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" A TIDE IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN"

Presented at the

Innotech Regional Seminar

On

Use of Community Resources In
Providing Low Cost Primary Education

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The man responsible for first getting me involved in international community development work was the late Dr. James H. Robinson - the creative, compassionate Black preacher from Harlem in New York City. Among his varied talents was his vast knowledge of the works of William Shakespeare and back in 1959 when Jim Robinson was arguing the necessity of building bridges of understanding between young Africans and young North Americans he frequently finished his appeal by quoting the words which Shakespeare had put in the mouth of Brutus as he and Cassius considered their strategy for the Battle of Philippi.

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

Applying the Shakespearian analogy to the field of educational development can we identify some "tides" or "currents" which should be followed. The question before this gathering is the use of community resources in education. I might be expected to analyze the Canadian examples which might be of most use to you.

There is a great impetus at the moment in Canada and indeed throughout North America to break down the isolation of schools from the communities they are supposed to serve. This drive is exemplified in the many projects which utilize parents as volunteer teacher aides in the classroom as well as a variety of efforts to utilize factories, office buildings and community institutions as alternative learning environments for school students.

In recent years in my home Province of Ontario there have been a number of official reports which attempt to grapple with the new educational approach needed for the present era. The first one to appear was entitled Living and Learning¹ which among other things concerns itself with the learning programs necessary for "the child in society". This committee argued that the students should not be treated as isolated entities but should be educated for life in a society which respects his or her individuality.

The universities of our country are not exempt from this enthusiasm to link the school and the community. A report on the future of my own university in London, Ontario was entitled "Towards a Community University". The recent Provincial Government report on post secondary education in Ontario includes among its many recommendations the idea that universities and college programs should be more fully integrated with opportunities for practical experience and practice in the community.

The financial implications of all these developments are not being ignored as the government also has established a committee to examine the costs of education for the elementary and secondary schools of Ontario in relation to the changing aims, objectives, programs and priorities of the educational system. The reports of this committee might be of some interest to some of you.²

The latest report which attempts to link together the community and the school is the "Interim Report of the Select Committee of the Legislature on the Utilization of Educational Facilities". The sub-title of their report gives us

1. Living and Learning The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario (Toronto, 1968).
2. Committee on the Costs of Education Interim Report No. 1, 2, 3. (Toronto, 1972).

a clear indication of their bias. "The School Must --- reflect its community, be part of its community, serve its community and have its community serve it".³

In preparing for this seminar I experienced an initial urge to concentrate on exposing you to many of the exciting projects underway in Ontario with regard to the use of community resources in the schools. In St. Mary's, a small town in the mixed farming area of Southwestern Ontario one could find on any given day senior citizens of the community fascinating the young children with stories of the early history of the town or working with them in the home economics room spinning wool taken from local sheep or making flour and butter and baking pioneer bread. The children no doubt learn a great deal of factual material from these sessions but the program is also aimed at other social problems; on the isolation of age groups, the lack of a sense of culture and the rootlessness of people who feel no ties with the land and lack a historical perspective.

In the northern mining community of Sudbury where I was raised and where my father slaved as a "mucker" underground in cramped damp mine shafts 12 to 14 hours a day seven days a week, before the days of unions, a recent program has been developed by the schools and the mining companies to introduce the students to the procedures, problems and potential of the mining industry - its role in their community and its role in the world community.

In Ottawa the Nation's capital some schools regularly bring into the classroom a great variety of workers to discuss their lives with the pupils. Salesmen, policemen, shopkeepers, shoemakers, and politicians have all

3. Interim Report Number One of the Select Committee on the Utilization of Educational Facilities (Toronto, 1973).

been given an opportunity to share their view of the community with the youngsters. Can you imagine turning over your class for an hour a week for six weeks to two sewer cleaners. The children of Ottawa were delighted with the opportunity to question such men about their interpretation of what was wrong and what was right in their city. This then is another view of the use of community resources in Ontario.

The project which excites me the most is one which is centred at our own College of Education and is now exerting an influence in communities across Canada and throughout the United States. It is Paul Park's "Early School Environment Programme" which can perhaps best be categorized by the theme "A Child's World and Welcome To It". The program has attempted to assist teachers in taking a serious concerned look at the interests, values and problems of the children in their class and to utilize something in which the student is interested as a starting point for learning. In a core area school in a large city the starting point may be the cosmetics and hair sprays in which the young girls are becoming so frantically interested. What qualities does each hair spray have? Can we test them against the claims made by the television ads? Are there any health hazards involved?

