequently overridden in recent years.

19. With the report of the Priestley Royal Commission in 1955, the principle was accepted that Civil Service pay should be determined by fair comparison with the earnings in comparable work outside the Service. This principle, and the pay research procedures for establishing the factual basis for such comparisons, are embodied in formal pay agreements, which were intended to give civil servants a reasonable assurance that their pay would not lag far behind that of others. In practice, however, the effect of various national incomes policies has been that in the last ten years the implementation of these comparable pay rates has more often than not been delayed. As a result:

- Civil servants have — at least for a time — lost pay increases due to them.
- They have also lost confidence that their pay will in practice be determined by the due process.
- More and more feel that successive periods of incomes policy have borne more severely on the public service than on other employment.

As inflation continues at a higher rate than before, civil servants' fears about their future pay are compounded by their bitter experience of the pay pauses and the pay freezes of the past.

20. There are other dissatisfactions over pay, at an altogether different level:

- The process of determining Civil Service pay by means of external comparisons can alter internal differentials and relativities; this is itself upsetting and can also have invidious consequences for leave allowances or other conditions of service that are tied to the pay of key grades.
- Pay scales can become unsatisfactory as circumstances change, but when negotiations between the Official Side and the Staff Side result in alterations to incremental pay scales, the staff who were relatively better placed before may feel aggrieved about the outcome.
- There is recognised to be some variation in the responsibility of jobs that

are paid on the scale for each grade; those with the heavier jobs can feel that their pay is thus pulled down unfairly.

- As economic circumstances change quickly, and as management structures change, pay settlements can contain complications which, however justified as meeting the merits of the situation, cannot easily be understood by the individual.

Ultimately, difficulties of this sort are inherent in any negotiation of pay on its relative merits. They are recognised by the Official and Staff Sides as such, and the need to minimize them is much in mind in each pay negotiation.

21. Pay is in itself the most important single cause of staff discontent, and notably aggravates other discontents. However it is necessarily outside the scope of this Review precisely because of its importance. We are in no doubt that the Official and Staff Sides already have at the top of their priorities the need to restore confidence in the pay system; much has been done and much is being done to put things right. In 1973, the "anomalies" settlements averted the worst effects of the recent statutory incomes policy — though they could not restore all the pay that the staff concerned had lost, nor did they recreate confidence. The new pay agreement the negotiation of which has recently been successfully concluded, will help to adapt the pay research system to current needs. We must emphasize however that there remains a deep and growing anxiety about the future of Civil Service pay; the Service's confidence in the fairness of the government as an employer is still very much at stake. If that is forfeited, the malaise of the Service is likely to seem irremediable. It was no doubt with that in mind that the Prime Minister said, earlier this year:

"Civil servants must be fairly treated, and there should be no discrimination against the public sector; and . . . we shall not retreat from the system of fair comparison as the normal basis for determining Civil Service pay."

These words have often been quoted to us.

Other economic rewards

22. In 1972, the Civil Service Pensions Scheme was improved by legislation so as to become once more one of the best in the country. It does not meet every aspiration and for instance the National Staff Side are taking up with Ministers the case of those who served as temporary civil servants before July 1949, and can count those years for superannuation only as to one half. Nevertheless Civil Service pension arrangements

- provide for pensions to be adjusted annually to maintain their purchasing power;
- derive pensions from the final year's salary;

- provide a widow's pension at one half (rather than at one third) of the rate of the officer's pension;
- allow unrestricted transfer of pension benefits (or inflation-proofed preservation) for those leaving before the retiring age; and
- cover all staff, including part-timers.

Few people outside the Service have a comparable scheme. Staff of the older generation at least always attach high importance to their future pensions, and as other employers' arrangements improve, it will be necessary to ensure that those of the Civil Service remain in the forefront.

23. Civil servants used to regard the security of their job favourably, by comparison with that of other jobs. However all employers are now bound by law to give at least minimum periods of notice, and compensation to staff who are made redundant. In practice too since World War 2 many firms have provided security virtually equal to that in the Civil Service, and within the Service there is the insecurity engendered by the possibility of the hiving off or dispersal or devolution of government functions. Leave-allowances in the Service were once conspicuously more generous than those of most other employers, and they remain so for those of greater seniority (in rank or years of service). But there is less difference in the leave allowances for junior staff in their early years in the Service compared with what they would have in other employment. So today job security and time off do not seem as advantageous to the civil servant as they did.

24. But there is no substitute for pay. Whatever civil servants feel about pensions, security and leave they would all agree that the highest priority in the area of economic rewards – indeed the most important thing of all for the well being of the Service – is to keep Civil Service pay right.

A worthwhile job with opportunities

25. Economic rewards are ultimately shaped by deep seated social trends. We turn now to factors which are more within the immediate control of an employer: whether the job itself is worthwhile, how the work and the staff are managed, and the opportunities open to staff in the longer perspective of a career.

26. Although work ought to give people a sense of fulfilment, a good many jobs in the Civil Service can be unrewarding: checking entries on forms or compiling statistical returns can easily become monotonous or seem pointless; interviewing a succession of clients with complex human problems can wear down the patience and human feeling of the person who does it all day and

every day. It is not surprising if those who do these jobs under relentless pressure do not come whistling to work. But the work has to be done; and it has come to be accepted – perhaps too readily – that national schemes of taxation or social security or subsidy have to be run in ways which require large numbers of people to spend their working days in narrowly specialised, repetitive or grinding jobs.

