

WORDS OF LIC. ANDRES CASO, PRESIDENT OF THE  
ORGANIZING COMMITTEE IN THE INAUGURAL  
CEREMONY OF THE SIXTINTH INTERNATIONAL  
CONGRESS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES

The National Institute of Public Administration and the Organizing Committee, do hereby thank the Executive Committee of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, for the decision passed in Caracas in 1972, that Mexico be the seat of the XVIth. International Congress of Administrative Sciences.

In the congresses in Paris in 1965, in Dublin in 1968 and in Rome in 1971, problems of administration in the countries that are undergoing economic and social evolution were discussed. Thus, Mexico was selected as the host of this important international event; we understand that this choice is an additional proof of the interest of the International Institute for the Administrative Sciences in the developing nations.

We wish to express our deep gratefulness to the President of the Republic, Luis Echeverría, Honorary Chairman of this Congress, for the particular interest shown in holding this Congress in our country and for his backing so that it may be held with the tradition of efficiency with which previous reunions have been held. From the time he was informed of this event, the President believed he could be with us this morning. The responsibilities of his high office, his decision to approach all the peoples, took him to a good will trip through Latin America; thus, we regret his absence.

Our gratitude goes also to Mr. Hugo Cervantes del Río, Secretary of the Presidency, whose help has been decisive to make this event possible, that has brought together the specialists from 75 countries. His generous closeness has allowed adequate progress in the organization work.

The stimulus and support of the Secretary of Public Works, Mr. Luis Enrique Bracamontes in all the work previous to this meeting, have had a definitive importance for us.

Due to their valuable contribution to the study of administrative sciences in Mexico, special mention is deserved by the Secretaries of

State, the Attorney General and all the Government officials who took part in the preparation of the issue on Mexican public administration published by the "Review of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences".

High-level administrative activities acquire their true dimension when they have as a basis a solid political thesis. To participate in the government of the Republic with a firm revolutionary conviction and using the legal and technical instruments for the discharge of higher duties, does distinguish, like in this occasion, the public official.

There are present two past presidents of the National Institute of Public Administration, Gabino Fraga and Gustavo Martínez Cabañas, our beloved and respected professors to whom Public Administration in Mexico owes so much.

Distinguished members of the XVIth International Congress of Administrative Sciences, be most welcome to Mexico a country of long hospitality tradition. Be welcome to share with us our aspirations for progress, our hopes and our concerns, since perhaps only hope and concerns can be shared by all men on earth.

The current world, has been often said, is a changing world. We must now admit that social, cultural and political structures that seemed to be stable and lasting just a few years ago, must now undergo important modifications. The growing social requirements do continuously demand action, flexible organizations that concern themselves with the vehement demands of strict justice, equitable development, better standards of living and culture shared by all.

We shall be exchanging ideas during five days. We shall be busy with all the subjects propounded by the outstanding experts in public administration in the modern world.

Shall we be able of presenting human solutions within the complicated systems and models handling? Do we have the sensibility to understand that behind each number there is a human being, behind each demand there is a cry, asking for better living conditions? Could we feel that while we are thinking in technically objectionable solutions, in highly sophisticated models that demand time for their application, there are still groups that can not afford that time, that are demanding an immediate solution? Because for these men and women, time represents death by hunger, disease, abandon or violence. If these concerns are valid for all the countries, they are still more for the developing countries; that is why the nations forming the Third World require not the optimum solution, but rather the best feasible solution.

We can not make trials of social policy; this represents a high

socio-political cost for us. We can not lose time in trying systems that could be positive for other countries and that, if we try to apply them in ours, through a simple transfer of higher technology, may bring about serious conflicts. We must have a critical outlook of technological transformations; we must apply them with the boldness required by the fast changes in our countries, while at the same time with the necessary prudence in order no to cause social problems.

Could we design a road for our research and our activity that contemplates the problems of population growth and wealth distribution which are no longer peculiar to any one country?

Interdependence in the current world is a concrete reality; a reality that may equal, sooner than we believe, the possibilities of general welfare or else, the possibilities of total destruction.

There are no longer isolated nations. Massive communication media allow access to all kinds of information, not only to the leading groups but to all the common men in this planet. This universal handling of information does, certainly, point out to one of the most noteworthy changes in our time: The possibility of understanding and interpreting what is happening in other areas of the world. This, unavoidably, brings men closer together. Shall this phenomenon lead to a universal culture? Of course not. But we are, nevertheless, in the position to assume a world conscience that is the acceptance that the destiny of one man depends upon the action of all men.

