

IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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Identifying the Problems

"Employers always prefer more highly educated people for any job - whether or not the higher qualifications are in fact necessary."

(Professor Mark Blaug)

"As to the Fourth Form leavers (the bulk of our school leavers), they receive a general type of education up to Form Four with a smattering of technical education in Agriculture, Industrial Arts (woodwork and metalwork) and Home Economics. A very small percentage find employment, for employers prefer Fifth and Sixth Form leavers. Some eventually drift off to New Zealand and the rest remain at home, unemployed. Because of the smallness of our country, employment opportunities have been very limited and will continue to be so and will not cope with all our school leavers each year. There is work in agriculture and other self-employed activities available - but our children have been educated to expect working for others in offices, shops, factories on a permanent basis. There is plenty of casual work as orange pickers or plantation workers but people are unwilling to work on such a basis, considering it below themselves."

(Letter from a Secretary of Education, in the Pacific Region)

"An Agricultural School has been established for school leavers and their programme is practical and aims at training the students to become independent farmers. Many young boys are beginning to be very interested in their programme since they see the good money earned by those who had been trained there. They are given all kinds of help when they finally leave and until their farms are financially viable. But again the government has to work to ensure a secure market for their products. Too many times, their produce is left to rot in the bush because there are no markets, or left to rot on the wharf because the boats cannot take it all. This discourages farmers from producing commercial crops and young people from such a precarious way of earning a living."

(Letter from a Senior Education Officer, in the Pacific Region)

"Whilst conducting a survey two years ago, I talked to all the Form Three and Four students in this province (Grades 9 and 10). Only one in the 800 I talked to indicated that he wanted to return to his village at the completion of High School Studies. I followed up with the question WHY? The answers came down to three major areas: the existing SOCIAL LIFE is too dull and boring; there exists no ECONOMIC potential to earn their own money; the older people disregard the SUGGESTIONS and VIEWS of the younger generation. Satisfactory answers HAVE to be found in these three areas."

(Letter from an Educational Planning Officer in the Pacific Region)

"Education is seldom related to traditional learning methods but rather to a formal structure that is set apart from everyday life i.e. the classroom, the book, the desk, the pen and the teacher: a person who has special standing in the community because he is what he is (a view unfortunately shared by many of our present teachers).

In many areas it is still the first generation of educated young people coming out of schools and the older generation still tend to be uncritical of the education process itself and in no way feel themselves to be a part of it apart from a labour force to erect new buildings, etc.

Early in the rapid expansion of education nearly all students were able to obtain some form of paid employment and this aspiration is still held by a majority of parents, villagers and certain "not with it" politicians etc. The reasons for decreased employment opportunities are beyond most levels of experience. This of course fluctuates from area to area.

Over the years the Department itself became so geared up to producing the large numbers of "educated" young people needed by the pre-independence build up of the Pacific Service, that it continued to produce these people long after the need had been met. In the meantime its structure and organization had become so bureaucratic and cumbersome that it was unable to recognize the national needs and re-organize itself."

(Letter from a Senior Officer in the
Pacific Region)

"Another factor is the concentration of schools in the urban centres (which is the main island here). Pupils and parents migrate here for the school year and many never return, lured by the prospects of better employment and better education. It also means that the curriculum is urban-geared and in fact helps in weaning people away from the rural areas because there is nothing for them in the curriculum. Dispersal of education centres and industries as well as devising a more relevant curriculum would help solve the problem. Industries that would utilize local resources, such as agriculture products, handicrafts and fishing should get preference. How to disperse urban facilities such as cinema, shops, electricity, telephone etc., which seem to attract people is another matter. I can see no way of preventing people from wanting these things and perhaps it would be unfair to expect people not to want them, but again the country is not in a position economically to pay for the dispersal of such services."

(Letter from an experienced Education
Officer in the Pacific Region)

"Where have all the young men gone?"

(Popular song - taken as title of an
article describing the situation in many
outlying Islands in the Pacific)

"Their nation may be developing - but their lives are not."

