

is more on performance appraisal rather than on a hunt for lapses and faults. The recommendations of various ad hoc committees on public enterprises are also listed.

The chapters (10-16) which address the functional areas of management are purely descriptive without any analytical depth, probably due to the vast canvas at hand. The case studies provided do point out policy errors, but do not provide specific policy recommendations. Perhaps the only optimizing criteria really laid down is in the chapter on project appraisal. The brevity in dealing with key issues can be illustrated by the space provided – a page and a half – to human resource development issues in the giant Indian Oil Corporation. The discussion on worker participation in management is wound up just when reader interest has been generated.

It would have been certainly rewarding to limit the scope of the book, providing a sharper focus on selected issues. After all, the author did exercise such discretion earlier, in his book “Public enterprise in India”, published by the Planning Commission in 1974, and with a laudatory introduction by Professor Robson of the London School of Economics, in which he focuses on the annual reports of companies.

P. Nandakumar
IIM Kozhikode

Maintaining Industrial Discipline : Answers to 50 Frequently Asked Questions
by G. P. Das Gupta, published by Responce Books, New Delhi, 2002;
211 pages.

The author has earlier written two books on industrial discipline – *Handbook on Disciplinary Proceedings*, and *Industrial Discipline : Concepts, Laws and Cases*. His long working experience as a personal and industrial relations manager of a premier industrial establishment of the country, makes him

particularly qualified to deal with the practical issues which often make a disciplinary proceeding instituted by an employer null and void, in the eye of law.

The book is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, the author gives, in brief, an overview of the management of discipline, covering both legal, and positive and constructive aspects of discipline. Chapter-2 deals with the various dimensions of the procedure of domestic enquiry, like : definition of misconduct, role of trade unions, employers' rights, stages of enquiry, and so on. This chapter tries to give the reader, in a summary form, an integrated understanding of the procedural sequence to be observed to establish a charge of misconduct against an employee. The third chapter deals with the employers' powers under law to terminate the service of an employee. It cites important recent case laws in support. First three chapters of the book prepare the context for the fourth and the final chapter which represents its kernel and justifies its title.

The fourth chapter provides answers to what the author describes as "Frequently Asked Questions". The author observes that since the law on disciplinary action is constantly evolving through the interpretations of the statutes made by the working managers and others, in the light of these new interpretations of law. The fifty frequently asked questions and their answers which he presents, cover a wide range of issues. It starts with answering 'What is a Misconduct?', then 'Who is competent to initiate a disciplinary proceeding'", through questions relating to what constitutes victimization, unfair labour practice, or perverse findings, to the powers of a civil court to intervene in matters of domestic enquiry initiated by an employer.

The book has nine annexures, Annexure-1 gives relevant excerpts of laws governing disciplinary proceedings. In the second annexure, the author presents several case exercises for drafting of chargesheet. In the remaining annexures he illustrates drafting of a chargesheet format of an enquiry report, draft termination order, etc.

All in all, a modest attempt at clarifying some doubts which often rise in the minds of the practitioners, while conducting a domestic enquiry in an industrial undertaking. Author's intentions are undoubtedly good. But given the highly legalistic and technical nature of the process of domestic enquiry, where one has to be always doubly sure about the legal ramification of an executive action, it is not certain how far one would refer to such a book for clearing the doubts. They would perhaps prefer to refer to a more authoritative source book, or the actual case laws themselves.

P. K. Sett
IIM Calcutta