

NOTES

RETROSPECTION

While on the subject of scientific temper or lack of it in our institutions, other unfortunate examples are the manner we conduct our seminars and conferences, the wasteful expenditure involved and most unbusiness-like proceedings. At the institution level if you want to see further glaring examples of lack of a scientific temper go and visit some of the laboratories, conceived more as museums than examples in utility. Visit the Directors' rooms with an accommodation that can fit a fullfledged wing of a laboratory ; with marble flooring and wall to wall carpets, an envy even of the Chief Executive of Tata or Birla groups ! Have we paused to give a thought as to what makes us go for such wasteful expenditure, at the cost of our poor countrymen. Where there is so much waste can corruption be far behind ? Is it wrong to call this 'commercialisation of science ?' Is it a manifestation of an inferiority complex or is it a deliberate attempt at empire building. Again who do we blame for this sorry spectacle ? How do we undo this false value system and pretentious ways that have become so much a part of the everyday life of many of our scientists, particularly in Government sponsored research institutes and departments.

What is equally important for fostering of science in the country is the way the scientists in power and position handle and treat their junior colleagues, the freshers who come to work with lots of promise and hope, how they are motivated for greater effort in the cause of better science lest they should fade out and drop out without blossoming. Therefore the priority area of work before we become festidious in our expectations from the country lies in setting right our house in order ; by recognising and encouraging real merit, by avoiding playing favourites, by abhorring waste of men and materials, by a steadfast belief in scientific temper as a way of life and by not playing politics in science. As long as scientists play politics, we cannot expect politicians not to play with science.

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CONTRIBUTION OF DST FOR MICROLEVEL PLANNING

A project titled 'Natural Resources Data Management System' (NRDMS) was conceived by the Department of Science and Technology in 1982, aimed at developing methodologies for generating computer compatible spatial databases of natural resources and collateral data on socio and agro-economic parameters. So far both planning and execution were on a regional scale and also not always with all the necessary basic data at hand. Here is an attempt to encourage micro-level planning, and collection and dissemination of data from as many agencies as