(Robert McNamara)

"An educational system that pays no attention to prospective manpower needs and job opportunities is likely to find itself in increasingly serious trouble."

(Philip H. Coombs)

"There are only two government high schools. At the end of the primary school there is a selection examination into the secondary schools taken by all pupils. 5000 children sit but less than 300 are given places at the two schools. The High School is very academic, given the best facilities and staffing, and the standard is very high. Graduates from this school get most of the scholarships for overseas study and they have the pick of the local jobs. There are complaints, muted of course, that this school is educating pupils away from the tradition of the country and that these people have no understanding of the problems of the country or its needs because they have been educated in a little Utopia, therefore they have no real attachment to the country.

The other school has a more practical orientated programme - offering full technical and agricultural courses. A practical farming programme is also implemented and involves all the students and the idea is to make the school self-sufficient in its food supply. This means extra work for the students in addition to their academic programme. The standard and staffing quality are generally lower than the other school, yet the feeling of the administration is that this school is the ideal place to train our youth for self-employment in the community.

But the irony is, of course, that the community does not accept this view of education and the boys are aware of this. The school administration keeps telling them that the whole man is developed in this school and regardless of job opportunities they can always create jobs for themselves and be independent of anyone but the boys ask: "Then if this is the best school, why aren't we given scholarships for further studies, why don't we get the cream jobs, why aren't we respected by the people?"

(Letter from a Senior Educationist in the Pacific Region)

"In 1976 there are 10,000 students enrolled in Form Two classes throughout the nation. These students are a highly selected group in that they are the top 30% of the students who attended Standard Six classes in 1974. Economic necessity decrees that a further drastic selection process takes place at the end of Form Two and only 60% of the Form Two students throughout the nation will be offered a further two years of education which leads to the School Certificate (at completion of Form Four). This means that nearly 4,000 young men and women (almost 40%) will be issued with a Form Two Certificate and will become "school leavers."

Are these Form Two "school leavers" well educated in the sense that they have the background knowledge and individual initiative to settle back into the community? Certainly not.

Are the Form Two "school leavers" a satisfied, grateful group? The answer is that the vast majority are unhappy, resentful, confused and frustrated. Are they proud to have completed approximately eight years of formal education in a country where the majority of the populace has not been to school at all? Unfortunately, their parents, their friends and the community in general feel them to be "failures" and as such, unable to take a useful place in the community.

The reasons behind this general attitude of "failure" and the feelings of unhappiness and frustration are: teachers equate success with good examination results; parents equate success with a paid job (usually a public service job); a complete lack of understanding of the changes brought about by a larger, more developed education system and a rapidly changing economy;

a confused desire to hold "white collar" jobs, or employment which does not require manual exertion; a realization that their eight years of education has not equipped them for the life they would like to lead.

There is a need to re-educate the community so that this attitude of high school education equals paid public service job is corrected."

(A High School Headmaster, Papua New Guinea)

"The issue at stake, which emerged in the course of the University seminars on community education, appeared to be that of how to reconcile the demands placed on the education system to fulfil higher level manpower needs with the equally pressing need for it to provide a form of practical education that would be of direct benefit to the village communities which constitute the major part of the country's population and are likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future."

(Graeme Kemelfield, in "Planning the Seed: A Proposal for Community-based Education")

"The second problem is the complete disjunction between school and home, a disjunction the more complete the more rural the child and the more illiterate the parents. (And, one might add, the more rural and illiterate the parents, the more disastrous the consequences of that disjunction, since it is the children from rural homes with illiterate parents who are least likely to get modern sector jobs.) Perhaps the best way to indicate the disjunction is simply to list some contrasting adjectives which describe it and some contrasting symbols which serve to sharpen awareness of it.

<u>School</u>	<u>Home and Village</u>
Modern	Old-fashioned
Scientific	Superstitious
Western	Traditional
Part of powerful officialdom	Powerless
Trousers	Sarong
The authority of the written word	Mere verbal traditions
No talk of money; concerned with higher things	Preoccupied with getting and spending

Will the pre-vocational studies be able to bridge this disjunction, to bring school and home into contact, to make them relevant to each other? And will they do anything to reduce the employee orientation of pupils, to train people to take their own initiatives, to set their own standards to determine their own objectives?"