In other schools the starting points more often may be animal life. Most of the subjects for such studies are found in nearby ponds or streams but for one year back in 1968 when I was sharing office space with Paul my room was filled with cages of Gerbils, a small Australian dessert rat which makes an excellent subject for classroom study in the primary schools.

In Goose Bay, Labrador the young boys earn pocket money by snaring rabbits which they sell on the street corners on Saturday night. Thus,

when Paul Park went there to run a teachers workshop he made the snaring of rabbits his starting point. At the Hudson's Bay Post he bought various kinds of string, rope and thin wire and got the boys started on testing their comparative strength, flexibility, longevity and cost once again taking the learner where he is at and using his present interests as a starting point for meaningful learning experiences.

Frivolous as some of the items might appear each situation is used to assist students in developing the ability to gather data, organize it, record it in a systematic fashion, and analyze it. The teachers continue to cover all the basic skills although they may not be utilizing all the basic school materials. Few materials are purchased by the schools, but rather come from the parents and shopkeepers of the community who are made to feel by the teachers that they are an essential resource in the school program.

Paul Park's attempt to make our schools reflect the interests of the community has brought to light a number of key issues that have to be faced and the preparation of teachers to this new approach is without a doubt the crucial factor. The written and film reports of this project may raise some appropriate questions for you to consider.⁴

Two concepts appear to underline most of these projects concerned with the use of community resources.

1. That education must be seen as a lifelong process and
2. That education is not confined to the facilities which have in the past normally been designated as educational facilities.

4. The World of the Child Profiles in Practical Education No. 2, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. (Toronto, 1971).

Some advocates speak of this as a need to concentrate on non-formal as opposed to formal education programs.

I applaud many of the Canadian efforts to develop educational alternatives as being appropriate responses to the communities' demand for increased access to education, individualized instruction and increased efficiency. I am one of many in Canada who have been pushing for community involvement in the schools and for the utilization of community resources for the school programs. I have submitted proposals to the Provincial Committee studying the cost of education in the schools of Ontario⁵ and in terms of setting up alternative learning environments I was part of a group responsible for developing the Cross-Cultural Learner Centre in London, a computerized multi-media resource centre being utilized both by the community and the school population.⁶

Having said all this I find myself reluctant to elaborate further on the Canadian examples and I hesitate to advocate them as appropriate models for your part of the world. There are many reasons for this feeling, one of which is the observation of the extent to which education is rooted in a culture and the schools are used as a major means for passing on the cultural values of the community in which a person lives.

Let me give one brief Canadian example to illustrate my point. Wilfred Pelletier, a North American Indian uses the specific example of how a child learns about the physical objects around him to show how the educational structure in this situation reflects and helps teach the child social values which he will use later on within the community.⁷ The Indian child is not taught that this is

5. A. E. M^{ac}Kenzie, S. L. North and D. G. Simpson, Submission To The Committee on the Costs of Education in the Elementary and Secondary Schools of Ontario. (London, October 30, 1972).

6. See A. E. D. M^{ac}Kenzie, S. L. North and D. G. Simpson, The Cross-Cultural Learner Centred Environment - An Educational Alternative - a speech presented to the Vienna Rotating Seminar on Universities and the Quest for Peace. (Vienna July 1972).

7. For further details see Wilfred Pelletier For Every North American Indian Who Begins To Disappear I Also Begin To Disappear. (Toronto, 1971).

mommy, daddy, desk, ashtray, house etc. Rather the child is left free to relate to objects as he wishes, learning adult names and relationships for them only as he listens to adults in conversation with each other. Thus, the child learns to relate many ways to an object. For example, he might turn a chair over, cover it with a blanket and use it for a house, since adult values on things are not necessarily instilled in the child (i.e. the chair is only used for sitting on). This educational environment allows the child to develop a great deal of creativity with respect to the growth of relationships. It also reflects and teaches one of the practiced ethics of the community; non-interference. Indian social interaction involves standing quietly and listening and speaking only when acknowledged. Thus, the parent does not interfere with the child's exploration and growing relationship to his environment, and the child in turn learns by observing and feeling rather than being told about things. Thus, the organizational structure of this early informal educational environment reflects the way of life of this community.

