

『Feminine Pioneer: Nellie Tayloe Ross, First Woman Governor』

Introduction

Currently even though it can be commonly accepted that a woman becomes a governor of the state or director of the masculine bureau like the Mint, in the past, it was very rare case. I believe that today's development of females' social position will be owing to the endeavors of women pioneers in the past. We know well how difficult to be the first woman is in masculine field and to keep the post several times is. In these aspects, the first woman governor and first woman director of the Mint, Nellie is one of the most outstanding feminine pioneers in public administration.

In this essay, I will present what Nellie contributed to public administration as a pioneer, how her behaviors can be explained in terms of gender theory, and how she influenced HRM.

Contributions

A feminine pioneer, Nellie Tayloe Ross was the first woman governor of an American state and the first female director of the Mint. In 1924, she was elected Wyoming's governor to complete the last two years of her husband's term. Following her defeat for reelection in 1926, she embarked on a career of writing and speechmaking on the national Chautauqua circuit. In 1928, Al Smith appointed her vice-chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). She directed the DNC Women's Division for the next four years and she helped to direct the campaign for the women's vote in 1928 and 1932. In 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt appointed

her as the first female director of the Mint. She was renominated to the Mint post three more times by Roosevelt and Truman. In 1953, after having completed a full federal career of twenty years, she retired at age seventy-six.

Nellie Tayloe Ross's several contributions to public service can be demonstrated as below.

First, her proficient performance as a governor helped to pave the way for aspiring female politicians across the nation. Especially, Nellie excelled public relations in the area of gubernatorial responsibility. She brought the state more beneficial national publicity and acclaim. Public relations effectiveness is dependent on good people skills, communication ability, and innate astuteness in handling the press, and in these areas, Nellie was superbly talented.

Second, the first woman director of the Mint, Nellie developed into a strong and popular administrator on the basis of her own leadership. Lacking business experience and management training, she based her leadership style on the organizational structure that she knew best, the family. She always referred to her workforce as "the Mint family." She was able to combine an almost maternal empathy and warmth with the reserved authority of a deeply revered father figure.

Finally, she performed well enough to be renominated to the Mint post three more times. She instituted a series of reclamation processes that resulted in savings of about \$100,000 a year. Following World War II, she introduced a Management Improvement Program, which resulted that mechanical and operational procedures were revolutionized and new types of equipment were invented and installed, resulting in an estimated reduction in the cost of coinage production of more than 84 percent between 1946 and 1951.

Discussion in aspects of gender theory

In traditional view of gender roles, a sociologist in the United States, Talcott Parsons believed that the feminine role was expressive activities which fulfilled internal functions, for example, to strengthen the ties between members of the family, whereas the masculine role was instrumental activities which performed the external functions of a family, such as providing monetary support. Through the view of traditional gender roles, we can assure that Nellie paved the way for new feminine role.

She became a governor in the form of completing her dead husband's term. Had it not been for the untimely death of her husband, Governor William B. Ross, Nellie would have spent the rest of her life as a contented political wife. She may have accepted the feminine role which was required by the society at that time, so that Nellie may have thought that her ideal mission for a woman, was to support her husband and to take care of her family. However, her decision to run for governor was not only that she had an altruistic desire to carry out her husband's unfinished agenda, but also was that Nellie suddenly awoke to personal ambition. Until the moment when she was forced to run for governor, she didn't realize her sleepy ambition and her ability within her inside because she had lived within the boundary which was usually determined as female role at that time.

During the tenure of governor and director of the Mint, she came to find potential within her inside for new role which had been considered for only males. However she had to manage the organization through negotiation and harmony with masculine culture in the workplace. In these situations, she had a great success in taking advantage of her female nature as a leadership style. Nellie managed her offices as she did a household where she had many experiences. As a pioneer who paved the way for women positions in public administration, Nellie may have

recognized that to succeed in this area, she first needed to approach the organization culture slowly and carefully not giving bad feeling to male employees until society would accept changes of gender role. That may have made her choose her feminine leadership style.

Relation to HRM

Nellie's leadership style had a great success in controlling employees in her office and is deeply connected with HRM.

Her mother-like leadership style had influenced employee's motivation and ability to perform their missions well. While most male politicians and agency executives were usually engaged externally that internal human resource practices were beyond their attention, Nellie knew each employee in the Mint. She took a careful interest in her employees by referring to workforce as "the Mint Family." That is, she was able to create a working environment in which her employees felt valued as individuals. A survey says that one of the strongest motivators in their job is to be accepted, to be valued, and to be made to feel important by others. Therefore, according to expectancy theory, employees would try to do their best to attain their agency's goal to reward for being valued by a director. Also a better working environment can help workers to achieve efficiently their goals. The personal relationship between an employer and employees can bring a synergy effect on productivity to the organization. The success in the Mint that she was successively appointed to the post four times was because she made desperate endeavors for employees as a competent leader.

Conclusion

Even though we live in changing and developing society, it's not easy to be the first one in any fields which it's whoever or whatever. Today's all common things that we usually accept in each area can be seen as a result that pioneers in the past made efforts through trial and error. Nellie is one of the most eminent contributors in public administration. She is a feminine pioneer as the first governor and the first director of the Mint. Also she paved the way for extending female role in society and influenced HRM by showing us the way her leadership style motivated her employees to work well and made her have workers behind her.

When we see today's AA and EEO in the organization as the product of the challenge that feminine pioneers like Nellie for the first time entered the office, this struggling process can be a part of development stages of history in female's social position for better future.