(Professor Dore, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex)

"Suppose a group of Sepik woodcarvers - after selling artifacts in Wewak and Goroka, with the possibility of some being bought later in Lae and Port Moresby and even exhibited later in Sydney or London - can dispose only of 30% of what they have produced. Would they burn the remainder as firewood - or decide in future that they must change their pattern of production? Possibly, said the teachers.

Suppose, however, it is your children - the products of your schooling - we are speaking of. Some have been accepted by High Schools,

with the possibility of a few proceeding later to universities in Papua New Guinea and even overseas - but 70% cannot find places at all. Are they to be disposed of as firewood? No, they said.

Some countries export their surplus young people, we said. Nepal sends its men from the hills to the Indian and British Armies: Tonga and the Cook Islands send their jobless youth to New Zealand. From Turkey they go to Western Germany, from Lesotho to South Africa, from the West Indies to Britain. Will you export yours to Australia?

No, they said, we must think of other ways."

(From an address to headmasters-to-be on an in-service course in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, quoted in a Report entitled "No gat wok")

"The world has so far survived and benefited from a succession of revolutionary innovations in agriculture, industry, medicine, transportation and communications. A corresponding educational revolution is long overdue, and for lack of it the whole world is paying a heavy price. To help get this needed educational revolution underway should be the overriding aim of the international strategy and targets of educational development in the coming decade."

(Philip H. Coombs, The Need for a New Strategy of Education)

Identifying the Solutions

Once upon a time, communities taught their children what they needed to know. And the young, even whilst they learnt, rendered some service to the community. Thus, as a boy learnt to fish, he added to the size of the catch: as a girl learnt to reap, so she helped with the harvest.

Now this reciprocal process appears to be faltering or to have ceased altogether. There is a feeling that both parties - the adult community and the young - are the poorer in consequence. How, in 1976, can the community be involved in the education of its young - and young people, in turn, make their contribution to the welfare or development of their community?

Vital to this relationship is the balancing of one need by another. Neither, it seems, can be satisfied in isolation. For example, the necessity to produce more food (be it from the land or from the sea) could mean the utilization of school leavers. Under such circumstances it would be reassuring to think that education might act as intermediary or matchmaker, enabling one problem to solve the other. This is not happening. The truth is that, in the face of community attitudes and values, school does not exert all that amount of influence.

A Multi-Pronged Approach Vital

Professor Dore, of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, has put this very pungently: "If all the planning efforts of a country were focused on the rural sector, then the "ruralizing" of both rural and urban schools would call for little extra effort and would indeed be a natural by-product of such a development strategy. But as long as the economic advantages of urban life are much greater, mere changes in the educational context of rural schools will neither stem the exodus of school leavers nor bring about the improvement of agricultural production."

A comprehensive multi-pronged approach to rural development would certainly include land reform to ensure that young farmers had the land to cultivate - and the improvement of marketing facilities (not forgetting the importance of inter-island transport and refrigeration for the countries in the Pacific).

Disparity of Rewards

Public recognition and the system of reward are probably even more important. The gigantic disparity in many developing countries between the salaries of government officers and those employed in the business sector on the one side - and on the other what the great majority of school leavers (and the unschooled) have to live on - makes a mockery of appeals to respect the dignity of manual labour or to engage in community service. Apart from the feelings of frustration and envy aroused amongst those who do not "make the grade", this disparity of reward corrupts the curriculum and distorts the expectations of schooling held both by parents and pupils.*

Whilst commercial companies are also to blame, the fact is that it is governments who are the worst offenders in many developing countries in establishing salary scales which put such a gap between the income of civil servants and what so many ordinary people have to live on. And, it is governments which make first appointments almost exclusively on the basis of academic performance, thereby not only deepening the despair of those who fail to be amongst the fortunate few but, more significantly, making it hard to arouse the interest of students in any activity not directly related to examination results. In the last resort, governments get the pupils they deserve.