27. A few departments have therefore undertaken job satisfaction projects which examine some of the more monotonous sorts of job with a view to improving them. The scale of these projects is small, and they offer no miracle cure for the Service as a whole. But they show scope for restructuring work so that the staff have opportunities to contribute more to it, and are less restricted by traditional patterns of responsibility and control. Many of the junior staff are better educated and more capable than their daily tasks require, and the job satisfaction projects show that, with the imaginative encouragement of line managers, their abilities can be put to proper use, so that they do a better – as well as a more fulfilling – job. From these projects it may be possible to learn some lessons of more general application.

28. We have met a good many managers in their everyday surroundings during this Review, from the Executive Officer level all the way up to Under Secretary and beyond, and in scientific and professional units as well as in administrative units. A good manager knows that provided he keeps his unit's output up from day-to-day he can to some extent help his staff do a better job in the longer term. He can encourage them; he may be able to move them around; he may be able to anticipate difficulties, explain procedures, and seek out and use their suggestions; he may be able to secure some improvement in their physical working conditions. He can be wise and practical with their personal problems or their development. But he has much else to do too. He may have an exacting personal load of case work; he has to cope with staff turnover, staff shortages and work fluctuations; he has to organise his unit's response to changes in procedural instructions, or to external events (a postmen's strike, the failure of the central heating, or public criticism). Instead of the support and drive of colleagues in a management team he may be rather hazy about what is required of him, and of what can be expected of his subordinates, and of his superiors as managers. He may feel very much at the mercy of outside events or the constraints of the system. Not every manager has the experience, training, information, authority or character to get the best out of his staff. These are all factors over which he has little or no control: they are rather the result of the traditions of the organisation, and the cumulative decisions of central and senior management, who are responsible both for broader management systems, and for the development of managers. In practice management systems and styles tend to perpetuate themselves.

29. Departments have been very conscious of the need to improve their work-systems and their management; much effort has been put into management training, into improving the organisation of work, and into developing more effective management systems. But the requirements too are getting more exacting all the time; and no department can as yet claim to have succeeded in a methodical attempt to adapt its managerial style to changing circumstances.

30. If junior staff have limiting jobs they will neither get satisfaction from them in the short run, nor will they develop into effective supervisors and managers in the longer term. If junior managers cannot make much difference to the way their staff get the work done, they will not easily develop into the sort of managers who can carry broader and more indirect managerial responsibilities at more senior levels. So there is a continuing need for departments:

- to develop the ability, experience and character of individuals as managers;
- to this end, to add to their authority and responsibilities;
- in so doing to take risks over the way developing managers do their jobs.

Better management of staff and of their work is going to require much attention from departments; in particular how the job itself can be made more worthwhile and how the staff are managed so that they give of their best.

Personnel development and careers

31. In a longer perspective the individual's job with his department is worthwhile if he has opportunities to widen his experience and to advance according to his abilities; these opportunities balance the needs of the department itself. The Fulton Report of 1968 accordingly placed high priority on personnel management; it recommended that more resources be devoted to the career management of all civil servants; and that all should have the opportunity to progress as far and as fast as their talents and appropriate training and experience could take them.

32. Much has been started since then:

- between 1968 and 1975 there will have been a thirty per cent increase in the number of staff providing personnel services;
- a unified pay-and-grading structure has been introduced at the top of the Service; and changes have been made in the structure of Civil Service classes, the science group, the professional and technology category, so as to remove some of the artificial barriers to advancement;
- a system of job appraisal reviews has been devised and these are being

progressively introduced to enable the individual regularly to discuss with his reporting officer his performance in his job, and how he can improve;

- a system of career interviews is being instituted so that at intervals personnel managers discuss the individual's experience, training needs and range;
- in the administration group serving staff now have the opportunity of accelerated advancement through the Administration Trainee scheme;
- since 1972 some young professional and scientific staff have had the chance to take part in a scheme which gives a couple of years wider administrative or managerial experience, and so helps them in their subsequent careers;
- many departments have devised career development schemes as a framework for individual career planning;
- seniority fields (governing eligibility for promotion) have been standardised and shortened;
- the effort devoted to training by departments has been substantially increased and the Civil Service College opened in 1970 has developed and expanded central training. A major review of Civil Service training has recently been undertaken to consider whether the division between central and departmental training adequately reflects the needs of the Service and whether these needs are properly met.

These and other developments provide departments and the Service as a whole with a very complete set of systems for assuring the individual of opportunities and assuring the department itself of a steady supply of talent.

33. Nevertheless many staff are still disappointed about their future prospects and opportunities, particularly in specialised grades, and especially at junior levels. The age structure in most classes and in most departments will result in an exceptional number of retirements over the next few years and so promotion prospects will be much better during that period. However with inflation and its effect on real earnings, civil servants now pin even more hopes on promotion than they used to. Not all have recognised that whatever arrangements may be made to open up the going opportunities more widely, the opportunities themselves are governed by the requirements of the work; and removing artificial barriers to advancement does not remove the need for the individual to earn it; indeed it rather increases the competition, and the number of those disappointed in the result. But it is a real cause for disappointment that for all the work that has been done so far, there are substantial numbers of civil servants — for instance in the messengerial and paper-keeping grades — who have not yet been reached by the improvements in personnel management systems; in the executive

grades the prospects of promotion are still far from equal in different departments and the expectations of many other staff too — especially in professional, scientific and technical grades — are still far from satisfied. It is perhaps an indication of a general dissatisfaction about the promotion process that the National Staff Side as a whole is now pressing for open reporting — which would give the individual a right to see his annual staff report.

