

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Discussions were held in group and plenary sessions and led to the Project One conclusions and recommendations set out on page 3.

The seminar noted the characteristic national frameworks discussed in the ILO paper, and noted in particular the conclusions of this paper that technician training was not a single concept but had many facets which called for a harmonious and complementary blending of the education system and the training system. Different countries had assigned different roles in the education and training process to their Ministries or Departments of Education and Labour. The division of jurisdiction between these two was seen as to some extent a British legacy but to some extent functionally inevitable, and the division between UNESCO and the ILO was evidence that it was generally accepted internationally. Mr Campbell had made the point that the ILO had a tripartite structure, being representative of governments, of employers and of employees, and the groups recognized in their discussions that these three interests should be taken into account at the national level.

Particular interest was shown in the national framework described in the Hong Kong country paper, and a Hong Kong delegate saw "the national framework" as simply a way of describing the sum total of responsibilities and expenditure on education and training shared between government on the one hand and industry on the other. If viewed in this light he suggested that "elements such as departmental responsibility, industrial training boards, levy and levy/grant systems are no more than expressions of the means of administering such responsibilities". There was general agreement that there could be no standard specification for industrial training boards or levy systems and there was not necessarily any reason, in some national circumstances, why they should exist at all; but their successes and failures, and the arguments for and against these elements of shared responsibility, were thought on the basis of evidence submitted in the country papers of Hong Kong, India and others, and the interesting paper submitted by New Zealand, to deserve separate study. It was felt that it might be possible, in time, to collect comparative studies of this kind into a worthwhile publication.

The groups concerned, and the seminar in plenary session, considered that legislation controlling industrial training was often inadequate and were agreed, from the different points of view from which they considered the question, that legislation was needed that had financial as well as regulatory and promotional purposes. They also took the view that apprenticeship as such was by no means out of date and that legislation should be enacted or extended to cover apprenticeship at the technician as well as the craft level. Differences between apprenticeship at the two levels would need to be recognised administratively; for example time spent on full-time education,

needed to a much greater extent at the technician level, should be counted; and the sponsoring of technician students, involving the payment of an allowance or stipend by the employer, probably constituted in most countries something of a problem for employers. Where this problem existed there must in the national interest be some means of offering incentives by governments. Several recommendations were formed and agreed on the basis of the discussion of these questions.

The role of Labour ministries or departments was generally recognized by groups as including the setting of "on-the-job" training standards and the supervision of on-the-job training in all sectors, as well as responsibility for legislation relating to industrial training. Nevertheless "standards" could not be conjured out of thin air, and here in particular the group concerned saw the need for the fullest consultation between Labour, Education, and employers' interests, as regards both standards and the content of the curriculum; and the group concerned felt that the development of new or existing professional bodies to promote the interests of technicians, as had happened in the UK, could play an important part in the setting of standards. These points were embodied in agreed conclusions.

All groups were agreed that every country should have a national body to co-ordinate technical education and industrial training, particularly at the technician level; though there were suggestions that this national body might cover training functions alone and leave formal technical education to the Ministry or Department of Education the general conclusion was that the national body should ideally be in function and in name a "Technical Education and Industrial Training Council". The group concerned recognized that the extent to which its edicts were mandatory and not merely advisory must inevitably depend on national circumstances and preferences, but felt that in some countries the existing national bodies did not have enough "teeth". Also in some countries they were not thought to be sufficiently broadly representative, and emphasis was placed on the representation of all legitimate interests - for governments, not only Education and Labour but major users such as Public Works; for industry, chambers of mines, industry and commerce, employers' federations or consultative associations, trade union councils and large single industrial enterprises; teaching staff, or their associations.

Reference was made to the recently established Technical Education Council and Business Education Council in the UK, because of their important place in the new British national framework for technical education and training and their contributions to training methods, particularly through the system of modules. Literature concerning these opportunities was made available; and the seminar would have an occasion to revert to the question of modular training under Project Three.

Manpower planning machinery came in for criticism and a number of different organizations were noted from some country papers; and from others, the lack of organization at all. It was felt that rigid positions taken up for or against manpower planning were often unrealistic; there must be at least some identification of manpower requirements and planning of ways and means of meeting them, but not over-planning. It was agreed that a greater responsibility lay on all employers in all sectors to make realistic projections of their future requirements; and that whether responsibility was vested in a Ministry of Labour, a Statistical Office, or the Central Government Planning Authority, there was a paramount need for manpower requirements to be ascertained and interpreted in terms of the educational provision

required. Only thus, the seminar agreed, was it possible to determine what courses should be run within a country and its educational institutions, and what courses run in other countries should be utilized to supplement them.

Finally the provision of a sufficient cadre of technical teachers was seen as an essential and all too often defective part of the national framework. The lack of interest in technical teaching in some countries was noted, and it was agreed that well-qualified technical teachers were sometimes quickly attracted away by better salaries and conditions of service in commerce or industry. No easy solutions were offered; the status of technician teachers was clearly bound up with the status of technicians and the seminar would return to this under Project Three.