

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS (1967-68)

TWENTIETH REPORT

(FOURTH LOK SABHA)

**Action taken by Government on the recommendations
contained in the First Report of the Committee on
Public Undertakings (Third Lok Sabha).**

**NATIONAL BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTION
CORPORATION LTD., NEW DELHI**

**MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING & SUPPLY
(DEPARTMENT OF WORKS & HOUSING)**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 1968/Vaisakha, 1890 (Saka)

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C O R R I G E N D A

Twentieth Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) Action taken by government in the recommendations contained the First Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (Third Lok Sabha) on National Buildings construction Corporation Ltd. New Delhi.

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS
(1967-68)

(FOURTH LOK SABHA)

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SECRETARIAT

Shri A. L. Rai—*Deputy Secretary*

Shri M. M. Mathur—*Under Secretary.*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Undertakings, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Report on the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (3rd Lok Sabha) on the National Buildings Construction Corporation Ltd., New Delhi.

2. The First Report of the Committee was presented to the Lok Sabha on the 30th March, 1965. Government furnished their replies indicating the action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report between 27th November, 1965 and 31st August, 1967. The Report was adopted by the Committee on the 27th November, 1967.

3. The Report has been divided into the following three Chapters:—

I. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government.

II. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply.

III. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in this Report is given in Appendix (II). It would be observed therefrom that out of 41 recommendations made in the Report 56.09 per cent have been accepted by Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 24.40 per cent of the recommendations in view of the Government's reply. The replies of Government in respect of 19.51 per cent of the recommendations have not been accepted by the Committee.

NEW DELHI;

April 23, 1968.

Vaisakha 3, 1890 (Saka)

D. N. TIWARY,

Chairman,

Committee on Public Undertakings.

CHAPTER I

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Serial No. 1)

The Committee consider that the objectives with which the National Buildings Construction Corporation Ltd. was set up, have remained largely unfulfilled. The Committee consider that, whenever a public undertaking is set up, Government should issue an Instrument of Instructions embodying, inter-alia, the objectives so that they are constantly kept in view.

The Committee also consider that when public undertakings are constituted for the achievement of certain objectives, it is only proper that, in their Annual Reports, they should review their performance in the light of the objectives also. The Committee recommend that Government should issue necessary instructions to ensure that this is done. (Paragraphs 4—6).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Under consideration by Government.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965].

The recommendation has been noted. Suitable instructions have been issued to the National Buildings Construction Corporation. The extent to which the objectives have been achieved has been reviewed in the Corporation's Annual Report for the year ending the 31st March, 1965.

[Ministry of WH & UD O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HIII (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 4)

The withdrawal of certain works from the Corporation is due to its inadequacy in equipping itself with the required men and machinery. The Committee trust that the Corporation would ensure that such cases are avoided in future, as these adversely affect its reputation with the clients. (Paragraph 18).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing Office Memorandum No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 8)

The Committee consider that the fixing of norms of consumption of material and labour and watching them regularly are obvious tools of management control in the building construction industry. Labour and material account for 60 to 70 per cent of the cost of works and, therefore, it is necessary to provide safeguards against their excessive consumption. The private contracting firms which enforce these controls rigidly, are able to economise in costs effectively. The Committee deplore that this is yet another instance where the management failed to do its primary duty. (Paragraph 25).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 9)

The reasons advanced for losses of over Rupees 97 lakhs clearly indicate that due care was not exercised by the Corporation at the time of tendering or negotiating for contracts. Works were undertaken without analysing costs or providing for likely increase in the cost of materials. Proper control was not exercised over the consumption of material or expenditure on labour. The performance of the field units were not watched regularly. Machinery and men do not appear to have been fully utilised. Overheads and indirect charges were not kept under control and works were delayed. ..

Considering that the problems faced by the Corporation are not new but are inherent in this business, it is clear that the management not only failed to organise and man its field units properly but did not also provide the necessary drive and leadership that was expected of it. (Paragraphs 31-32).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The set up of the Corporation has been reorganised and the work decentralised. The field units are now able to function with greater

efficiency. New returns have been prescribed to watch the performance of each unit. Senior officers at Headquarters and those who are in charge of Zones consisting of field units pay frequent visits to work sites to exercise better control and provide the guidance required.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 13)

It is apparent that the margin of 2.5 per cent profit provided by the Corporation is not an adequate return on its share capital and is very low. Public Undertakings are expected to earn reasonable profits after providing for depreciation and reserves. In the opinion of the Committee the Corporation should aim to fulfil at least those expectations if not earn the profits normal in this industry. (Paragraph No. 45).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial Nos. 14 and 15)

The Committee are very much surprised to note that the Corporation is not even aware of the normal turnover of similar organisations in the private sector. It is expected of every business organisation that it should collect such basic data about its competitors. The Committee regret that this has not been done by the Corporation so far. They hope that the Corporation would now make a study of the turn over and other important norms of working of the private contracting companies in the building industry as early as possible.