34. A number of necessary improvements in the personnel management field will have to be tackled centrally, including the remaining structure problems, but the focus of activity must be at the departmental level. It will be necessary for departments to carry forward and consolidate the progress in personnel management which has been made in the light of the Fulton Report.

Consideration, respect and fairness

35. If they are to give of their best, people at work need to know that their employer respects them, considers their needs and aspirations, and treats them fairly. This principle governs a whole range of ways in which the employer shows the staff what he thinks of them: the rules and conditions of service, the style of central and senior management, and the working conditions, amenities and welfare services the employer provides. And we have put the point in personal terms because that is the way the staff see it. However the Civil Service and departments in treating the staff equally can treat them impersonally; in avoiding any waste of taxpayers' money it can treat them austere; the Service does not easily change its ways and they can come to seem unduly old-fashioned.

36. In visiting working units we have not met much criticism from junior staff of those of their seniors with whom they come into contact — though some feel that more encouragement and appreciation would help; and some do not see why their names are not shown on the door, on the desk or in the directory. They do criticise more senior management whom they do not see much and who easily seem anonymous, or remote or indifferent; those who do get away from their desks to see the staff not only avert some of this criticism, but also say that they learn valuable lessons from doing so, about the way procedures, instructions, or rules affect the staff in their practical application.

Rules and conditions of service

37. The staff also get an impression of their employer from the rules and instructions that govern their working lives, in the way the rules are administered and indeed in all the communications they get from senior and central management. It is not always a good one. As times change the rules can come to seem unduly inflexible or discriminatory or restrictive or in other ways out of touch with contemporary life. Experiments with flexible working hours, the revision of day subsistence allowances into two rather than four rates, and the

extension of transfer allowances all indicate ways in which the rules have recently needed adaptation to match changes in the aspirations of staff and their patterns of life. Staff serving in Northern Ireland face special difficulties as a result of the emergency situation and some concessions have been agreed, including for example wider discretion for departments to grant special distress leave. More generally, the Service has recently introduced many easements to help staff with domestic commitments: flexible working hours, the employment of more staff on a part-time basis, unpaid leave for school holidays, have removed some of the obstacles. Fewer posts are now confined to men. A nursery for pre-school children has proved successful and more will be set up. Staff who resume their careers after a break, for instance to look after young children, may now be reinstated in the grade they reached before they left. Taken together with the longer-standing tradition of equal pay and treatment, these and other easements will make the Civil Service a distinctly more attractive employer to married women or others with family commitments; and that is to the employer's advantage as well as to theirs.

38. It is not only the rules themselves; it is also the style in which they are administered. Regular meetings are now being held between CSD and those officers in the major departments who are responsible for the interpretation and administration of the rules governing travel, subsistence and removal allowances, to identify any aspects which need re-consideration, and to ensure that they are fairly and reasonably interpreted. A number of departments have, with CSD, looked at the sort of letter a member of the staff gets when he is posted, or called to a promotion board, or when a query arises on a claim for travel and subsistence allowance; and it has become clear that not all departments observe uniformly high standards of consideration and courtesy. But these things matter to the staff; they form an impression of their employer, and how he values them, from the way he treats them. And he sets them an example which they may follow in the way they treat their clients in their everyday work. The rules and conditions of service should be subjected to continuous and systematic review, as should the way they are actually administered.

The working environment

39. Many civil servants compare the working conditions in their office, or the catering arrangements there, or the welfare facilities, or other benefits they have with what other employers provide. They naturally tend to make the comparison with the best provision by other employers, which can be misleading. For although the public service aims to be a good employer, it cannot match the best in every detail. Nonetheless such comparisons indicate to the staff whether their employer considers them as other employers consider their staff.

40. The National Staff Side say that in many places accommodation has

become, after pay, the most potent source of dissatisfaction; and it probably gives rise to more walkouts than any other cause. We have seen for ourselves that although many civil servants are well accommodated, others work in overcrowded or drab or inconvenient premises. Many can take no pride in the place where they work. Considerations of economic stringency or short-term practicalities have left the Service with far too much poor or neglected accommodation.

41. There are several ways in which this situation can, and must, be improved. First, there should be a firm commitment to ensuring that civil servants are provided with good conditions in which to do their work. Luxury is obviously not the objective but rather the simple requirements of adequate space, lighting, heating, modern furniture and equipment, professional standards in layout and decor, attractive and well kept entrance halls, staircases and lobbies, freedom from excessive noise, good standards of cleaning and attention to detail in the general management and maintenance of the building. Conditions such as these are bound to pay dividends in working efficiency, staff morale and the general reputation of the Service both as an employer and in relation to its customers and the public at large.