It is clear that we have had difficulty in my country allowing certain disadvantaged groups to utilize the resources of their own community to build a meaningful school program for their children. The realization of this tempers my enthusiasm for suggesting to educators here in Southeast Asia ways in which they can best make use of community resources.

I would like rather at this time to raise some of my concerns about the way in which educators from the West backed by some of the funding agencies may sometimes allow their enthusiasm for innovations in their own society and their global interests in education to cloud both their awareness of the cultural uniqueness of much of the education process and the fact that peoples demands for education usually reflect the social realities of their society rather than the theoretical models of the international educational planner. I am concerned

with some of the new thrusts being suggested by some of the aid organizers.

Following that I would like to stick my neck out and suggest areas of priority for educational research. Finally I would like to react to the Innotech Delivery System project and its attempt to utilize community resources.

HAVE THE AID AGENCIES A NEW STRATEGY WITH REGARD TO EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT?

It is impossible to give a definitive answer to this question for all aid agencies. It is clear, however, that some donor agencies have concluded that the educational expansion of the sixties failed to meet the requirements for development. They point to chronic and rising unemployment among the educated, irrelevant imported curricula and a failure, in particular to meet the needs of rural development. Readily available statistics on wastage and cost are also used to substantiate their position that the present system of education has failed abysmally. The prognosis which often follows from this diagnosis is:

"What is required is radical and massive educational change and a complete re-ordering of priorities."

WHY IS THERE SUCH AN INTEREST IN MASSIVE RADICAL NEW APPROACHES TO EDUCATION?

It would seem to me that among the many problems confronting ministers of education in Third World countries, there are two which I expect are of particular concern to all of them:

1. The increase in the unemployment of educated persons,
2. High budget costs and increasing social demand for schools.

These concerns are shared by the international donor agencies but quite often it seems to me the outsiders want to add on to these two concerns whatever is current in educational experimentation in North America and Europe.

These include such items as Illich's ideas on de-schooling and a concern for the democratization of education. The concern for democratization

and the concern for social justice tends to lead one towards non-formal education particularly in view of the rather disappointing results of compensatory education programs for minority groups in North America. One of the unifying themes in the arguments put forth by western proponents of non-formal education in the Third World is their attack on the formal system for fostering elitism.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH WHAT IS BEING SUGGESTED?

The diagnosis put forth by those in favour of massive radical change rests on at least two general assumptions neither of which may be valid.

1. -- that the present system of formal education has been seriously tried and has failed.

The question here is to what extent the present system has been given a chance to work. In its present expanded form of mass education the present system has in most less developed countries been operative for less than 20 years and 20 years is rather a short time in the evolution of a system as complex and diffuse as the school. In other words there may be a lack of historical perspective in the diagnosis.

If we look at the realities of the primary school classrooms in many towns and villages, it might be fair to say that the present system in many cases has not yet been given a fair trial. The realities of the primary school more often than not include few or no books, untrained or absent teachers, insufficient seating, no chalk or blackboards, a building that is flooded in the rainy season and children who walk many miles to school and work all day without proper nourishment.

2. -- that educational systems can be viewed by the planners mainly as a passive instrument of social policy which can be altered by them and replaced with new policies which will easily receive community support.

It must be an excessive enthusiasm for the new approaches that leads planners astray on this point for it is difficult to believe that many could support the above assumption if faced with it in such stark terms. Nevertheless there are some who continue to promote policies which neglect to consider the needs, expectations and dreams of the people in that particular community.

For example, numerous developmental economists are busy gathering data on rate of return studies to determine what area of education should receive priority. Their statistics (of dubious reliability) put them in agreement with many educators who are pressing the case for primary education. Some of these same economists are advocating ways of cutting the social demand for education and of restraining the rate of expansion of educational opportunities.

Given the vast numbers of children not in school at the moment and the high budgets for education this is a compelling and logical view but one that cannot be sustained in many communities given the expectations that people have. Let us take an example from Nigeria which recently has gone through the lengthy process of re-examining the goals of their educational programs. As a result of deep consultation with people in the community they are recommending to the government among other things, that there be automatic promotion for all students from primary to secondary school, that secondary school be changed to a 6 year program, and that the University course be changed from a 3 year to a 4 year course. These are further indications of the pressure to provide more schooling opportunities for a wider segment of the population. The cost implications are horrendous but then I am not telling you anything of which you are not already well aware. This is one of the major concerns which has led to the Innotech Delivery System research project.