A National Youth Wage

Recent ILO Reports on matching aspirations with work opportunities in South East Asia have made recommendations which are indeed radical. There is a suggestion that a National Youth Wage be paid to all young people for an initial period, irrespective of the work they are doing. In this it is recommended that a maximum wage be set and graded according to age. If there were greater equality of income, then any form of selection - and school is seen by most as a mechanism for sorting out the few destined for advancement - would be less painful, for less would be at stake in terms of both money and prestige.

"Barefoot" Professionals: Promotion from the Ranks

Another ILO suggestion with profound implications for the educational system is that the whole public sector (and not just the Government) should do all its

* There are, of course, exceptions, even amongst island communities. In Spanish Wells, one of the tiniest islands in the Bahamas, youngsters yearn to quit school at the earliest permissible age to go fishing - which makes the island the richest, per head, in the whole archipelago. Nearer to the Pacific at Darwin in Australia, bone-heads at the meat works last year could pick up A\$1000 a week (as against A\$170 a week, the national average wage); this year the meat works are closed, because the proprietors cannot operate profitably at such wage levels - an interesting example of the dignity of labour having become counter-productive. In those particular circumstances school success does not correspond with earning capacity - and the problem is to keep youngsters at school.

recruiting from amongst 16 and 17 year olds, not only for manual jobs but also for professional occupations. All entrants into the civil service might be recruited as clerical workers, and gradually given more responsibility in their duties to develop and assess their capacity. After two to three years those officers who showed promise could be selected - on the basis partly of work performance, partly of special tests conducted by outsiders - for further education and training for eventual promotion to the administrative and professional grades. Similarly, teachers might begin by working in primary schools, and those more suited to teaching older pupils would then be later trained for secondary schools (alternatively, teachers might be chosen from amongst pupil-teachers). Again, engineers might all begin as craftsmen and trainee technicians, and doctors as medical assistants etc.

As Professor Blaug points out in, Education and the Employment Problem, many advantages would stem from this approach. First, demand for higher education would be considerably reduced.* Second, middle-level technician jobs would become of necessity the first stage in the career of the ablest youths destined for professional status. Third, practical training would lose the stigma from which it suffers at present. Fourth, there would be greater maturity and knowledge of the world of work. Fifth, learning is more effective when it is motivated not just by a desire to pass examinations in order to get a job, but by interest in doing one's job better. Sixth, promotion (and salary) would depend infinitely more on actual performance on the job rather than on academic attainment. This would go a long way to discourage certificate-mindedness and unrealistic expectations and would underline the importance of starting as a practical worker.

Aptitude Versus Achievement Testing

There is an ILO proposal aimed at replacing achievement testing in secondary schools with aptitude testing. For instance, the ministry of education might offer a one-week radio-and-correspondence course on an announced subject towards the close of the school year. All students in secondary schools would devote that week to studying the subject and they would then be examined at the end to see how much of it they had mastered. The principal advantage claimed for this approach is that it would create a measure of educational achievement which would not warp the curriculum, since teachers would not be able to drill students beforehand. Though able students would probably fare as well in aptitude tests as in achievement tests it is worth considering any step that reduces the negative impact which conventional examinations exert at present, inhibiting as they do the involvement of the school in service to the community and vice versa.

Certainly dependence on examinations set for students of a totally different social and economic background - say in New Zealand - should be questioned, particularly at a time when New Zealand is itself reconsidering the validity of such examinations. This is the moment, perhaps, when a distinction must be made between those islands from which young people seek to

* Whatever resistance might be expected initially from colleges and universities, the unique importance of these institutions would not be diminished since they would tend to deal with far more experienced and committed students who possess a greater sense of reality and relevance. Their contribution would build on and complete what, in effect, would be a sandwich course - secondary school/practical work/higher or further education.

emigrate, and those from which they do not. It might be argued that leaving one's country is an act of desertion, not of service. But newcomers can bring with them a strong sense of community and certain talents, as with the Chinese and the Scots. It was, let it be remembered, Pacific Islanders who took Christianity to other islands. A brain-storming session might suggest how - in those islands where migration is a fact of life - communities could prepare their young people for migration, helping them to show pride in taking with them some message or skill, new or old.

