

ABSTRACT

Administrative Leadership of a Mayor

Though the municipal form of government was adopted in Thailand more than thirty years ago, the system is not yet functioning effectively. The central government has tried in many ways to improve the situation, --mainly through amending the laws and regulations concerned, but the system remains virtually inoperative.

There are various problems underlying the failure of the municipal system. One of the most crucial concerns the role of the administrative leader of the mayor.

Obviously, an essential factor in the success of any municipality in serving the needs of the people is to have an efficient chief executive.

Leadership may be defined simply as the means by which individuals are motivated to achieve group goals. It is the first requirement in successful administration. Here, leadership is dealt with from the standpoint of the administrative process as the steps and tactics in getting job done.

This thesis attempts to give insight into the problems of municipal administration in Thailand. It is believed that many problems arise from the behavior of the mayor as an administrative leader. In essence he prescribes municipal policy and acts as local political leader. Whatever his legal sanctions, however, the mayor's success depends on his capabilities as a leader. Evidently, then, some municipalities operative with considerable efficiency while some others are deplorably inefficient. The result has been a relatively slow progress of the municipal system in Thailand.

Several drawbacks prevent the mayor from acting effectively:

Firstly, the mayor cannot be a true local leader as is the mayor in other countries. Because of the strong control from the central government in Thailand, he receives little active attention and support from people in his locality.

Secondly, the mayor has inadequate authority to formulate policy. He is not lacking initiative, but practically, he just cannot implement his ideas.

Thirdly, the mayor, in Thailand cannot make decisions by himself because of the many restrictions placed upon him by the Ministry of Interior.

Lastly, and crucially, the mayor is not legally empowered to supervise and control his subordinates.

It is evident that the mayor is not an independent administrative leader of the municipality but is himself very closely supervised and controlled by the central government. The Ministry of Interior, through the Chaengwad governor, exercises its power over municipal officials. It does not give sufficient authority to the mayor to discharge his responsibilities effectively.

If we wish to see in our municipalities a real process of local self-government, to be in truth, a school of democracy, serving the needs of the people, it is the duty of the central government to grant more autonomy to municipal officials - more particularly, the mayor. The writer is of the opinion that such action will lead to the development of an organization serving the needs of the people more effectively and efficiently.

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