Judged from any standard it is evident that the turnover of the Corporation has been below normal expectations. As admitted by the representatives of the Corporation it has been partly due to non-realisation of dues from clients and partly to under or non-utilisation of machinery and men. The Committee urge that the Corporation should make earnest efforts to improve its turnover so as to come up to the normal standards in this business (Paragraphs 51 & 52).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

FURTHER INFORMATION CALLED FOR BY THE COMMITTEE

Further action taken and the latest position in regard to the recommendation at Sl. No. 14 may please be intimated.

[L.S.S.O.M. No. 16-PU/65 dated the 5th April, 1967]

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

The suggestion of the Committee that the Corporation should get itself acquainted with the details like turnover etc. of the other undertakings or private companies in the construction industry has been communicated to the Corporation who have been directed to take action accordingly. The Corporation have, however, stated that they approached some leading construction agencies in the private sector to study their organisational pattern, but the latter had not been very helpful in this regard since, for obvious reasons, they did not like to divulge the information about their manner of working etc to the Corporation.

The recommendation that the N.B.C.C. should make efforts to improve its turnover, has been noted and efforts are being made in that direction.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 13(9)65H-III (P.S.) dated the 18th July, 1967].

Recommendation (Serial No. 16)

The Committee consider that the efficient functioning of a building contractor's business is intimately dependent on full utilisation of labour and equipment as well as strict control over pilferage and wastage of materials. They are constrained to observe that the Corporation failed to do this. This also shows that there was utter lack of cost consciousness. The Corporation did not prepared any estimates of prime cost, works overheads and general overheads of the works undertaken by it and hence could not exercise any control over the field units in this regard. The Committee were assured that in future the estimates for prime cost, works overheads and general overheads would be prepared for each work and communicated to the field units for strict compliance. In case they went outside these estimates, sanction of the Head Office would have to be obtained in time. The

Committee hope that with the introduction of this procedure, the prime costs and overheads should be considerably reduced. (Paragraphs 57-58)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The procedure indicated has been introduced by the Corporation.
[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 19)

It appears to the Committee that the acceptance of the suggestion to allow rebates for prompt payment would lead to prompt recovery of bills and would consequently result in lowering of tender rates.

It would help the eliminating malpractices and will put the client departments on their toes as any delay in payment would be promptly detected. The Committee, therefore, suggest that that proposal may be reconsidered. (Paragraph 19).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The matter is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

The recommendation has been accepted and action to implement it is being taken.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HIII (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 20)

The Committee are unable to appreciate as to why no norms for wastage and depreciation can be fixed. Since the expenditure on this account also has to be added in the tenders, there should be some norms for assessing them. The Committee feel that there is scope for reduction in expenditure on small tools and plants and temporary hutments, if effective control is exercised over them. They trust that these norms would be fixed by the Corporation after a comparative study of the practice followed by the private contracting firms and the expenditure on this account would be kept under constant watch with a view to minimising the same. (Paragraph 68)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Norms for wastage and depreciation have already been laid down. The matter will be kept under constant watch.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 24)

The Committee consider it necessary that top management viz. Managing Director, Chief Engineer and Financial Adviser and Chief Accounts Officer bring with them some previous experience of managing similar undertakings. One way of securing this would be to select them in advance and to give them intensive training and orientation in similar undertakings where they can acquaint themselves with the organisation, methods of working and problems of public undertakings. It is unfortunate that even when such training could easily have been arranged with the National Projects Construction Corporation, no attempt was made to do so. The Committee have no doubt that had this been done, the losses suffered by the Corporation would have been minimised if not avoided altogether. (Paragraph 82)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 25)

The Committee recommended that to avoid similar situations in future, Government should take timely action to impart the requisite training and orientation to the top management of new undertakings. (Paragraph 83).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration by Government.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

The recommendation has been brought to the notice of the Bureau of Public Enterprises. The Bureau intends to build up suitable cadres of qualified and experienced persons for top management posts in

Public Undertakings. When this is done the need for specially intensified training for such personnel may not arise. The Bureau has, however, noted this recommendation and decided that arrangements should be made for refresher courses and seminars at all levels of management including top management.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HII? (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 26)

The Committee consider it important that great care is exercised in the selection of members of the Board of Directors as they are expected to contribute effectively to the efficient working of the Corporation. Apart from the connected officers of the Ministry of Finance and administrative Ministry, other members should possess such experience and knowledge as would really be useful in promoting the business of the Corporation and its efficient functioning. The Committee trust that this would be kept in view in future. (Paragraph 85).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 27)

The Committee consider that frequent changes in the Board of Directors detract from the effective direction and supervision that is expected from this body. The Committee hope that as agreed to by the Secretary of the Ministry this would be avoided in future. (Paragraph 87).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 28)

The Committee are not convinced by the reasons advanced by the Ministry for not representing the National Projects Construction Corporation Ltd. on the Board of the Corporation. They feel that it would be advantageous for the public undertakings working in the

same or allied fields to have inter-locking of Directorships as this would enable them to benefit from mutual experience. The administrative control of different Ministries over such undertakings should not stand in the way of this arrangement. The Committee understand that since 1962-63 the National Projects Construction Corporation has extended the scope of its activities to civil and structural engineering works and has in fact constructed airfields and civil works. They, therefore, recommend that early steps should be taken to have the Chairman or the Managing Director of the National Projects Construction Corporation on the Board of this Corporation. (Paragraph 90)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965].