What I am underlining is the view that the school has become a social institution, that education and social change go to the very roots of personal and family life. Regardless of the problems associated with schools the parents are not going to allow them to quickly disappear or to follow the dictates of educational planners or international agencies.

Let us consider three additional new priorities often suggested by the advocates of radical change and see the extent to which they relate to our concern with relating the school to its community. These priorities are the ruralization of schools, the extensive and elaborate use of educational technology and support of non-formal as opposed to the formal system.

(1) Ruralization of Schools

It would appear at first glance that this suggestion is an attempt to have the school relate with its community and reflect that community. The assumption behind most notions of ruralization of schools is that the requirements of rural youth are different from those of urban dwellers. This, in turn, assumes that children born and educated in rural areas would remain in the rural areas if they received a different type of education. The train of this argument is that if schools were made more relevant to their rural environment and that if farming were effectively taught in the schools then school leavers might become farmers and not drift to the towns and cities. At first glance it looks like a reasonable suggestion. But a little exploration shows us that this idea has been around for many years. In the African setting it was part of the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes report in the 1920's and has been raised periodically ever since. It has not taken root essentially because it does not give the people what they want. As long as the social reward systems remain as they are I expect that rural people will fight for the opportunity for their children to obtain the social and economic benefits of an education no matter how great the odds against them are. Anything that appears to indicate that the

educational opportunities for their children should be restricted to a rural environment will no doubt be seen by them as second class education and will be rejected.

The proposals for ruralization then rather than being a response to the felt needs of the community may be another attempt by planners to manipulate people in order to solve some major political problems.

Supposing one could get people in a rural area to endorse this concept of education there is then the additional question as to whether or not such a system of education is in fact pedagogically sound. Archibald Callaway has dealt with this issue in his article "Educational Planning and Unemployed Youth in Africa" when he attacks the concept of the ruralization of schools by saying "pupils who complete the primary course should be able to read and write fluently in their own and in the national language, to do a certain amount of arithmetic, to understand enough science and history to interpret the world around them, and to learn sufficient civics to be made aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. This does not make pupils into farmers or carpenters or nuclear scientists: it is basic to all these careers. Education is not meant only to adapt pupils to their society, but also to equip them to alter it. And it may well be that widespread primary schooling provides the foundation for modernizing agriculture -- not by trying to teach pupils to become farmers, but by giving them the tools of literacy and the confidence to try new techniques".⁸ The desires of the youth and their parents may therefore be at great variance with the planners notion of "ruralizing" rural schools and if this is the case the prospects for the success of such a program are very remote indeed.

8. Archibald Callaway, "Educational Planning and Unemployed Youth in Africa" in Approaches to Employment Problems in Africa and Asia (Commonwealth Secretariat, London, 1973).

II EXTENSIVE AND ELABORATE USE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

I have been a consistent worker in my own community for the development of educational technology as a learning tool, but again find myself with little enthusiasm for suggesting it as the method for a major breakthrough in developing countries especially if we define educational technology as so many people do as the extensive use of television. For twenty years there have been predictions in North America that education would be soon revolutionized by the technologies of communication. James Koerner in a recent article entitled "Educational Technology -- Does It Have a Future in the Classroom"⁹ indicates that the initial enthusiasm in North America of leaders and futurists from the knowledge industry, from government and from education has given way to embarrassment as their rosy prophecies have not been realized. Koerner is not attacking the idea of experimenting with the uses of educational technology. Rather he is cautioning against expecting it to do too much in coping with the relentlessly rising costs of education. He goes on to say that for school boards and college trustees to look to technology for rescue at this point in time is like expecting the Wright Brothers to put their first aircraft into commercial production and carry passengers around the country in it.

Similarly let us not expect too much of educational technology in your communities. Some will claim that the new technology will be able to (a) reach wider audiences (b) reach them more effectively and (c) more cheaply than conventional classroom teachers. An examination of the projects underway should leave one with some real questions. Jim Sheffield of the Centre for Education in Africa at Columbia University writes that "Bitter experience has shown ... that such efforts usually remain exotic transplants, funded and staffed largely by outside agencies, with little spinoff effect on the indigenous system

9. James Koerner, "Educational Technology - Does It Have a Future in the Classroom" Saturday Review of Education (May, 1973).

they were designed to help. Motivated in part by a desire to by-pass the poorly educated local teachers, many technological innovations flounder eventually on the very personnel they were unable to ignore".¹⁰

The western proponents of massive technology leave themselves open to the criticism of either (a) trying to use developing countries as a testing ground for experiments which we have not been prepared to try ourselves or (b) trying to provide a wider market for our technology hardware.

