

.....When a chartered accountant signs certificates, the minimum that he is expected to do is to verify the accuracy of the figures certified.”

If, after proceedings conduct under Section 13, the District Forum (State or National Commission) is satisfied that the services provided by the advocate, medical practitioner, chartered accountant or other tax practitioner suffers from “deficiency” as defined above, (in the light of principles

stated above), the District Forum, the State Commission, or the National Commission as the case may be, *shall* issue an order directing him to pay the said amount as may be awarded by it as compensation for any loss or injury suffered by the consumer (client) due to the negligence of the practitioner.

Thus a professional is very much under the purview of consumer protection Act and does not enjoy any immunity.

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## DEBASEMENT OF MORAL AND ETHICAL VALUES IN PUBLIC SERVICES

*By*

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Good administration is necessary not only for the healthy growth of our national economy, but also for preserving our country's freedom. It is the function of a democratic Government to secure reconciliation of the demands of the people and it is the function of the Parliament or a State Legislature to approve of the policies of the Central or the State Government, as the case may be. But those policies can be carried out only by the executive, which should be sturdy and independent.

(2) It is an admitted fact that, today, corruption has permeated all ranks of Government from top to bottom. It is growing in alarming proportions affecting Indian life very badly. It is difficult to get a licence or a permit or even a ration-card without paying extra for it. By corruption, we mean not only the illicit money gains, but mental or moral corruption, political corruption, nepotism and all deceitful practices, which warp the smooth course of

honest, impartial and evenly balanced administration. Corruption has presented insuperable obstacles in the way of all-out efforts to extirpate it.

(3) A corrupt administration cripples the activities of the Government. The Ministers are dependent on big businessmen for their election campaigns, for the party funds are not sufficient to meet the election expenses. Close links between those who are in power and those who have wealth have been forged. The statutory limits on election expenses have become a fiction. The Ministers start their political careers by sending fraudulent returns of their election expenses and get themselves tied up with rich men who never give aid without strings and never hesitate to tighten the strings to suit their own purpose. The dependence of these guardians of administration on their rich patrons is well known. The obvious remedy is to reorganise our electoral system in such a manner that heavy expenditure is kept down.

(4). The qualifications of our top executives, namely the Ministers, are generally very dim, apart from the jail sentence and their ability to spin yarns. Most of them have no positive background. They have neither the time nor the desire to learn the rudiments of administration. Their main concern is how to continue to remain in power and they have to do a good deal of tight-rope walking to maintain their position. Lust for power and prestige has dominated the political life of our country.

(5) As regards public officials, most of them have selected their careers in a spirit of public service. But today, that spirit of public service has been given a complete go-by and is non-existent. The virulent element of corruption has surreptitiously entered into their heads resulting in deterioration or degradation of their moral and ethical values. If there is any slackness, inertia or inefficiency on the part of the public officials in the discharge of their official functions and if their character, moral uprightness, honesty and sincerity are at stake, then there will be a virtual impairment of the entire administrative machinery.

(6) The control of corruption can only be effective, if there is a determination at

the top to do so, irrespective of personal considerations of position and status of the person concerned. Personal loyalty should be no ground for condoning graft and corruption. It is obvious that there should be honest and speedy investigation of all complaints, whether they relate to public officials or Ministers. If there is a charge of corrupt practice against a Minister, the normal process of law should be set in motion particularly as the matter is of vital concern. The investigating agency, in such cases, should be given full freedom. But, unfortunately, today, that investigating agency is also crippled with corruption and lack of integrity making a mockery of the entire investigating mechanism.

(7) It is not necessary for us to lose hope. We must mobilise the best elements of the public to put up a stiff fight against this growing evil. In the United Kingdom and other developing countries, Anti-corruption Leagues have done good work in educating the people to resist it and focusing it by exposing corrupt practices mercilessly.

(8) The setting-up of such an organisation in India is a vital necessity, for the cup of the suffering of the people is full to the brim.