The recommendation has been accepted and necessary action to implement the same is being taken.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13(9) 65-HIII (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 29)

The Committee also feel that the association of the heads of research organisations like National Buildings Organisation or Central Building Research Institute on the Board of the Corporation would also contribute to efficiency and economy by introducing new designs and techniques in the buildings industry which is one of the objectives of the Corporation. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Board of the Corporation may be suitably reorganised as early as possible. (Paragraph 91.)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

The Director of the Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee, has been appointed as a Director of the Corporation.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13/9/65-HIII (P.S.) 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 30)

It is evident that there is no continuous and concurrent watch over the performance of the Corporation by the Board. This conclusion is further strengthened by a perusal of agenda and minutes of the meetings of the Board, which do not give any indication that they have evolved any method to measure the performance of the Corporation as the works proceed. The Committee cannot help observing that that Board failed to perform its principal task of evaluating the performance of management and giving it the necessary direction and guidance. Had the Board been vigilant, the mistakes and shortcomings of the management would have been detected in time and the losses minimised. The Committee trust that Government would take suitable steps to watch that the Boards in Public Undertakings not only realise their responsibilities but discharge them properly. (Paragraph 93)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HII (P.S.) dated the 27th November, 1965].

The recommendation has been noted.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HII (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 31)

The Committee consider that the setting up of a Planning Cell should have been the first step for an organisation of this nature. They trust that this Cell would be suitably organised and would prove a real help in improving the working of the Corporation.

The Committee further suggest that the Corporation should also set up a Cell at the Headquarters which can prepare designs for works undertaken by it. This would enable the Corporation to secure more works on the basis of economic designs as also to introduce new and unfamiliar designs, which is one of its objectives. The Committee understand that reputed private contracting firms also follow this practice and submit alternative designs at the time of tendering which is a factor in their securing works readily. (Paragraph 96)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the, 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 32)

The Committee consider that a study of the organisational structure of similar organisations in the private and public sectors was necessary before launching a new undertaking as it would have been helpful in organising it on sound lines. It is regrettable that no such prior study was made. At the instance of the Committee the Managing Director of the Corporation has now undertaken to do it. The Committee hope that this study would be completed at an early date and the organisation of the Corporation reviewed. (Paragraph 101).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The study recommended is being made.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 34)

The Committee note that the turn-over of the majority of Resident Engineers during 1962-63 and 1963-64 has been much below the norm of Rs. 20-25 lakhs fixed for them.

Considering that the Corporation desires to stabilise its annual turn-over for some years in future at Rs. 400 lakhs, the Committee feel that the Corporation would require not more than 20 Resident Engineers, if the norm of work-load of Rs. 20 to 25 lakhs for each Resident Engineer is adhered to. The Corporation at present has 36 Resident Engineers. The Committee, therefore, recommend that immediate steps should be taken by the Corporation to reduce the strength of the Resident Engineers so as to bring it in conformity with the workload. At the same time it should ensure that the out-turn of work by the Resident Engineers is of the required standard. (Paragraphs 106-107).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Action is being taken to reduce the number of Resident Engineers so as to conform to the norms and reduce the overheads.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 35)

It may be that in the initial stages taking of some top officers on deputation would be necessary. The Committee, however, feel that deputationists, besides being costly on account of the incidence of deputation pay and leave salary and pension contributions are not ultimately conducive to the efficiency of any organisation as they have no stake in it. Moreover, by their attitudes and training the deputationists are used to different way of working which hardly fits in to a business organisation of this type. The Committee therefore, recommend that the Corporation should take energetic steps to recruit, train and develop its own staff so as to do away with the deputationists at all levels within a period of five years, if not earlier. (Paragraph 111).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

The recommendation has been noted. The N.B.C.C. is taking all possible steps to build up its own cadres and to eliminate the need for deputations to the maximum extent possible.

[Ministry of WH&UD O.M. No. 13/9/65-HIII (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 38)

The Committee feel that the position in regard to the submission of Reviews by the F.A. is not happy. They hope that once a report or return is prescribed and a time limit fixed for its submission it should be adhered to.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 40)

The Committee deplore the delay in setting up the brick kiln as delays invariably increase costs. They hope that the kiln would now be commissioned expeditiously and it would be ensured that the cost of bricks would be kept within the estimates.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Project is reaching the final stage and the Brick Kfm is expected to be installed by the middle of 1966.

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

FURTHER INFORMATION CALLED FOR BY THE COMMITTEE

Further action taken and the latest position in regard to the recommendation may please be intimated.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 16-PU/65 dated the 5th April, 1967].

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

The first stage in the setting up of the brick making plant in Delhi is almost complete and the Plant expected to go into production shortly.

[Ministry of W&H O.M. No. 13(a)/65-HIII (P.S) dated the 18th July, 1967].

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

Recommendation (Serial No. 2)

The Corporation has been working on an ad-hoc basis and without fixing any targets of work. The Committee consider it very essential for public undertakings to prepare a well considered long-term programme of work not only to enable them to assess their requirements of finance, staff and machinery but also for a proper appraisal of their performance later on. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Corporation should have a systematic plan for securing contracts and should lay down targets of work for every year.