III SUPPORT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AS OPPOSED TO THE FORMAL SYSTEM

Let me deal first of all with that minority of non-formal advocates who are staging direct attacks on the established system and calling on men to "de-school society" in order to reform society. This position is put forth most forcefully by Ivan Illich whom you have heard at one of your earlier seminars. Illich writes "America's commitment to the compulsory education of its young ... now reveals itself to be as futile as the American commitment to compulsory democratization of the Vietnamese. Conventional schools obviously cannot do it. The free-school movement entices unconventional educators, but ultimately does so in support of the conventional ideology of schooling. And the promise of the educational technologists, that their research and development -if adequately funded - can offer some kind of final solution to the resistance of youth to compulsory learning, sounds as confident and proves as fatuous as the analogous promises made by military technologists. I believe that the contemporary crisis of education demands that we review the very idea of publically prescribed learning, rather than the methods used in its enforcement."¹¹

I accept much of the criticisms of educational systems which this group has made but find little to commend in most of their anarchistic, nihilistic romantic indeed selfish notions about "de-schooling" and what would follow. One of the best critiques of their proposals has been written by Ronald

10. James Sheffield "Education Technology and Development - A Critical Reappraisal" unpublished paper February 1973.

11. Ivan Illich Deschooling Society (New York, 1971) p 65.

Dore of the Institute for Development Studies in Sussex, England.¹² He expresses anger "at the evidence, either of insensitivity to the real sufferings of a large part of mankind, or else of that same capacity for self-deception which enables the questioning, protesting youth of North America to mistake their own self-regarding concerns for social concerns, and to conflate their own identity crisis with the crisis of their society". He charges that their prescription is for an individualistic, selfish, play orientated educational system "and that whatever its virtues in a North American context, to prescribe such an educational system as suitable also for poor societies which must struggle to keep their population barely alive, shows culpable insensitivity".

But enough of the radical de-schoolers for they are only a minority group among the advocates of non-formal education, and their ideas have not captured the imagination of most policy makers in the aid agencies.

Two years ago Jim Sheffield and Victor Diejamaoh published their study on non-formal education in Africa which introduces us to a wide range of educational opportunities carried on outside of the regular graded classroom and geared to preparing people for employment.¹³ They admit that it is difficult to isolate a conceptual model which could be easily transferable and stress that the key to the success of most projects was not the technique of training but the links to the job market. The successful programs they observed (and there were many) were often small scale and in most cases the program would have been ruined by overloading it with many students and more money in an attempt to expand the output. Thus, although the sponsors of the study were anxious to find a model or models that could be expanded, Sheffield speaks of micro solutions to macro problems and makes no great claims for non-formal education as an alternative to the formal system.

12. I.D.S. Discussion Paper No. 12. October 1972.

13. Victor P. Diejomaoh and James R. Sheffield, Non-Formal Education in African Development (New York, 1971).

Others are more forceful in their advocacy of the non-formal approach. Among this group there appears to be an underlying assumption that non-formal education will enable governments to deal with the two major problems of unemployment and low productivity. It is clear that some training programs carried on outside the graded classroom have been successful in preparing people for available jobs. The question is can these programs be expanded and duplicated? Even if they can, are we talking about an alternative to the formal school or are we talking about something different?

There is another element to the issue of non-formal education. Not only is non-formal education being advocated as a better way of preparing people for work in the modern sector of the economy, it is also being argued as the way to prepare people for the informal (non-formal) sector of the economy. For some time in the past, manpower planners concentrated their analysis more or less exclusively on what they called the modern (formal?) sector of the economy. At a later stage the economists began to pay much more attention to the large part of the working force which operates in the informal sector of the economy (bakers, carpenters, seamstresses, tailors, cooks, etc.)

Some educators, following the economists lead, have discovered this informal sector and would advocate a major shift of resources to provide training for this sector. It may well be that increases in efficiency in this sector will result in greater levels of capital formation and it may be that this sector offers partial answers to the requirements of increasing productivity and generating jobs. But the recognition that the informal sector exists is not the same thing as the comprehension of the structure of that sector and its requirements. Even less is known about how school age youth and their parents view this sector.