Service a Condition for Overseas Study

Equally, the privilege of pursuing studies overseas - whether supported on Government scholarship or purchased by parents - might be made dependent not only on academic attainment but also on service already rendered. There are Commonwealth precedents for such conditions. In Tanzania no one may proceed to college until he has undertaken national service, and in Nigeria no graduate may take a job until he has completed a year of service.

Where primary education is in fact also terminal, the year at which children first go to school can influence their involvement in the community. In three African countries - Tanzania, Zambia and Liberia - it is felt that the later the age at which pupils enter school, the greater the advantages: children are less likely subsequently to despise their parents because they have had enough time to absorb the culture of their community; children are stronger and more mature when they leave and consequently more able to undertake adult work forthwith; parents can participate more naturally beside their children in school.

Bearing in mind that the overwhelming majority of children in the Third World inhabit rural areas, some thoughtful people advocate that primary school should begin at nine years, others even say at twelve years. These arguments are, understandably, strongly resisted by parents in urban areas whose work may take them away from their children.

How Real is Community Participation?

In many developing countries, the community's sole contribution to education is that of free labour for the construction of a rural primary school. Some members of the community may sit on a local management committee, and in a number of instances the use of the school premises may be allowed for an adult activity. But, too often, that is the limit of community participation in education. For all the advocacy (and genuine desirability) of parents and others coming into the school to share their skills and knowledge with the children, this happens but rarely. When school entry occurs at the later age, however, this gives a real opportunity for the children to absorb something of their community's lifestyle and lore, and for fathers and mothers to teach and learn alongside sons and daughters, both outside school and even within the classroom. At an earlier age such sharing of skills and knowledge within the context of the school takes on a somewhat artificial and unnatural appearance.

An Integrated Policy for Employment and Education

We have mentioned a number of different measures: commitment to a rural development programme that embraces the work of all ministries and not just that of an educational department; a national youth wage, to diminish excessive disparity in financial rewards; recruitment for posts in the public sector at the age of 16 or 17 years, with entrants beginning as practical workers/technicians, followed by further higher education for those who have

first proved themselves; the replacement of achievement tests by aptitude tests to discourage "swotting"; making overseas study conditional upon a period of service; raising the school-entry age.

Several of these approaches may seem not only radical but quite beyond the capacity of what educationists themselves can introduce, in that they amount to a kind of social engineering. But the more far-reaching recommendations come actually from international experts working on behalf of a United Nations Agency. They underline the fact that the problems cannot be solved by curricular changes only or by the construction of more institutions for vocational training but by a manpower plan, indeed by an integrated government policy which sees employment and education as two parts of a whole.

When All Students Learn Self-Reliance

Not only in developing countries but also in Britain there has been a marked tendency to introduce practical work or community service into the last year's timetable of the early school leavers. Meanwhile the academically abler students continue to concentrate on conventional subjects so as not to endanger their examination prospects. Inevitably, then, practical work and/or community service comes to be seen as something for the dimwits, the future drop-outs or the potential push-outs. To avoid this stigma, the Headmaster of Brandi High School in the East Sepik District of Papua New Guinea has introduced a course designed to give all Form Two students some marketable skills. There is a wide choice of activity, ranging from pig-keeping to jewellery design, and from printing to cycle-repairing. Each course includes practice in keeping accounts and marketing their produce or service. Furthermore, while students still continue to pursue academic studies, as many as nineteen periods per week are assigned to this course to ensure that students really will become self-reliant and capable of both planning and executing a course of action. Reports from Brandi High School itself indicate that both teachers and students are enthusiastic about the course. The great value of this approach lies, of course, in its universality, with all students at a particular stage or age undergoing the same training, and in its practicality, so that self-reliance is not just a pious exhortation but a reality.