The Committee appreciate that the Corporation has stabilised its turnover at Rs. 4 crores. Since there is enormous scope for public works to be undertaken by the Corporation there is no reason why turnover should be stabilised at this level. The Committee recommend that the Corporation should equip itself for the execution of bigger targets. (Paragraph 10).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Corporation secured works through open tenders and it cannot be known in advance what work it will be able to obtain on this basis from year to year. It has tentatively been decided to fix a target of a turnover of Rs. 4 crores per year, but every efforts will be made as soon as the target has been reached to raise it still further. (Paragraph 10)

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 5)

The Corporation has not only so far depended on negotiated and cost plus basis works but in future also desires to be allocated work without competitive tendering. It is surprising that the Corporation should try to sustain itself on negotiated works which is contrary to the original intentions. Such a practice is also a deviation from the system of calling competitive tenders for works which

is commonly in vogue. Works at negotiated rates and on cost plus basis would leave no incentive to the Corporation to economise on its expenditure and to improve its efficiency. Further, this practice if followed by the Ministry/C.P.W.D. would also expose them to the charge of according preferential treatment and awarding works at higher rates to the Corporation. The Committee, therefore, urge that the Corporation should observe the normal procedure of securing works through open tenders. Towards that end it should develop its competitive strength and efficiency. (Paragraph 19).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Corporation secures works through open tenders in the case of works like the construction of multi-storeyed buildings, factory works, and structural and steel works. This procedure cannot, however, be followed for works in border and other 'difficult' areas, where the other contractors do not come forward to do the work.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendations (Serial No. 10, 11 and 12)

The Committee deplore the casual manner in which the Corporation and the Ministry have dealt with the question of losses. It is amazing that the Ministry did not bestir itself to the fact that the Corporation was running at a loss until after it had run into huge losses consecutively for three years.

It was normally expected of the Managing Director and the Board to have examined the reasons for the losses during 1960-61 and 1961-62, with a view to fix responsibility and to devise remedial measures. Had this been done, the subsequent heavy losses would have been minimised. Even the inquiry conducted by the Ministry in January, 1964, did not indicate that it was intended for probing into the reasons for the heavy losses and fixing responsibility therefor.

It is surprising that the Housing Commissioner who is a Member of the Board of the Corporation and is partly responsible for its working should have been entrusted with the inquiry into the losses. The Committee consider it necessary that such heavy losses, as have been suffered by the Corporation should have been investigated expeditiously by an independent body. They regret that this was not done. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a formal Committee of Enquiry with precise terms of reference may be appointed to probe into the losses and fix responsibility therefor.

The Committee are not happy at the manner in which the cases of disciplinary action have been dealt with by the Ministry and the Corporation. They regret that there has been so much delay in taking disciplinary action. They feel that lack of prompt action in such cases encourages mal-practices and engenders indiscipline in the staff. It is apparent, that due importance was not given to the vital matter by the Ministry and the top management. The Committee trust that action would at least now be taken promptly in all cases where disciplinary action is indicated. (Paragraphs 37-38, 39 & 41).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The matter is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing Office Memorandum No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Suitable disciplinary action has been taken in all appropriate cases. The Resident Engineers who were responsible for the losses have since been removed from service. The officers at the top level have been changed. The Government consider that the appointment of a formal Committee of Enquiring will not serve any useful purpose.

[Ministry of WH & UD O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HII (P.S.) dated the 24th September, 1966].

Recommendation (Serial No. 23)

The Committee consider that the appointment of the Secretary of the administrative Ministry as Chairman of public undertaking was ill advised as these busy officers could not obviously be expected to spare sufficient time to effectively supervise the affairs of the Corporation which was expected of them in their capacity as Chairman. Moreover such an arrangement is not conducive to assessing the working and efficiency of the Corporation in an objective and impartial manner by the administrative Ministry. The Committee regret to point out that the continuation of this arrangement after November 1961 was in clear contravention of the decision by Government on the recommendations of the Krishna Menon Committee that no Secretary of a Ministry/Department shall be a member of any Board. The Committee trust that in future Secretaries would not be appointed to the Board of any Public Undertaking. (Paragraph 80).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Secretary of the Ministry was appointed as Chairman of the Corporation because no suitable non-official was readily available for the post. The present Chairman is a non-official.

[Ministry of Works and Housing Office Memorandum No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Recommendation (Serial No. 36)

The Committee consider that it would make for economy and speedy execution, if the Corporation, which is wholly Government-owned and is managed by technical persons, is made directly responsible for execution of works of the Ministries, rather than through the agency of the Central P.W.D. as it would avoid duplication of supervisory staff and levy of departmental charges by the Central P.W.D. Such an arrangement obviously presupposes that the Corporation is fully geared to undertake the required type of works and has acquired a reputation for executing quality work expeditiously and at economic rates. The Committee suggest that the feasibility of entrusting works directly to the Corporation may be examined as early as possible. (Paragraph 114)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965]

The recommendation has been considered and it has been found that it would not be possible to completely eliminate supervision by the C.P.W.D. of the works entrusted to the N.B.C.C. as the ultimate responsibility for all such work rests squarely on the CPWD. However, experiments are being made on certain selected works to find out the extent to which the supervision by the C.P.W.D. can be eliminated.