Communication allows us to choose, like never before, between a range of alternatives. Public leaders and administrators must analyze the most convenient options and, with the active participation of the people, make the decision as dictated by reason and their social sensitivity.

As a counterpart, massive information may be an instrument for cultural pressure, for ideological colonization, can substantially modify our life habits, disintegrate social structures. Face to face with this real danger is the capability of the human being to assimilate the achievements obtained by other brethren in other latitudes and that can be integrated into our culture. These features shape what we have called world conscience, that is, the capability of man for understanding without distinction of race, language or political beliefs. The capability of man to understand his fellow by the mere fact of being a man.

We, the administrators and scholars of administrative sciences are seriously concerned at the orientation our discipline may take when it only analyzes the efficiency of public administration as an abstrac-

tion, forgetting that it only has a reason for being in the measure it becomes identified with the society that gives it its origin.

It is evident that the current world is changing the traditional table of values and that, against this transformation, one can hardly rebuild people confidence based on values that have deteriorated in their social effect. Can we analyze the impact this has caused upon our governmental structures? Can we objectively examine the big problem of administrative corruption as a symptom of social disintegration?

We are going through a complex stage, in which a deep revision of ideals, principles, forms of actions, norms, the very concept of society and human behavior is being effected.

When new ideals, new shapes are faced against decrepit and useless ideals, the crisis, however serious could be overcome, and still changes can be initiated that will transform the society for the benefit of all. Since the ideals by themselves are only operative when they act socially, when they become institutions such as justice in courts, the good for all, politically and economically through the State. But, if these institutions through ankylosis and corruption are in opposition to the ideals that are their essence; if, instead of living in the reality, they repeat formulas, then, repulse and a great skepticism will grow and the greatest danger is that this attitude may not only be against the institution that betrayed its ideals, but that disappointment and bitterness may lead to the rejection of the very ideal that inspired the life of the institution.

If we can not understand public administration as an assemblage of institutions at the service of the community, if it becomes a superstructure that nullifies the citizen, if people demands are prevented from reaching the decision levels, if the administration becomes the **FACELESS POWER** that desarticulates and destroys the human being, then it becomes an ironhanded bureaucratic structure.

That is why we must give full effectiveness to the institutions, not detract from its purposes and be on the watch so that people's confidence be not deteriorated by a treason to the objectives or a corruption that makes them still more negative. The public administrator is obligated to make into a reality the ethical principles that are the foundation of the efficiency of institutions, their identity with the social structure and political postulates that gave them birth.

To what point is it possible to think that an institution is effective if it lacks a political thesis to sustain it? Is it possible for us, as administrators, to remain on the sidelines of political decisions?

In the current world, the classic theories of political neutrality of

the public administrator, are being seriously questioned. The administrator, who is the responsible of organizing and leading men, financial resources and material resources to achieve a certain objective, has a political responsibility; he must act according to a political thesis: The thesis that the will of the people has outlined for the Government it elected.

The public administrator who implements governmental decisions, if consistent with his own values, must actively participate in the political decisions of the State of which he forms a part. If he does not, he is failing short of the most elementary sense of loyalty and is negating the very essence of the administrative science that is a function of politics.

We can not ask from the administrator citizen to relinquish his rights, his critical capability; we can not ask him to become socially mutilated and remain marginated from political decisions. The administrator must not be just a cold spectator; he must act politically engaged with the social thesis of the community to which he belongs.

Administration and politics are merged in one single decision, in one single objective: To achieve general welfare through the public function.

When posing these questions we have done so with full consciousness that they may be analyzed with absolute freedom and with the conviction that we wish to arrive at positive solutions. Certainly we are capable of raising the curtains of our cultural prejudices, of opening the windows to the ideas of others and to point at the solutions for a true understanding.

We are linked by common interests, we are linked by the desire of service inherent to our vocation; we are linked by the consciousness of the responsibility we have towards our fellow men. We are, lastly, linked by the certainty that we have in our hands the important mission of making a reality of the fundamental thesis that a country propounds to itself through its own being.

“To implement our hopes —as President Echeverría stated— it is necessary to ceaselessly improve the mechanics of public administration”.

May this congress set the bases to improve public administration systems, that the hopes of all men in the world may become a reality.