Clearly in the absence of such data, attempts to develop training programs oriented towards this sector can only derive from western experience (and one of the major criticisms of formal education is that it is based on western experience and inappropriate to conditions in the less developed countries). We need to know more about the community we are trying to serve. The need here is not for massive commitment or extensive structural reorientation, but for cautious experimentation to learn more about the structure, requirements, and limitations of the informal sector as an antecedent to discussions of curricular and educational innovation or reform.

It may be that a non-formal approach can provide some useful answers here in the long run. What I am saying is that we know very little about the non-formal system at this time and we should be leery of rushing ahead with massive funds for a new approach which may prove to be as dysfunctional as some of our past efforts to push countries to establish universal primary education long before they could afford the cost or absorb the school leavers.

The formal system is not likely to disappear; it will survive and expand as will the problems associated with it. The real danger may be that in promoting a non-formal approach to education and in providing massive sums for those who respond to this stimulus, advocates of this position rather than making education more flexible, relevant and efficient may be primarily assisting in the development of a second parallel expensive system.

What will be the recurrent costs of this system? If we were able to answer all other questions about this new approach, this would still be the key factor. If there is any area which requires responsible planning, it is the area of fiscal planning.

MY OWN POSITION - RADICAL OR REACTIONARY

These questions which I am facing with regard to massive innovations in education have led me into a curious position. Accustomed as I am to be called a progressive (and by some a radical) educator in my own community I have come to the point where in discussions of educational developments in Africa and Asia I find myself being viewed as conservative (and by some as reactionary) in my views. This caused me confusion and consternation for a while but I am more comfortable with my position now.

I am not trying to suggest that there is no crisis in education nor would I want to support the views of those who feel no changes are necessary. It would seem clear to me that in various parts of the world we have to find new ways of educating people and ways of making educational programs more efficient.

However, the more I have discussed the various suggestions for massive radical change in education, the more concerned I have become that many of them represent intense speculation and sweeping judgments with little supporting evidence. It is irresponsible of westerners to advocate extensive education alternatives abroad knowing so little about the schooling system in those countries. Many donors are looking for the gross alternatives that will stimulate a massive change. The concepts are grand and exciting but perhaps in many cases they represent intellectual indulgences which the less developed countries can ill afford.

I would urge that rather than advocating massive changes there is a need to point out some of the unsupported assumptions about primary schooling and alternatives to it, suggest more effort to sort out what we know and what we do not know and support some more experiments and carefully evaluated try outs

before broad scale structural changes in primary education are recommended. In the absence of a cautious, experimental posture quite negative consequences may well follow. This would reflect a failure to learn a lesson from the sixties when large sums of capital from developed countries were applied to beneficial social projects including the expansion of schools without fully appreciating the magnitude of the recurring costs which would have to be assumed by the recipient government.

Let us consider some possible research approaches under four general headings.

1. RESEARCH ON HOW THE PRIMARY SYSTEM WORKS

Here we might be interested in such questions as:

-Do parents care whether curriculum is relevant to rural areas so long as it enables children to have some possibility of advancing in the education and the social system?

-To what extent and in what way do schools and universities function to distribute widely unequal life-chances and how do the consequences of schooling shape the motives of pupils, parents, teachers and educational administrators?

-Will a few hours exposure to practical courses have an enduring effect on skills and attitudes?

-What motivates students to make different decisions about their future?

-Can one isolate educational factors that assist people in becoming more productive? Is it mainly a matter of attitude? Are there certain educational programs (for example study-service) that can influence attitude change?

-What information do we have about how different teachers' qualifications and characteristics, management abilities of headmasters and school plant and equipment really affect learning and scholastic achievement? (Do teachers with

higher certificates actually produce better pupils? Is a pupil teacher ratio of 35/1 really necessary?)

-What happens to the drop outs and the educated unemployed. For how long are they unemployed? Is it mainly a matter of youth unemployment? In developing a long-run employment-oriented strategy, is it essential to include proposals for reforming the education system or is it possible that problems in the present system have very little influence on long-run adult unemployment problems?

We might concentrate on discovering areas where changes might be possible which might lead to making the present educational system more efficient. Some of these possible key change points are:

- i Number and nature of learning materials for teachers
- ii Number and nature of learning materials for students
- iii Nature and cost of school buildings
- iv Age at which children begin school
- v Duration of the school program (both within the school year - and the length of the program before termination).
- vi Financing of education
- vii Selection process and exams
- viii Administration of education
- ix Language of instruction
- x Motivation of parents, teachers and students
- xi The teachers

If one is concerned about cost, the last one is most likely the crucial one for teachers' salaries consume the largest percentage of the budget. What can be done to change this? Is it as some claim basically a matter of general employment strategy? I think not. Let us search for ways of preparing and assisting teachers to be much more effective in dealing with a larger number of students.

