

Leadership at the Crossroads

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HERE are several definitions of a leader—usually depending on the point of view. The military have theirs. So do others in business and allied activities.

But, to the layman, a leader is no other than the man at the top. Stating it in another way, he is the head of any group or organized body. Among the men in uniform, he is the individual with the highest rank.

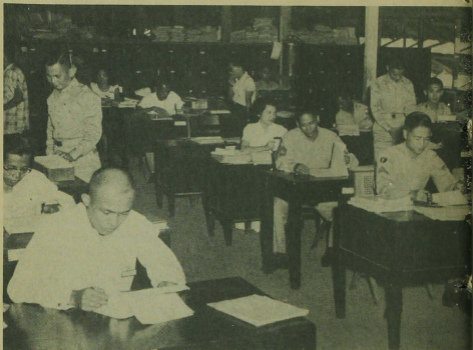
There are also differences in prerogatives. A "commander," for instance, implies authority over a military or naval body. On the other hand, a "leader" has influence and directing power. A "head" has authority in addition to executive power.

A leader has his own duties and responsibilities. How he discharges such duties and responsibilities are personal to him. An analysis of how a leader behaves, in general, shows that common denominations can be arrived at for all of them. These denominations are three: namely, (1) leadership in his line; (2) administrative leadership; and (3) leadership in social affairs.

All three must exist. Deficiency in one usually determines the degree of success of the leader himself. The preponderance of each over the other depends on the nature of the office headed by the leader.

A man is a leader in his line when he excels others in that particular line. This form of leadership takes

In the true traditions of the military service, the success or failure of an outfit is either one's personal glory or defeat. To know the duties of a leader is one thing; his performance of these duties is another. A leader should not be a fossilized being. He must be dynamic and be able to know who, when, where and how he leads



The success of an office or business depends upon its organization and management. Photo above shows a portion of an administrative office in the armed forces where civilians and army personnel perform clerical service for the army. It is in offices like this where the administrative ability of the chief and his assistants come into play.

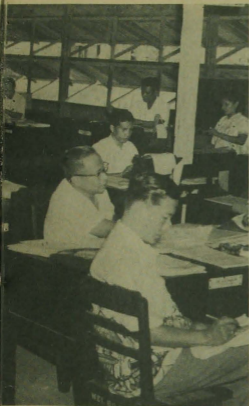
time to establish. It is only attained as a result of determined effort by the prospective leader. It actually takes years of preparation to become a leader in one's line. Although some have suddenly become leaders in their line, the "rise" is definitely the exception rather than the rule.

The man at the top need not be an specialist, indeed. He should instead be a generalist to be able to understand all the factors affecting the office so that he can coordinate them. But, if a man can be a specialist first, and generalist second,

he approximates the perfect leader as the books would have it.

The tendency when a specialist is placed at the head of an office other than that pertaining to his line, is that he will unwittingly put emphasis on the line of work in which he is familiar. That is but natural. But this should be minimized, as far as possible.

A GHQ assignment, for instance, should have an AFP-wide mentality and not merely a one-way line of thinking affecting, for example, only the Philippine Army or the like. In



business, the principle is the same. A production specialist should not only think of production when he becomes the president. Whether he likes it or not, he will be forced to gear his thinking to the business as a whole which includes, financing, marketing as well as labor problems.

The success of an office or business depends upon its organization and management. The leader is naturally responsible for the efficient organization and management of his office. Viewed from the outside, he

is the factotum of it all. However, in the true traditions of the military service, the success or failure of an outfit is either one's personal glory or defeat.

The usual method of insuring the efficiency of an organization is to have an able assistant, a deputy or an executive officer. With such an assistant, the office will function regularly even if the top man has no administrative leadership. Nevertheless, the chief has to stamp his approval on matters requiring policy decisions in connection with the administration of his office or business. There is therefore a need for the chief to lead the accomplishment of end-results in his outfit and in administrative matters which he only can solve.

Administrative leadership, naturally, does not pertain to the minute details of administration. Not even to the middle management portion of it. These are done by subordinates. The boss must concentrate his efforts in the "bigger" things for the office or business. Others call this division of labor or delineation of authority.

An organization, big or small, is necessarily a social unit. People work there and other people deal with it. The requirements of the social amenities of life cannot be avoided. Hence the necessity of social leadership by the chief or leader.

Social leadership for a chief or leader does not mean that the chief should be a social climber, the best "cha-cha" dancer in town, the best party giver, or a socialite par ex-



An organization, big or small, is necessarily a social unit. To the leader, the requirements of the social amenities of life cannot be avoided. Above picture illustrates an occasion where his attendance is called upon.

cellence. Far from it.

Instead, it is enough that the top man acts as guide to whatever little social affairs his office or business may have. An example is the usual Christmas party in December. Should he compel his subordinates to contribute over and above their means? Should he forget the occasion altogether? Should he see to it that he exhibits his ability to drink in the party? Or, should he guide his subordinates so that, in case a party is decided, everybody will enjoy?

The expression, really, is "Hats off to the chief." He is respected and admired. As a result, he is invited to this or that social party most often than not because of his position. When he accepts the invitation, he represents the office which he heads.

As off-shoot of the social leadership requirement of the top man of an office or business, there are qualifications that are "musts." Cour-

tesy as required by the customs of the service is one of them. Some say the word is public relations.

In the past, there has been some individuals who have shied away from positions of leadership because of social demands of the office. They simply cannot afford the sacrifice. But everything has its price. And the price tag for a leader includes the inevitable personal expenses due to the social activities which is quite considerable.

Just how many per cent is social leadership compared to the role of leadership in one's line or administrative leadership, no one can accurately state. But to be sure, the three must all be there. And selling the services of the office or business, through social leadership, is at least entitled to one third attention, or a little more, by the leader, if he as a top man is to retain his position for sometime.