[Ministry of W.H. & U.D. O.M. No. 13 (9)/65 H-III (P.S) dated the 24th September, 1966]

Recommendation (Serial No. 37)

Despite the submission of all reports and returns neither the administrative Ministry nor the Ministry of Finance were aware of the difficult financial position of the Corporation in time. On the other hand, these reports on the basis of a set formula calculated that a margin of profit would be earned by the Corporation on each work. Such reports can only be categorised as misleading. The Committee, therefore, feel that there is a need to re-examine the utility of these reports and returns. Their form and content need

to be modified. They recommend that the Government should review the matter.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965]

The recommendation has been noted by the Bureau of Public Enterprises.

[Ministry of W.H. & U.D. O.M. No. 13 (9)/65 H-III (P.S) dated the 24th September, 1966]

Further Information Called For by The Committee

Further action taken and the latest position in regard to the recommendation may please be intimated.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 16-PU/65, dated the 5th April, 1967]

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

The reports and Returns in respect of all Public Undertakings are prescribed by the Co-ordinating agency, viz. the Bureau of Public Enterprises. As already stated this recommendation has been forwarded to the Bureau who are taking necessary action.

[Ministry of Works and Housing Office Memorandum No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 18th July, 1967].

Recommendation (Serial No. 39)

The Committee regret that it has not so far been possible for the Comptroller and Auditor General to detect the irregularities and losses of the Corporation and to report on them. They consider it essential that such cases should be detected and brought to the notice of Parliament as early as possible. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the feasibility of devising a procedure under which this can be done may be examined. (Paragraph 121).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The matter is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965]

The recommendation has been brought to the notice of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

[Ministry of W.H. & U.D. O.M. No. 13 (9)/65 H-III (P.S) dated the 24th September, 1966]

Recommendation (Serial No. 41)

The Committee are constrained to observe that the performance of the Corporation has been extremely poor and thoroughly disappointed. The desirable objectives with which it was brought into existence have not been fulfilled. This is not the result of inherent difficulties but due to want of proper planning and absence of direction and superintendence by the concerned administrative Ministry and the Management of the undertaking.

The Committee have no doubt that with the increasing building activities in the country there is great scope and need for a public sector undertaking like the National Buildings Construction Corporation. But unless the Ministry reviews the working of the Corporation since its inception and devises means to mend the Corporation and its working, it is not likely to achieve the objectives with which it was established.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry should take up the question of rectifying the defects in the organisation and methods of working the Corporation with the utmost expedition. (Paragraphs 125-126)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The matter is under consideration.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt dated the 27th November, 1965]

The recommendation has been noted. Necessary action is being taken to improve the working of the Company and reduce the losses to the extent possible.

[Ministry of W.H. & U.D. O.M. No. 13 (9)/65 H-III (P.S) dated the 24th September, 1966]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Serial No. 3)

The Committee feel that the delays in execution of works are due to the Corporation not having properly organised its work. In some cases, however, there have been delays due to the inability of the clients to supply detailed designs and drawings. The Committee are very much concerned at these delays, as they result not only in higher costs to the Corporation by way of mounting overheads on establishment charges and depreciation of tools and plants but also disrupt the plan schedules of the clients in regard to incomplete works. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the works are completed within the time schedules fixed. Prompt execution of works would not only reduce the costs of the Corporation but would also attract more clients to it. (Paragraph 13).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The delays were mainly due to factors such as shortage of cement and steel, non-submission by the clients of designs etc. in time and non-availability in time of work sites.

The corporation have reorganised their field set up which is now on a sounder footing. The effect of the changes is expected to be felt after about a year.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1967].

FURTHER INFORMATION CALLED FOR BY THE COMMITTEE

Further action taken and the latest position in regard to the recommendation may please be intimated.

[L.S.S. O.M. 16-PU/65, dated the 5th April, 1967].

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

As already intimated by this Ministry the Corporation have reorganised their field units on a sounder footing. As a result of this reorganisation and with the setting up of a Planning Cell in the Head Office of the Corporation, the losses of the Corporation which were to the extent of about Rs 23.72 lakhs. (6.1 per cent. of the turnover or 20.27 per cent. on the investment) in 1964-65 have come

down to Rs. 20.51 lakhs (5.6 per cent. of the turnover or 15.9 per cent. on the investment) in 1965-66.

[Ministry of W. & H. H. O.M. No. 13 (9)/65-HIII (P.S.) dated the 18th July, 1967].

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

The reasons given for the delays are not satisfactory for a Government organisation like N.B.C.C. and also when the clients are also Government organisations. There is no justification for non-submission of designs by the clients and in fact the work should not have been undertaken without getting possession of the designs.

Recommendation (Serial No. 6)

The Corporation has not yet signed agreements for 25 works, which include 13 pertaining to the year VIIFB-FC. Since non-finalising of contract agreements may lead to difficulties and disputes eventually, the Committee urge that the Corporation should ensure that all the agreements are signed within a stipulated time. (Paragraph 21).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Corporation has since signed Agreements for 9 works including 1 for 1962-63. 12 Agreements relate to N.E.F.A. region and are expected to be signed shortly. 1 Agreement relates to a work which has been withdrawn. Action for signing the remaining three agreements is being actively pursued. For the future, every effort will be made to sign the agreements before the work is undertaken.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

There is no justification for delaying the signing of agreements. When N. B. C. C. as well as the clients were also Government organisations, machinery at the higher level should be made use of in ironing out differences and for ensuring that work proceeds in a business like manner.