When Schools Practice Self-Sufficiency

Students' self-reliance on leaving may be linked with the school practising self-sufficiency. Experience in Africa has shown that when an independent school is able to reduce fees substantially because of the profit from agricultural produce (whilst at the same time maintaining academic standards), the attitude of both students and parents towards manual work alters markedly; that when government schools begin similarly to register a profit, the interest of education departments is quickened; and that when a neighbourhood is enriched by a water supply laid on by the school, the local community is disposed to respond to any request from the headteacher for reciprocal assistance.

Whilst growing food - for consumption by students, for sale to the community, or both - may be the form of self-reliance most widely practised, it is not the only expression it can take. In Madang, Tusbab School puts on plays and performances of a high quality for visiting tourists. In New Britain, Kambubu School, as well as growing practically all kinds of local food, runs a furniture factory and a sewing business while Palmalmal School, in addition to organizing a coconut plantation, a trade store and a fishing scheme, and growing fresh vegetables and fruit, acts as an air travel agency. The seminar might like to consider other forms of self-reliance, not omitting those that can be introduced by urban schools.

Basing Extension Services in a School

Some schools have "adopted" a nearby institution such as an orphanage, a hospital, a workshop for the blind, a leprosarium. A more fruitful approach is for a school to provide support for a village-level worker in a rural area or for a social welfare worker in a town. Such people suffer frequently from isolation and tend to feel overwhelmed by the task of changing attitudes and habits amongst a population of thousands. Students can considerably reinforce their efforts by developing what amounts to a school "extension service". When a dispensary or first-aid post is actually located in a school - for the convenience of the local people and not just of the pupils (as at Budu in Sarawak) - then students have a chance to help in bringing simple medical care to the community and simultaneously to learn about health in a practical manner. (This assumes, of course, that village-level workers or social welfare officers - whether they belong to the Ministry of Health, Social Development, Agriculture or Local Government - have been trained or retrained to recognize that individual officers cannot make much impact on 5000 or 50,000 people, and that they should welcome students as allies.)

Students can Help Each Other - Tutoring

Students can render service within the community of the school itself - by assisting those less advanced than themselves. This help - often called "tutoring" - can be given by older students to younger students in the same school, or by students in colleges to those in secondary schools, or by students in secondary schools to those in primary schools. Is this in any way different from the old system of pupil-teachers which modern educationists now condemn? Yes. In the first place, tutoring is generally (though by no means always) on a one-to-one basis, where there is an intensity of attention which no teacher, however professionally experienced, can give to each pupil in class. Whilst tutoring can be, and frequently is, connected with reading, it can equally be in mathematics, science, games or swimming.

Research has shown that in this "cross-age relationship", the tutor gains as much as the youngster who is being tutored. This discovery has led to teachers arranging for, say, a 15-year-old slow-learner to tutor a 10 year old. The senior student in trying (perhaps for the very first time) not to be shamed, makes effort to explain what he himself hitherto may have had difficulty in grasping, and consequently finds that his own understanding grows. Thus in teaching he learns. Also, the concern by the older student for the progress of the younger one, and the respect/gratitude on the part of the younger pupil for the help received, can replace a bullying attitude which often makes for a mood of fear in many schools.

In rural areas it has been traditional for older children to watch over and care for younger children. Tutoring recognizes the essential value of this relationship, and turns it to an educational advantage.