42. Clearly a major improvement cannot be achieved overnight but there is a continuing programme of new building and acquisitions – including, over the next ten years, a unique opportunity with the dispersal programme to provide a better working environment as one of the benefits of moving from London. The problem of existing buildings is already being tackled by the Office Improvement Programme which will provide better and more modern decoration, close carpeting, and, where these are most needed, such things as better ventilation and noise reduction. Despite the present economic stringency, the government has increased the allocation of funds for this programme in 1975/76. The standards of accommodation for messengers are under review. All this has been welcomed by the Staff Side, and will be welcomed by the staff on the ground as it takes effect. They would be severely disappointed if the momentum of the programme could not be maintained.

43. In our interim report, we drew attention to the irritations caused by poor cleaning, and by delays in carrying out minor repairs. Builders and cleaning contractors need to be constantly kept up to the mark and it is not always easy to maintain high standards; but

- within the PSA, authority to commission work has been delegated to the depot level. Except when PSA direct labour is employed, PSA Depot Superintendents or District Works Officers may when practical allow local Depot Officers to order certain minor repairs directly on PSA appointed contractors;

- the Official and Staff Sides are discussing a national-level agreement on cleaning under which cleaning contracts will be placed on a best-value-for-money basis (not a lowest-cost basis); it includes a model specification, lays down cleaning standards and provides for better supervision of cleaning.

These two developments should help departmental management to iron out some of the irritations over accommodation. But overcrowding is a serious inconvenience in some places, and the postponement of programmed improvements causes much frustration.

Catering, welfare and other benefits

44. The Civil Service's catering arrangements too are compared unfavourably by the staff with those of other employers. Lunch and refreshment facilities are subsidised to some extent, by the provision of space, equipment and various free services; there are also some cash grants, which have recently been increased but it remains to be seen whether these new rates are sufficient. At present, broadly speaking, the staff pay most of the cost of food and canteen labour; in a smaller unit a mess room is provided to give the staff free facilities but they supply their own food and cook for themselves. The Civil Service, unlike other employers (including some in the public sector), gives luncheon vouchers only to young people under 19 years of age. Some employers subsidise their staff's midday meals, – for instance providing restaurant quality food and service at canteen prices or without charge, but the Civil Service could not readily follow their example without taking the consequences into account in pay. The Civil Service Catering Organisation has made a start with the modernization of facilities and other improvements, but they have a great deal of work still ahead of them, and the pace of further modernization will depend upon the allocation of necessary finance. As opportunity arises, the Service should continue to improve staff catering to higher standards and with a higher level of subsidy.

45. On the other hand welfare arrangements in the Civil Service are favourably compared with those of other employers: they are extended and adapted as the need arises: so special attention is now being given to the problems that young and lower-paid staff can have over residential accommodation. Another important development, agreed with the National Staff Side, is the extension of the voluntary health-screening-scheme to include in 1975 some 80,000 staff in the London area in middle and later life.

46. Something must be said about other fringe benefits. An employer who wants to show staff that he has their interests at heart provides whatever mix he thinks appropriate – and some organisations can and do go much further than the Civil Service: for instance in allowing their staff their products or services at a discount. The Civil Service cannot easily follow suit. It is committed

to providing the more traditional fringe benefits (such as financial support for the facilities of the Civil Service Sports Council and the Civil Service Benevolent Fund) and it would lose appeal if it did not. However there is an element of favour about fringe benefits which is inappropriate to the public service, and as the value of outside fringe benefits is taken into account in the fair determination of pay the Official Side and the Staff Side have generally preferred better pay to better fringe benefits. The object must still be that fringe benefits and pay should together fully equate with the whole package of rewards provided for comparable work by other employers.

The common purpose

47. Any organisation can work well only if its purposes, style and values are generally accepted by the staff at all levels, and generally respected by the public. A government service needs to have a continuing framework of public service purpose and ideals and of corporate traditions, and standards. In recent years the civil servant's sense of identity has been somewhat eroded, for the reasons given earlier.

48. To restore a sense of common purpose must be an essential part of any general improvement in the well being of the Service. In this section, we consider three aspects:

- staff relations – negotiations and consultation through the Whitley system;
- management communications – up and down the lines of management and between line and central management; and
- the impression that the department and the Service make on the public through the media – since this too has its effects on the civil servant's own view of his colleagues and of his employer.

49. In the half-century since the Whitley system was instituted, the non-industrial Civil Service has developed an outstanding system of staff relations, based on a formal framework but flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions: it operates, as it can only be operated, in a spirit of mutual trust and co-operation between the two sides. The Civil Service Whitley system is exceptional in several respects:

Few other organisations bring all grades of staff from senior management to the most junior levels within a single system of staff relations.

The Civil Service staff associations who make up the Whitley Council represent almost ninety per cent of the staff – an exceptionally large proportion in a non-industrial setting.

Whitley Councils and Committees operate on national, departmental and

local levels, enabling consultation and negotiation to take place at each main decision level.

The matters that are the subject of consultation and negotiation within the Whitley system are perhaps exceptionally wide-ranging, extending to all aspects of working conditions, conditions of service, personnel management and training, and matters of organisation and procedure as well as pay and pay-related subjects.

