

ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN IMPLEMENTING REFORMS

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that effective political leadership is essential for the achievement of political reform. What is less well known is the fact that even with strong political leadership, it is rarely possible to achieve sustained economic and political reform without organization and management reform in government. This need for reform of governmental machinery has been demonstrated in country after country, large and small.

Economic and political reforms are not self implementing. The transition from a communist command system to a democratic society with a market economy requires fundamental redesign of the various levels of government in order to implement the reforms effectively. At the same time, there is always great pressure to move forward quickly. The longer it takes a government in transition to demonstrate to its people a capacity to implement reforms in a timely fashion, the greater the public protest and discontent with what the citizens perceive as an ineffective government that is indifferent to their needs.

USE OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Every government which undertakes management reforms, most of which are far less fundamental than those of Russia, has found the need to draw upon experience in other countries. In fact, in the United States we have always looked at the experience of other countries before embarking on our own reforms.

We believe the Institute of Public Administration could be particularly useful to the Russian Government because (a) IPA has led major successful reforms in the United States, a country with comparable population and substantial size, (b) IPA has had broad management experience in a variety of countries ranging from the Czech and Poland Republics to Japan, and (c) IPA staff and associates have extensive practical experience in designing and managing large new organizations and existing ones undergoing major changes. A discussion of IPA capability for contributing to government reform is provided in Attachment "A".

IPA was founded in 1906 as a private nonprofit organization to assist governments in the United States to eliminate corruption and

5. Governance. Although the Russian Federation has some very able people in the new leadership, their ranks are thin and without prior experience in operating democratic institutions.

This means that a handful of people are faced with a very formidable task of quickly (a) planning and implementing a sustained economic program under extremely difficult circumstances, (b) establishing democratic institutions and practices, relying largely upon lower level personnel whose only training has been in command systems that discouraged initiative and independent thinking, (c) helping to establish local and intermediate governments, including effective oriented procurement, financial and personnel management that will both guard against corruption and yet not inhibit the capacity of a fledgling government to act.

Very few well established governments are capable of doing all these important things under conditions far less difficult than those facing Moscow today. Clearly, the philosophy of simply "getting government out of the way" does not accomplish any of the foregoing governmental roles which are essential for the Russian Federation to succeed in its task of achieving a democracy with a market economy.

There is a need to respond to the Russian request that help from United States institutions include technical assistance for their governmental reforms that are necessary for political and economic reform on a reasonable timetable. It is not clear how long the patience of the public will endure rising crime, lower living standards, and continued political instability.