Examples of the "Cross-Age Relationship"

Papua New Guinea provides several contrasted examples of older students helping younger ones. At the University in Port Moresby the "Science Demonstration Squad", comprising some 18 students and two staff members, correspond with science teachers in up-country high schools about which experiments the latter would like to have demonstrated but which, owing to lack of appropriate laboratory facilities, they cannot mount themselves. After rehearsing the experiment, members of the squad go with the necessary equipment, put on a demonstration and talk with the high school students. Through

these demonstration exercises a number of high school students with negative attitude towards science have been encouraged to study science. At Lae, senior students at Bugandi High School have established a "Student Associate Group" for youngsters who have not been able to proceed with their secondary schooling. The older ones have worked alongside them to clear the land, plant and cultivate crops, and build a fish pond and duck pens, (from which an appreciable income is derived). These senior students have also tutored the younger ones in English and other subjects. It is seldom that one finds that those who are upward-bound on the educational ladder devote time and sympathy to those who have fallen out of the academic race. Bugandi students have set an example which could and should be copied in very many other places. At Sogeri High School, students have started and continue to run a pre-school group in a nearby plantation. They also bring primary school children into their own science laboratories, coach them in sports and help as volunteer instructors (on a one-to-one basis) to teach English and writing to an adult group consisting of cooks and labourers. "Every Learner a Teacher" is a philosophy that can be implemented in every school throughout the world.

Converting Social Studies into Social Service

"But doesn't this kind of activity interfere with the syllabus?" And further, "since there are only a certain number of periods in the school day, surely every hour spent on community service has to be subtracted from study?" Not necessarily. In some islands "Social Studies" is a combination of English, History and Geography, in others it is a subject in its own right. But, either way, a slight alteration in emphasis could change it into "Social Service". In Northern Nigeria, Kano State has produced a most admirable social studies syllabus for primary and post-primary schools. It would be only a small step, surely, from the class visiting the walls of the city and learning how they came to be constructed to doing some repair work on the walls; from observing the different dress of children of Southern (Christian) parentage in the non-Muslim schools to inviting them along and making friends with them; from recording what goes on in rural dispensary or hospital to writing a letter for an illiterate patient. A small step only but it could transform Social Studies into Social Service, not only deepening the understanding of students but enabling them to give help where it is needed. The seminar might like to consider how the Social Studies syllabus in different islands could be converted similarly into Social Service.

How Every Subject can Relate to Human Needs

Through the curricular approach to community service, almost every subject in the syllabus can be related to a human need or social problem. In Britain, Physical Education can mean giving a display in a nearby hospital ward or getting students to blindfold themselves or simulate some other disability and then devise games which can be played by the handicapped. Chemistry at the sixth form level has led to a Scottish school measuring the degree of pollution in the atmosphere caused by smoke and sulphur dioxide with the result that government ministries responsible for the environment became concerned. Arithmetic has enabled 11-year-olds to help old people to budget their pensions. Handicraft has involved a class of 15-year-olds in devising equipment to enable crippled children to move about more easily. Science in a comprehensive school near Manchester has led to 14-year-olds inventing a gadget to warn neighbours if an old person, living alone, falls suddenly ill and cannot notify anyone; the same class also devised an alarm-clock for the deaf. In every instance, learning has been linked with action, and study combined with service. (At a remote secondary school in West Africa, students have devised

a windmill and a solar heater (actually used in their kitchen) to demonstrate alternative sources of energy.)

Advantages of Curricular Approach

This curricular approach, by which virtually any subject can be related to a need and thereby contribute to the service of the community, has many advantages. It is equally valid in universities and polytechnics which, at the most sophisticated level, are also engaging in the humane application of knowledge. Yet the idea of learning as you create, of producing as you learn, is as old as time. What is new is the further development of this idea - which might be called the concept of "social apprenticeship" - whereby the student can make a positive contribution to the community even as he pursues his studies. In this way every school or every college, can become a resource centre of help to the neighbourhood. Through such an approach students are challenged to think as well as to act: and, equally, to act as well as to think. Provision is made, too, for the vital element of growth in community service programmes: (would it be less confusing if they were called programmes of social service?). Seventeen year-olds are faced with problems commensurate with their own intellectual development - instead of undertaking the same kinds of projects as they did at 13 or even at 9 years of age. Most importantly, they are not diverted from their studies, nor are their examination prospects damaged: rather, their interest in the subject they are studying grows and their understanding of its meaning is deepened. Finally, not one single teacher but a whole cross-section of the school's staff is involved alongside the students. The Seminar may like to consider how the curricular approach could be adapted to situations in different localities in the Pacific.