Recommendation (Serial No. 7)

The Committee are amazed at the perfunctory and unbusiness like procedure adopted by the Corporation in tendering for works.

This lapse has been mainly responsible for the heavy losses incurred by the Corporation. The Committee recommend that the responsibility for lapses in this respect should be fixed and disciplinary action taken against the persons responsible. (Paragraph 23).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Action is being taken.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

FURTHER INFORMATION CALLED FOR BY THE COMMITTEE

Further action taken and the latest position in regard to the recommendation may please be intimated.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 16-PU/65 dated the 5th April, 1967].

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

In the formative years of the Corporation, the only way to get new works was by tendering in an apparently unrealistic manner. With the setting up of the Planning Cell, the Corporation now tenders for works in a more realistic manner, after taking into account factors like local rates of materials and stores required for works, labour overheads etc.

The officers who have erred in this regard have already been removed from service by the Corporation and this Ministry consider that no disciplinary action is called for against any other office of the Corporation.

[Ministry of W. & H. O. M. No. 13(a)/65-HIII(P.S.) dated the 18th July, 1967].

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee cannot help feeling that uptill now incompetent and unbusiness like people had been incharge of the tendering work. Tendering is an acid test of a contracting organisation which survives or falls on the mode of tendering. In the case of N. B. C. C. an impression is left that the tendering has been done in a light hearted manner.

Recommendation (Serial No. 17)

The Committee regret to state that the information regarding the period for which the payments were due and the reasons in each case has not been furnished to them.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Noted.

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

Sl. No. (17)

FURTHER INFORMATION CALLED FOR BY THE COMMITTEE

Final action taken by Government on the recommendation may be communicated.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 16-PU/65, dated the 1st Aug. 1967].

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

The following is the position of the payments due to the N.B.C.C. from the various parties from time to time:—

(As on)				(Rupees in lakhs)
31-3-65	..	..	..	93.72
30-6-65	..	..	..	91.15
31-12-65	..		..	102.00
31-3-66	..	..	..	99.36
30-6-66	..	..	..	109.17
31-12-66	..	..	..	113.82
31-3-67	..	..	..	93.96

2. In order to reduce the outstanding the following steps have been taken:—

- (i) The Managing Director and the Chief Regional Manager of the Corporation have been personally contacting all the clients at the highest level explaining to them the necessity for prompt payments.
- (ii) Instead of depending on their clients for the preparation of their monthly bills, the Corporation has introduced the system of preparing their own bills and submitting them to their clients. In addition to speeding up payments, this enables the Corporation to know the exact amounts due and to present their claim accordingly.
- (iii) Instructions are issued frequently by the Managing Director to all resident Managers and Resident Engineers to make all efforts to collect the dues from the clients as promptly as possible.

- (iv) The Joint Secretary in charge of works in this Ministry has addressed all Additional Chief Engineers of the C.P.W.D. to instruct the Superintending Engineer and the Executive Engineers under them to take special steps to quicken the rate of payments due to the N.B.C.C.
- (v) A claims Cell has been created in the Head Office of the N.B.C.C. under the overall control of the Planning Engineer to effectively deal with the claims and outstanding dues against clients in respect of completed works in the fields units which have been closed.
- (vi) Government keep a watch over the position of the outstandings through the Quarterly Financial Reviews of the Corporation prepared by the Financial Adviser of the Corporation.

3. A statement (Appendix I) is enclosed showing the amounts outstanding on the 31st March, 1967, and the parties from whom and the years since when they are due to the N.B.C.C. It will be observed that the amount outstanding in respect of completed works on that date was Rs. 27.66 lakhs and in respect of the Works-in-Progress Rs. 66.30 lakhs. The corresponding figures for the period ending the 31st December, 1966, were Rs. 42.30 lakhs and Rs. 71.52 lakhs.

4. The main reasons for the outstandings are:—

- (i) delay on the part of the clients in measuring the works in time; and
- (ii) lack of funds in the hands of some Departments like the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Government Electric Factory, Bangalore and the National Mineral Development Corporation etc.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 13(9)/65-HIII (P.S.), dated the 31st August, 1967].

Recommendation (Serial No. 18)

The heavy outstandings indicate that the officers of the Corporation have not vigorously pursued the recovery of their dues from the clients. There was no procedure to ascertain the amount of outstanding dues against the clients on a particular date. Large amounts were allowed to remain unrecovered with the result that the Corporation had to borrow money to carry on its works. Apart

from the fact that bills were not prepared by the Corporation, it appears that the measurements of works were also not recorded in time and were left to be recorded by the clients. This is unsatisfactory although the clients were public undertakings and Government Departments. The Committee feel that the field units did not perform their duties, in this regard, and the Head Office and the Board were also remiss in that they had no procedure for watching the outstandings. It is apparent that they felt no urgent need to recover the moneys due as they had no difficulty in finding working capital by resorting to loans from Government and the State Bank. Normally no contracting organisation can afford to allow its funds to be blocked for long periods. Since the outstandings are mainly due from public undertakings and Government departments, it should not have been difficult for the Corporation to recover these dues in time. The Committee further suggest that all cases of outstandings should be investigated promptly and steps taken to recover them as early as possible.

