OMBUDSMAN- THE WATCHDOG OF PUBLIC OFFICE

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ABSTRACT

Everywhere throughout the globe there is a cry against corruption and maladministration in public offices. Hardly one can find somebody nowadays who is not a victim of corruption and maladministration. This Article is an attempt made by the author to make the people conscious regarding the existence of one such institution, named as ‘Ombudsman’ that has been created only with the purpose of protecting them against such unethical practices by corrupt public officials. Getting its genesis in the Scandinavian Countries, the popularity of the institution has spread all over the world within few decades. Even some Countries like India, the largest democracy in the world, where officially the institution is not functioning till today, but there is a demand for the establishment of such an institution to keep an eye on public offices for more than five decades. In fact, Ombudsman institutions throughout the world act as watchdog over public offices. Initially the institution of Ombudsman was associated with problems relating to democracy, democratic development, governance and public administration, but in recent years it is perceived that Ombudsman can also act as a mechanism to curb corruption. In broader sense, the institution of Ombudsman can actually be perceived as a mechanism for redressal of public grievances arising out of arbitrary use of official power and maladministration. Keeping in view the growing popularity of the institution all over the world, an attempt is made to discuss its functioning in various countries.

KEYWORDS: corruption, maladministration, Ombudsman, redressal, Parliamentary Commissioner, public office.

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Conclusion

A stage has arrived where corruption is threatening the very security and safety of the State everywhere- there is corruption in execution of projects, in sanctioning government contracts, in making purchases, in issuance of licenses and permits, in appointments, in elections and so on and so forth. There is hardly any sphere of life left untouched by corruption in our society. Corruption has struck deep roots in the society throughout the globe including its administrative apparatus. At every rung of administration whether at the Centre or the States, there are corrupt elements causing immense loss everywhere to the public interest. The very objective of the institution of Ombudsman is to give relief when the administrative action is contrary to the law, or is not reasonable. The Institute of Ombudsman has the role to act as a
watch dog over departmental administration. In fact, because of this reason the institution was adopted by the various countries of the world and is also getting overwhelming response everywhere regarding its functioning. It is thus the need of the hour to strengthen the Institute of Ombudsman more and more everywhere so as to make it strong enough to fight with the evil practice of corruption in every sphere in whatever forms it may come.