50. The Civil Service relies heavily and with varying degrees of formality on discussions in Whitley Councils and Committees on general matters, and between departments and individual staff associations on matters affecting particular grades. The individual staff associations exist to represent the particular interests of their members. At the same time the object of the Whitley system of staff relations is to secure the greatest measure of co-operation between the management and the staff, with a view both to increased efficiency in the public service and to the well-being of the staff. The Official and Staff Sides of any Whitley Council have the obligation collectively to meet these dual aims. On the Staff Side, this can only be secured so long as its members while representing fairly their own sectional interests and views, are prepared to seek the compromises necessary to obtain a common view when advising or negotiating with management. To achieve this is at once a prerequisite, and a major step towards, a common understanding and a common sense of purpose in staff relations, and the achievement of the dual aims of Whitleyism.

51. The staff associations themselves have their own problems at the present time: they have their own difficulties of size; some have a young — and so more impatient and less experienced — membership; and the conflicts of interest and outlook within and between associations are certainly no less than they were in the past. All this has its dangers:

- at the level at which staff associations are consulted or negotiate separately on sectional matters, they may be tempted to emphasise their members' immediate interests at the expense of their longer term advantage.
- in Whitley Councils, sectional interests on the Staff Side can adopt positions which prevent the emergence of a common line in the best interests of the staff as a whole.
- in either context negotiating tactics or public relations techniques may be adopted which undermine the system of consultation and negotiation.

Insofar as both Sides can adhere in the future, as they have in the past, to the traditional spirit of the Whitley system, these problems can be overcome. But there is an increasing onus on both Sides to consult together on as wide a range of matters affecting the staff as possible, to consult open-mindedly and to

negotiate fairly with the dual aims of the Whitley system in mind.

52. The Official and Staff Sides' faith in a strong Whitley system has been demonstrated by the recent national agreement on facilities for staff association representatives. It not only lays down important principles governing staff relations but also:

- recognises at the national level the arrangements that departments have made with their Staff Sides and trade unions for their representatives to have the use of rooms, furniture and equipment, and typing, telephone and other services; and for them to be allowed time to carry out their staff relations work;
- provides for annual branch meetings, at which officers are elected, to start in working hours;
- provides for trade union subscriptions to be deducted from pay and remitted to the unions without charge; and
- requires departments to consider again the facilities that they make available, so that they can be modified as may be appropriate to present circumstances.

53. In its application at the local level this agreement could enable staff to be brought more fully into consultation with management. At every level insofar as these facilities help staff associations fully to represent their members, they also help the management side in its job of managing on the basis of proper negotiation and consultation with the staff.

54. Two other developments are important to the effective functioning of the Whitley system:

- the National Staff Side have been considering their own organisation, and the pattern of representation of the various trade unions which constitute it;
- at the departmental level, some departments have joined their Staff Sides in considering the working of the Whitley system at their own level, with particular reference to the range of matters considered in Whitley Committees, and the effective translation of Whitley decisions and discussions into practical action.

It is becoming more widely accepted too that if consultation is to be constructive, there is often an onus on the Official Side to initiate it at an early stage and before its own ideas are set, rather than wait for the Staff Side to make representations or simply expect them to respond to hard and fast proposals.

In this way the Whitley system can and should come to play an even more lively and constructive part in increasing the efficiency of the service and the well-being of the staff.

Management communications

55. Staff Sides and staff associations can never of course be the sole channel through which management communicates with the staff, and the staff with the management. A whole range of work instructions, of information about rules and conditions of service, and indeed of more general information and news must be conveyed directly, through circulars, handbooks, notices and by word of mouth. On our visits, we have been surprised how little staff – not only at junior levels – know about the rules and their entitlements; about what is going on and, particularly, about the reasons for things that affect them. They do not automatically share or understand the assumptions of senior and central management, and so they need more explanation. There need be no competition of course between the channels of management communication and those of the staff associations: it does little harm if some people are told some things twice, and it is nearly always possible for the management side to say what it needs to in terms that the Staff Side accept as a fair presentation: the Staff Side or its constituents may of course wish to present the same material as well, or in a different light, and they are free to do so.

56. The need for improving communications between the management and the staff has been recognised in such ways as the institution of house journals, the preparation of handbooks (eg on transfer allowances) and in the arrangements for the circulation of the information in other forms, for example about lodgings. Some departments have reconsidered and updated their systems for disseminating management information (including questions of format, frequency, circulation, reprographic methods, and indexing and consolidation). Senior staff and central management are giving more time to visits to outstations, and to discussions with Staff Sides, staff associations and other groups of staff. But methods of communicating between management and staff have not yet been re-examined and modified as widely as they need to be.

The public impression

57. The Civil Service like other public services, must be open to criticism in the media and from the public. But a significant discontent amongst civil servants is their belief that they get an unduly bad press, and that too little is done about it. The Service's reputation is too low and, for instance, a national newspaper recently said in an editorial "If any one has to be low paid in the scale of society's intuitive scale of social merit, it would probably be clerks in the Civil Service". It may be necessary for the well-being of the Service to

devote more effort to its public relations (in the broadest sense), answering criticism and pointing to successes as well as explaining or rebutting stories of failure or shortcomings. The impression that the Civil Service gives cannot be better than the reality; but many civil servants feel that our present reputation does us less than justice and that a true picture, warts and all, would give the public a much better impression of the Civil Service as it really is today.