They also hope that in future the bills would be prepared regularly and payments recovered promptly.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

A procedure has been laid down for determining the outstandings against clients. The management at all levels is in constant touch with the clients. The Ministry of W. & H. have also addressed all the clients who are principally Government Departments and public undertakings to make regular and timely payments.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE (Sl. Nos. 17 & 18)

In para 59 of their 1st Report on the N.B.C.C. the Committee noted that the payment of outstandings against clients rose from Rs. 6.9 lakhs at the end of 1961-62 to Rs. 77.37 lakhs at the end of 1963-64. The periods for which the payments were due and the reasons in each case were not supplied to the Committee. The Committee in para 60 (Sl. No. 17) regretted that the information had not been supplied. At the time of furnishing their replies to the recommendations of the Committee the Ministry merely noted the recommendation. The Ministry, on being asked to supply further information have done so. It is also seen that the outstandings were mounting. At the end of calendar years 1965 and 1966, these amounted to Rs. 102.00 and Rs. 113.82 lakhs respectively. The

amount outstanding on 31.3.67 was Rs. 93.96 lakhs. (Rs. 27.65 lakhs for the completed works and Rs. 66.30 lakhs for the work in progress. For the amount pertaining to completed works, about 21% is outstanding since 1964-65 and about 6% since 1963-64). It is also noted that most of the debtors are Government/Semi-Government parties who should be expected to settle their dues promptly.

The total amount outstanding is still enormous. The Committee consider that the reasons advanced for the present state of affairs are not convincing and the Corporation will have to take more effective measures to recover the outstandings.

Recommendation (Serial Nos. 21 & 22)

The Committee cannot help agreeing with the view that plant and machinery was purchased by the Corporation without fully considering the need therefor. Large sums of money were invested in defective machinery which could not be fully utilised. Apart from uneconomic capital investment, this resulted in increasing the overheads of the Corporation by way of depreciation of the machinery and the wages of the staff. It is vital for a business organisation to see that the entire plant and machinery is brought into full use. The Committee, therefore, recommend that effective steps should immediately be taken to utilise all the machinery to the optimum extent so as to ensure maximum out-turn from the large capital investment made therein.

The Committee are concerned at the light manner in which the purchase of defective machinery was treated by the Corporation. They are surprised that no enquiry in this regard was even considered necessary to find out whether any malpractices were involved. They recommend that this matter should be investigated and responsibility fixed. (Paragraphs 72, 73 and 74).

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The only machinery which was utilised by the Corporation were some crushers and some gantries fabricated for the Madras Runway. Every effort is being made to utilise the crushers to their optimum capacity. The gantry at Madras was experimental and it is now being disposed of to the best advantage.

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-Bt. dated the 27th November, 1965].

FURTHER INFORMATION CALLED BY THE COMMITTEE

Final action taken by Government on the recommendation may be communicated.

[L.S.S. O.M. 16/PU/65, dated the 5th April, 1967].

FURTHER REPLY BY GOVERNMENT

The Corporation purchased 8 new Stone crushers. These crushers were not defective. They could not be put to optimum use only because operating them was a specialised type of work requiring considerable experience. The staff of the N.B.C.C. were not sufficiently trained at that time to make the best use of them. Five of the crushers are being used by the Corporation in its different units and the remaining are being disposed of.

As the crushers were not defective, no enquiry or disciplinary action was called for against any official of the Corporation in this regard.

[Ministry of Works & Housing O.M.No. 13/(9)/65-H III (P.S.) dated the 31st August, 1967].

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

It is strange that eight crushers were purchased at the same time and the money was blocked while properly trained personnel for operating them were not available. That three of the crushers are proposed to be disposed of shows that these were purchased in excess of requirements and were obviously purchased without proper planning. The Committee would like to stress again that minimum quantity of machinery should be purchased according to absolute requirements.

Recommendation (Serial No. 33)

The Committee consider that the multiplicity of categories of posts in a public undertaking leads to blurring of responsibilities and consequential delays in execution of works. They also feel, that there are a large number of higher posts in the Corporation than is necessary and that there is scope for reduction therein. The Committee recommend that the question of rationalising the categories of posts in the Corporation with a view to their reduction may be examined. While doing so the position prevailing in similar undertakings in the private and public sectors may also be taken into account. At the same time it is important that the res-

possibilities of each category of post are clearly determined and demarcated.

(Paragraph 105)

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Action is being taken to implement the recommendation.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. 5/27/65-BT. dated the 27th November, 1965].

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee would again emphasise the desirability of reducing the staff in the Corporation. The Committee consider that increase in staff should never be disproportionate to the profits of the Undertaking.

NEW DELHI;

April 23, 1968

Vaisakha 3, 1890 (Saka)

D. N. TIWARY,

Chairman,

Committee on Public Undertakings.