I would like at this time to highlight one type of project which has great potential for dealing with a number of educational problems including the difficulty of finding and funding enough qualified teachers. Here I am referring to the great variety of study-service or national service programs that are evolving in various countries, many of which concentrate on making students available to serve as teachers for a specified period of time.

One of the oldest of the National Service Plans is the Education Corps of Iran which enrolls school-leavers or drop-outs into a service program for education. Critics used to complain that the Shah of Iran had organized the program as a means of keeping young potential trouble makers under disciplined control and this may well have been one of his aims. But success of the "Army of Knowledge" seems to have gone well beyond the goals of security or defensiveness against juvenile delinquency.

Professor Abdomactten of the University of Kabul wrote about an assessment that he carried out in 1970:

"If the government of Iran had to meet the expenses of the projects which have been carried out by the people, encouraged by the Educational Corps members, such as construction of schools, baths, running water systems and roads, the cost would have been overwhelming, and they could not have been accomplished."

Independently in many countries schemes of this kind are being undertaken. A newer development is to include the community service work as a direct part of the students education - hence the term study-service. For example, since 1964 Ethiopian students have been taking a year out from their university studies to work in rural communities, a majority of them as teachers.

A striking feature of the growth of study-service schemes is the range of its sources of support. To begin with, the Governments that have established study-service schemes come from widely spread parts of the political spectrum, e.g. the Governments of Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Nigeria, People's Republic of China, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States.

Within individual countries, the spread of sources of support is also usually broad and frequently includes students, educational planners and administrators, development planners, field-level implementers of development activities, and politicians. I think it highly significant that these programs are able to generate support from so many parts of the community even though people working together to help establish study-service are often doing so for different sets of reasons or with different emphasis on particular reasons.

Besides making a contribution to meeting the basic needs of other people and providing an educational experience for the participant the study-service scheme can be seen as a significant training program and can be used as a catalyst or enabler for other significant changes in education. Study-service carries the image of service which is a "good thing" that it is difficult to find reasons to oppose. It tends not to carry the image of "Educational reform" which may be a dangerous threatening image to many conservative educationists.

Bold claims are now being made for this approach but little evaluation has been carried out. It would be useful to encourage such comparative research to grapple with such questions as:

- what effect does the program have on the recipients in the rural area?
- Is there a development pay-off or is it mainly a useful educational experience for the participants? Can it be used as a less expensive method of supplying good teachers?

- what effect does it have on the participants? Does it influence their further career patterns?
- what effect does it have on the universities and other educational institutions from which the participants come? Does it influence the teaching approach and the curriculum? Does it influence research priorities?
- how much does it cost?

2. EVALUATION OF INDIGENOUS LEARNING SYSTEMS

As a second research priority I suggest that it would be useful to know more about different indigenous learning environments such as the traditional apprenticeship system. We know little about the informal sector of the economy and before we shift substantial resources into the training of people for this sector (as is suggested by the non-formal proponents) we should know a great deal more about this sector and how school age youth and their parents view this sector.

- how does this sector recruit its manpower?
- what are its skill requirements?
- nature and extent of the training programs it has evolved
- the incentive it affords
- the profit it realizes etc.

3. EVALUATION OF A NUMBER OF EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS ALREADY UNDERWAY

The SEAMEO and Sheffield-Diejomaoh reports on non-formal education in Asia and Africa introduces us to some interesting educational projects (most of which are systematic and formal in their pedagogy, although outside the regular primary system). Philip Coombs' reports first for UNICEF and secondly for the World Bank add to the list.

What needs to be done now is to analyze the conditions under which these different programs are a success, and the ways in which they can be systematized and be made replicable. We may be surprised to find how few of these exciting local projects can be rapidly expanded into a national program. It is interesting to note, for example, that the Overseas Liaison Committee team sent to Tanzania to find non-formal projects for which the World Bank could supply capital support came up with only two feasible ones (1) the rural farmer training centre and (11) the rural primary school now known as a village learning centre.

I would be interested in evaluations on these village learning centres as well as such things as village polytechnics in Kenya, the College of the Air in Mauritius and Botswana, radiophonic education in a number of Latin American countries and the numerous correspondence education programs.