Conclusions on the needs of the Civil Service

58. At the outset of the Review, the National Staff Side submitted a list of issues which they considered suitable for early treatment; they have drawn attention to others since, and throughout the Review we have had suggestions from individual civil servants about particular conditions of service or other matters needing attention. We have pursued each of the issues with those responsible in CSD and elsewhere. It has been possible to make early progress on a number of them (the most notable are mentioned in chapter 3) and others are being followed up appropriately through the normal channels. To the Team the identification of particular issues in this way has also been of especial value in pointing to the underlying problems and to the more general and significant issues which we have highlighted in this chapter and elsewhere in this report.

3. The task ahead

59. In setting up this Review, the management of the Civil Service, with the Staff Side, recognised widespread discontents among civil servants. We have indicated a good many reasons – notably the treatment of Civil Service pay, constant changes in the work and the organisation of government, poor working conditions, falling status and increasing criticism, some of the work itself, the way it is managed and the prospects offered. These factors are cumulative, and disillusion spreads amongst people who work together. Many civil servants are a long way short of achieving that self-respect which people ought to gain from their work, the conditions under which it is done, and the way they are treated.

60. Throughout our visits and discussions with the staff we have heard a great deal about their problems and difficulties because that is what the Review is about. But this is only one side of the picture. Many of the staff are happy in their work, and apply themselves to it enthusiastically and scrupulously. They do not dwell unduly on their difficulties. That is not to say they have nothing to complain about: they often have. The question we have had to ask is whether the goodwill of the staff has been taken too much for granted and we think it has. We have found a great deal to put right and there is no room for complacency. Ministers and senior management in departments as well as in CSD have a responsibility to ensure that these matters are taken seriously and that action is taken to put them right.

The adaptability of the Service

61. It is only realistic to acknowledge that, by tradition or of necessity, the Civil Service has some characteristics which can hamper its efforts to solve its managerial problems:

- first, **size**: the Service itself is large, and its managerial units can be large: a Department of Health and Social Security region may comprise 6,000 individuals; and there are many units of over 1,000 staff on a single site. Managerial structures and units often share a location with others that are managerially separate: all this handicaps orderly and effective communications;
- **Resources** – both of manpower and of finance – are centrally controlled both within departments and for the Service as a whole; this can hold back

an immediate and flexible approach to problems as they arise; and resource allocations from the centre will not always fit the local sense of priorities;

- the Civil Service is committed to **equity** and **consistency** both in its treatment of the public, and in the treatment of its staff. It is answerable for every decision to what are often distant headquarters, and ultimately through Ministers to Parliament; this leads to detailed control over administrative practice, and tends to reduce the amount of local discretion as well as restricting its use;
- in **organising** its work, the service seeks to avoid any waste of staff or other resources by assigning particular areas of work to specialised – and often centralised – units; this can give rise to narrow jobs; although it concentrates expertise, it can also tend to accumulate the problems to an extent which makes them more intractable;
- **the staff relations** of the Civil Service are conducted, as regards most groups of staff, at three levels – the national, the departmental and the local, and for some at a regional level too. Too many issues are unresolved locally and go on to higher levels with consequent delay in their settlement, and broadening in their scope;
- the **security** of tenure which civil servants enjoy can lead to a toleration of mediocrity;
- the increasing **scope** of government work, and the widening range of government objectives, make conflicts of direction both more frequent and more difficult. These require resolution at relatively high levels, and so draw non-routine decisions away from workaday levels.

We recognise that many of these characteristics of the Service are an integral part of its traditional strength and virtues. It and individual departments are the size they are because successive governments and Parliament have entrusted whole ranges of required activity to a properly constituted public service. The Service must be under the proper control of Parliament and Ministers, both as to the use of resources, and as to the quality of its work. And elsewhere in this report we have emphasized the value of job security and of lively staff relations at all levels, not for their own sake, but as necessary features of a public service organisation in the modern world. Taken together, these characteristics have made the Service one whose efficiency and fairness stand up well to any detailed scrutiny. They cannot lightly be discarded, especially because to do so would subject to a radically new course of treatment a Service which has undergone much strain and surgery in recent years.

62. In less disturbed times the Service was generally able to anticipate and respond adequately in its traditional style to its own needs. But these

characteristics lead to a somewhat impersonal and cautious style of management, constrained by broad-scale programming, relying on centralised common services, dependent upon high-level problem solving. Over the years the Service has adapted itself remarkably well to new circumstances and requirements, but it will take a very great effort on the part of the management of the Service – at all levels – to adapt it fast enough to meet the challenge of fast-changing and more demanding times. The going will be uphill and the gradient is getting steeper all the time.

Ministers

63. Constitutionally civil servants are servants of the Crown but for all practical purposes Ministers are their ultimate employers. Some of the present troubles of the Civil Service can fairly be attributed to decisions which successive governments have taken (cf paragraph 13). The resources that governments can devote to the Civil Service are not unlimited; but as many Ministers have recognised that sets a limit to what they can expect of their departments. If they want to help the Civil Service out of its present difficulties and help to keep it out of difficulty in future:

- they can, in the words of the Prime Minister, avoid discriminating against the public service in the application of their economic and social policies;
- they should, in a desire to get things done, and quickly, still duly consider what it is possible for their staff to do and to do properly.

If Ministers adhere to these principles, and in other ways regard their staff as any other large employer would, they will help to ensure that the Civil Service is the effective instrument they require to carry through their policies.