APPENDIX I (Completed Works)

Statement showing the position of outstanding dues against clients as on 31-3-67 estimated by Resident Engineers
Assistant Engineers/Regional Managers

Station	Name of Clients	Dues outstanding since year					Total	Remarks
		1962-63	1963-64	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Delhi	Central Public Works Department	—	—	71,219.18	2,61,505.50	2,37,479.00	5,70,203.68(A)	(A) Rs. 2,50,176.50 repeated as on 28-2-67 as statement for 3/67 not received from R.E. IV.
Bombay	-do-	—	—	—	7,905.41	55,531.04	63,436.45(B)	(B) Figures arrived at from Head Office Ledgers.
Madras	-do-	—	1,58,000.00	—	—	—	1,58,000.00	
Changleng	Tirap C.P.W.D. Khonsa	—	—	—	1,42,216.60	—	1,42,216.60	
Total for C.P.W.D.		—	1,58,000.00	71,219.18	4,11,627.51	2,93,010.04	9,33,856.73	
Delhi	Indian Institute of Technology	—	17,911.00	—	3,14,117.55	—	3,22,028.55(B)	
	P.W.D. Govt. of Kerala	—	—	13,415.98	—	—	13,415.98(B)	
	P.W.D. Mysore	—	—	—	1,00,059.40	—	1,00,059.40(C)	(C) Rs. 59,665.40 as on 28-2-67.

Trichy	Mount Heavy Electricals Ltd.	—	—	—	45,433.61	—	45,433.61
Durgapur	Optalmic Glass Project	—	—	—	6,893.00	496.00	7,389.00
	Mining Allied Machinery Corporation	—	—	75,985.00	—	—	75,985.00
Patratu	Bihar State Electricity Board	22,478.79	—	—	—	—	22,478.79
Ranchi	Heavy Engineering Corporation	—	—	97,930.70	—	29,941.43	1,26,972.13
Imphal	P.W.D. (Manipur)	—	—	—	3,012.00	1,31,792.50	1,34,804.50
<hr/>							
	Grand Total	22,478.79	1,75,911.00	6,06,497.33	12,86,248.63	6,74,380.61	27,65,516.36

APPENDIX II

Vide Introduction

Analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (3rd Lok Sabha)

I. Total Number of Recommendations made	41
II. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government (Vide Sl. Nos. 1, 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, 40.	
Number	23
Percentage to total	56.09
III. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply (vide Sl. Nos. 2, 5, 10, 11, 12, 29, 36 37, 39, 41.)	
Number	10
Percentage to total	24.40
IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee (Vide Sl. Nos. 3, 6, 7, 17, 18, 21, 22, 33.	
Number	8
Percentage of total	19.51

PART II—WORK IN PROGRESS (POSITION AS ON 31-3-67)

Station	Name of clients	Net Amount out- standing against clients	Remarks
Calcutta	Central Public Works Depart- ment	5,34,814.79	
Delhi	—do—	2,22,579.96	
	Total for C.P.W.D.	7,57,394.75	
Bhopal	Public Works Department (P)	5,48,935.53	
	Maulana Azad College of Tech- nology	2,48,025.00	
Delhi	Public Works Department (Gujarat Government)	12,198.00	
	New Delhi Municipal Committee	2,79,174.00	
	Delhi Municipal Corporation	7,90,133.84 5,08,987.63	(Figure as on 28-2-67 repeated as statement for 3/67 not received from R.E. IV)
	Anand Niketan	30,199.22	
Durgapur	Mining Allied Machinery Cor- poration	2,60,651.00	
	Ophthalmic Glass Project	2,30,335.00	
Imphal	Public Works Department (Manipur)	85,401.50	
Namrup	Fertilizer Corporation of India	8,32,488.00	
Bailadilla	National Minerals Development Corporation	18,69,000.00	
Madras	Indian Institute of Technology	1,73,852.33	
	Central Leather Research Insti- tute	3,383.30	
	Grand Total	66,30,159.10	

Sl. No	Name of Agent	Agency No.	Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.
21.	Sat Narain & Sons, 3143, Mohd. Ali Bazar, Mori Gate, Delhi.	3	30.	People's Publishing House, Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi.	76
22.	Atma Ram & Sons, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-6.	9	31.	The United Book Agency, 48, Amrit Kaur Market, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi.	88
23.	J. M. Jaina & Brothers, Mori Gate, Delhi.	11	32.	Hind Book House, 82, Janpath, New Delhi.	95
24.	The Central News Agency, 23/90, Connaught Place, New Delhi.	15	33.	Bookwell, 4, Sant Narakari Colony, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-9.	96
25.	The English Book Store, 7-L, Connaught Circus, New Delhi.	20			
26.	Lakshmi Book Store, 42, Municipal Market, Janpath, New Delhi.	23		MANIPUR	
27.	Bahree Brothers, 188, Lajpatrai Market, Delhi-6.	27	34.	Shri N. Chaoba Singh, News Agent, Ramlal Paul High School Annex, Imphal.	77
28.	Jayana Book Depot, Chapparwala Kuan, Karol Bagh, New Delhi.	66		AGENTS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES	
29.	Oxford Book & Stationery Company, Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi-1.	68	35.	The Secretary, Establishment Department, The High Commission of India, India House, Aldwych, LONDON, W.C.-2.	

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