4. SUPPORT OF PILOT PROJECTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WAYS OF DELIVERING EDUCATION

I cannot point to many specific projects which fit into this category but hopefully more will be forthcoming in the future. The Integrated Educational Development Project in the Benue-Plateau State of Nigeria although just in its formative stage appears to be a project that will be well worth examining once it gets underway. Another possibility is the experimental integrated rural development work being considered in Ethiopia. If the interested persons are able to establish an inter-ministry/university committee to construct a project involving the minimum agricultural package, the minimum formation education plan, and the rural work of the Ethiopian University Service, then it would be worth supporting.

Of particular interest to me, of course, is the Innotech Research Project on "A Delivery System For Mass Primary Education". I know of no other place where such a comprehensive experiment is being tried and I applaud you for your efforts. Almost all of the key change points listed

earlier are up for consideration in this project.

Given what I have said earlier let me now raise some of the questions about your research project that are in my mind.

-I feel some uneasiness about the "No More Schools" title. Does it really imply the main thrust of this project? Will it be a liability in gaining local support?

-Potentially the most useful community resource is the people of that community. How will they identify with this project? Will they have any opportunity to state their needs? Will the researchers be in the villages enough to be accepted by the people living there?

-Can the research operations centre be established in one of the villages?

-Is there a possible problem that resource material will be produced by outsiders without involving local people?

-One of the things learned from Paul Park's Early School Environment Project was the need to look very carefully at the selection and preparation of teachers. They found that a well organized new teacher preparation program was almost completely wasted if they took a teacher whose background and experience was in a large city and tried to get him to develop community based schooling in a rural environment. They found it important to use teachers who came from the community, or from communities which were very similar to the one in which the new project was being developed. Even in successful television education programs the role of the teacher is crucial. Telescuola in Italy which emphasizes almost total teaching by T.V. and correspondence courses reports "We have repeatedly had the opportunity to notice that the benefit which pupils derive from Telescuola corresponds directly to the zeal and education of the monitor".¹⁴

14. R. P. Hoare, Lessons Through the Air (London, 1972).

-One of the key resources in each community then are the teachers already there. What arrangements then are being made to include the teachers of the local schools in the project area in the planning and operation of the project? Can some of them become members of the research team?

-Are steps being taken to have the participating teachers actually carry out an inventory of all the potential resources in their community that might be utilized by the school program?

-If a new delivery system is developed what arrangements will be made to absorb all the teachers presently working in the area?

-The material is first of all going to be tested in the present school system. This raises the possibility that the project will end up by focussing mainly on just producing resources for the school system.

Assuming that the pilot projects are a success one is still left with the problem of multiplying the pilot projects across the system. C. E. Beeby has dealt with this type of problem in his sane little book "The Quality of Education in Developing Countries". Beeby claims that "the failure of research to influence practice may be due in part to the fact that research workers have, with a few notable exceptions neglected the problem of how educational practices spread".¹⁵ He goes on to say that it frequently happens that the research worker loses interest at the point, where, for the administrator, the experiment begins to be significant. What arrangements for the diffusion of the results of your research are being built into your project?

I am sure that considerable attention has already been given to these and other questions and I look forward to learning more about your strategies.

15. C. E. Beeby, The Quality of Education in Developing Countries (Cambridge, Mass. 1966). p. 107.

CONCLUSION

I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my ideas with you. I hope that these seminars will be held on a regular basis and that they will continue to serve as a forum not only for discussion of educational developments in the SEAMEO region but also for discussion of innovative projects being tackled in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Asian countries outside of the SEAMEO area.

In closing may I return to my opening reference to "the tide in the affairs of men". If there is an inevitable tide which I wish to highlight it is not the tide of non-formal education, ruralization of schools and educational technology but rather the tide of the growing realization that changes towards the direction of a different life style for greater well being and dignity cannot in the long run be imposed on people. No matter how polite and sincere the outsider may be, educational policies and styles of organization should not be imposed from the outside - introduced - yes! imposed - no! I am convinced that the real dynamic for change has to come from within a society and ideas from outside when they are recommended incessantly against local wishes will usually acquire a bad image and become unpopular, no matter how constructive and positive the ideas are. Packaged programs of educational aid organized outside the community are an incomplete and sometimes irrelevant solution. In other words, maximum use should be made of the resources within the community whether the community we are talking about is a nation, a province or a village.