General developments affecting all departments

64. While our review has been in progress much of the activity at the national level, and affecting all civil servants has been in accord with the lines indicated in this report. The following is an illustrative selection:

- a. A new **pay** agreement has been negotiated, which will adapt the system of pay research to current needs; since the end of the pay freeze in November 1973, major settlements have been reached with all the main pay-groups, in one instance after arbitration; whatever other lessons may be drawn from these settlements they give support to the system of determining Civil Service pay by fair comparison, negotiation, and if need be, by arbitration.
- b. A number of **job satisfaction** projects have been undertaken which suggest there may be lessons of more general application in making routine jobs better within the existing grading structure.

- c. Building on the work done in earlier years, the Service now has a set of **personnel management** and **training** systems which when fully implemented should ensure that opportunities are open to all according to their talents.
- d. Work has been put in hand to adapt the **rules and conditions of service** to the realities of contemporary life, for example:
- i. Experiments with flexible working hours – now enjoyed by some 75,000 staff.
 - ii. The allowances payable to reimburse staff for the costs of moving their homes when transferred have been extended, and subsistence allowances have also been revised.
 - iii. Consideration is being given to some relaxation in the restrictions on political activity on the part of some of the junior grades.
 - iv. Regular meetings are being held between CSD and those officers in the major departments who are responsible for the interpretation and administration of the rules governing travel, subsistence and removal allowances. Departments have also been encouraged to ensure that the staff responsible for processing claims do so quickly and flexibly paying proper regard to an individual's circumstances.
- e. An **Office Improvement Programme** has been launched this year, with the objectives described in paragraph 42 and the government has increased the allocation of funds to it for 1975-76.
- f. A national level agreement on **cleaning** is being discussed by the Official and Staff Sides which would lay down cleaning standards and provide for better supervision.
- g. New standards of **accommodation** for messengers are being introduced..
- h. The following developments are taking place in the **welfare** field:
- i. A special investigation is being undertaken of the residential problems of young and lower paid staff.
 - ii. Preparation for retirement courses have been introduced.
 - iii. The voluntary **health screening** scheme is being extended in 1975 to include some 80,000 staff in the London area in middle and later life.
- i. A national level agreement, whose main provisions are described in paragraph 52 has been reached on the **facilities for staff association and trade union representatives** in departments, which should help the Official Side in its job of managing on the basis of proper consultation and negotiation.

Other examples could readily be cited, and opportunities for national level improvements to the terms and conditions under which civil servants work will arise from proposals by the National Staff Side, and be progressed in consultation with them.

65. In addition the following also deserve consideration in our view for action on the part of CSD:

- a. Some positive and general measure to strengthen line management by providing a means for them to tackle local difficulties affecting the staff and their work.
- b. As opportunity arises, the improvement in staff catering should be continued to higher standards and with a higher level of subsidy.
- c. A systematic review of the rules and conditions of service to find and dispense with any which may be unnecessary and go against the humanity, good sense and trustworthiness of staff and management.
- d. An increased effort to arrange interdepartmental promotion opportunities.
- e. In collaboration with departments which identify and attempt to tackle such issues as:
 - i. the improvement of the quality of management;
 - ii. improvements in the style of central administration in the treatment of staff as individuals;
 - iii. improvements in office keeping and cleaning, and liaison with the Property Services Agency over priorities and requirements;
 - iv. improvements in methods of communication between staff and management;
 - v. further job-satisfaction projects and experiments in the associated organisation of work and style of administration;
 - vi. the resources required for personnel management in departments, and the ways in which these resources can be best deployed;

the CSD should draw out general lessons and make sure they are available for other departments to use.

These exercises would be contributions from CSD with its central responsibilities for the improvement of departmental management. CSD's policy and controlling responsibilities (notably in relation to pay, to manpower and to departmental expenditure) will also need to be exercised in ways which give full weight to the managerial needs of the Service as well as to other objectives of government policy.

Action in departments

66. At the departmental level too the action has already started. In keeping with the general themes of this report for instance:

- a. The Inland Revenue are preparing a Pay Guide, mainly for junior staff which will explain pay matters in detail but in simple terms. A periodical Pay News to complement the Guide is also under consideration.
- b. Customs and Excise set up a special Pay Enquiry unit to deal promptly with individual queries following a number of instances of late or wrong payment of salary as a result of the recent complex changes in pay etc.
- c. Customs and Excise have also recently completed a joint review with the Departmental Staff Side of the procedures for dealing with travel and subsistence claims. The intention is to make the procedures simple and payment quicker: to this end local staff concerned with processing claims are being given special training to make them more self-sufficient.
- d. The Scottish Office has issued to all managerial grades from HEO and equivalent upwards a circular summarising the various aspects of staff management and indicating the respective responsibilities of line and personnel managers.
- e. The Home Office has arranged a programme of visits to outstations by a small team from Personnel Division. Staff are given the opportunity to attend sessions where the panel explains and discusses personnel matters.
- f. The Department of Energy has initiated discussions with the Staff Side on the desirability of establishing links with other departments for cross posting and possibly promotion pooling. The department is also reviewing what special procedures are necessary to safeguard the career opportunities for staff in special groups.
- g. DHSS is undertaking an experiment in a number of local offices related to the organisation of work and the job satisfaction derived from it. The experiment requires the adoption of a new and radical technique whereby the staff determines the organisation best suited to serve the needs of the work and the public.
- h. DHSS, as part of the measures to counter ill-informed comment and misrepresentation of the department's work, have appointed full-time Regional Information Officers at SEO level to make contact with the press and broadcasting authorities in the regions and generally to take active measures to improve the department's public reputation over the whole social security field. Their efforts so far have achieved a considerable degree of success.

i. The Department of Employment has been operating since November 1972 a system of annual career reviews for staff in the Administration Group, and additional staff were allocated to personnel sections for this purpose.

j. The Ministry of Defence will be following up the results of a comprehensive study which they have carried out on the attitudes of young Executive Officers to their jobs, to the department, and to the Civil Service.

67. In addition departments have already been invited to consider what further action they should take, along the lines indicated in this review, to improve the well-being of their staff. Each department has begun to formulate and discuss with its Departmental Staff Side a programme of follow-up action with particular emphasis on personnel management, the improvement of line management, internal communications and the other areas where the department has the main responsibility. In most areas the department does the front line work, and it is this that directly affects the individual member of staff, and the working unit. So these programmes will be the main instrument for translating the themes of this report into practical action. Each department's programme, which is likely to include much that is already in progress, should after discussion with the Departmental Staff Side become an integral part of that department's development and practice, and whatever arrangements may be made between the two Sides for monitoring it and following it up should take their place in and merge with the normal processes of Whitley consultation in the department.

Summary of findings

- 68.a. The Civil Service is changing. The great majority of staff now work in very large departments, mostly outside London. Over the next ten years the last of the pre-war generation – nearly half of the staff in the largest department – will retire, leaving the Civil Service to the post-war generation – who already make up nearly half of the staff of the second largest. (Paragraph 7 to 11.)
- b. The values, assumptions and attitudes of the post-war generation have been shaped by the welfare state, a changing educational system, relatively full employment and the influence of the television age. The pay and standing of office workers and of public servants has changed in relation to that of many other occupations, and the material success of organised labour in industry has had its effect on traditional white-collar attitudes in the Civil Service as elsewhere. (Paragraph 12.)
- c. The Civil Service has had a disturbing time; frequent changes in policies, re-organisation, staff shortages and the pursuit by successive governments of economic and social objectives that run counter to the Service's managerial needs have made civil servants feel they have been mucked about a lot. (Paragraphs 13 and 14.)
- d. Pay has been the single most important cause of discontent in the Civil Service and it has aggravated other discontents. The new pay agreement should help to adapt the pay research system to current needs, but there remains a deep and growing anxiety about the future of Civil Service pay. The most important thing for the well-being of the Service is to keep its pay right. (Paragraphs 18 to 24.)
- e. Better management of staff and their work is going to require increased attention by departments; in particular how the job itself can be made worthwhile and how the staff collectively and as individuals are managed so that one and all they can give of their best. (Paragraphs 25 to 30.)
- f. It will be necessary for departments to carry forward and consolidate the progress on personnel management which has been made in the light of the Fulton Report; for all the work that has been done so far, there are substantial numbers of civil servants, particularly in the junior grades, who have not yet felt the benefits of this progress. (Paragraphs 31 to 34.)

g. Individual members of staff form an impression of their employer from the way he treats them. The rules and conditions of service should be subjected to continuous and systematic review in the light of changing circumstances; the way in which the rules are administered also needs to be kept under review to ensure that they are being fairly and reasonably interpreted. (Paragraphs 37 and 38.)

h. Considerations of economic stringency or short-term practicalities have left the Service with too much poor or neglected or overcrowded accommodation, and after pay this has become the most potent source of dissatisfaction in many places. There should be a firm commitment to ensuring that civil servants are provided with good accommodation in which to do their work. (Paragraphs 40 to 42.)

i. The Whitley system of staff relations should come to play an even more lively part in increasing the efficiency of the Service and the well being of the staff; the recent national agreement on facilities for staff representatives will help. (Paragraphs 49 to 54.)

j. The need for improving communications between management and staff has been recognised but methods have not yet been re-examined or modified as widely as they need to be. (Paragraphs 55 and 56.)

k. Although we have heard and written a great deal about the problems and difficulties of civil servants, the staff do not dwell on them unduly. They know they are there to serve the requirements of the public and the country as laid down by Ministers and Parliament. They get on with the job energetically and scrupulously. But there is a good deal to put right and there is no room for complacency. (Paragraph 60.)

l. In less disturbed times the Service was generally able to respond adequately to its managerial needs. But its size, its proper subordination to Parliament and Ministers, its traditions in the organisation of work and other factors make the Service slow to change; it will take a great effort from the management of the service at all levels to adapt it fast enough to meet the challenge of fast-moving and more demanding times. The going will be uphill and the gradient is getting steeper all the time. (Paragraph 62.)

m. Ministers can help the Civil Service by recognising their responsibility as employers for the staff of their departments:

- they can avoid discrimination against the public service in the application of their economic and social policies;
- they should in their desire to get things done, consider what, with the resources available, it is possible for the staff to do, and to do properly. (Paragraph 63.)

n. Much has already been put in hand along the lines indicated in this report, both in CSD and in departments; but new lines of action are also indicated both on a Service-wide scale and in departments, who are already formulating and discussing with their Staff Sides programmes of action to tackle the problems discussed in this report. (Paragraphs 64 to 67.)