Turning Emergencies to Advantage

Emergencies can be turned to educational advantage, opening the eyes of students, teachers and the community to the potential in initiative and helpfulness which lies in most of us but which formal schooling so seldom stimulates. In most islands of the Pacific which are vulnerable to typhoons or hurricanes, village custom has evolved a certain way of responding to such onslaughts of nature. Is it the case that in the event of a warning being received in term-time, schools just close so that children can stay at home? Could a positive role be devised whereby students hasten to see that elderly and other people who may be defenceless receive adequate protection? A participant in the freedom marches which the late Martin Luther King led in the southern states of the USA some 15 years ago observed: "In times of crisis the generation gap disappears because the young suddenly manifest a capacity for adult responsibility and the much older are rejuvenated." Whilst the Red Cross and similar agencies have a well organized drill for public emergencies of this kind, the schools may have a role to play in this respect. At Man O'War Bay, on the Atlantic coast at the foot of Mount Cameroon, it was a feature of all the short, intensive courses at the Citizenship and Leadership Training Centre that students should be confronted with sudden crises: e.g. an outbreak of typhoid at a plantation workers' camp, the destruction of a village by fire necessitating plans not only for relief work but a subsequent development programme. Can members of the seminar think of other ways by which young people, whether at school or out of school or on special courses, can be activated not only to respond with alacrity to crises but even to plan for the kind of development and reconstruction that should follow such disasters?

Making the Most of the Sea

The presence of the sea should be turned to maximum use. Last year a team of consultants from the Commonwealth Secretariat's Youth Division proposed

to the Government of the Bahamas that a Maritime Youth Corps could not only provide challenging outlets for the energies of young people, but also meet some very real needs. Such a corps might, it was suggested, build or reconstruct sea walls where necessary; engage in co-operative fishing; be ready to fill the role of a coastguard and rescue service; and man a schooner which could sail from island to island, conducting courses wherever it moored that would relate community service to the local situation.

"Community Service" may seem to be another way of saying "Community Development" or "Rural Development". That suggests work with one's hands, a prospect regarded perhaps neither as very attractive by students nor as very educative by teachers. Both could be wrong. The techniques of making a road-trace, of constructing a culvert or seawall, or a storage-tank for catching the rain from the school roof, comprise skills well worth acquiring. Some might argue that the ability to mend a fuse, change a tap washer, repair a puncture, mend a sewing machine, or mix cement, should be regarded as basic skills for a young citizen in a modern society.

Not only Brawn but Brains Needed

Mind is needed as well as muscle. Why should the local people be so blind and oblivious to the injurious and ugly consequences of allowing filth to accumulate that a clean-up campaign becomes periodically necessary? Can students help to plan (and lay out) a better market or bus park or communal laundry or river clearance or timber plantation or incinerator or measures to prevent soil erosion, or notice-boards, and then try to persuade councillors to accept their proposals? In what ways can students, perhaps by making models in the school, as well as setting an example themselves, persuade parents and adults to participate more in projects of self-help and community development? Teachers should be aware of the fact that these problems present intellectual challenges as well as physical tasks, thereby contributing both to the educational development of their students as well as to the betterment of the community.

Human needs and social problems, however, extend beyond constructional projects and manual labour. Whilst school students may be unable to do anything, for example, about high rents and housing difficulties in urban areas, they can do a lot (perhaps as much as adults) about juvenile delinquency; they can assist the young handicapped; they can help in literacy campaigns; they can discourage resort to drugs; they can promote road safety on the way to and from school; they can develop activities for women in a number of ways; they can promote games and sports (traditional as well as modern).

Drama's Role in Community Development

Plays performed by students were mentioned earlier as a means of raising funds to help make their school self-sufficient. The preservation of their culture can be one of the most valuable forms of service which the young can undertake; and in this field the older generation can be more than just a passive audience; they can play a vital role in transmitting their culture to the young. One would hope that schools would not be content with performing the traditional dances or singing the old songs but would be devising new dance-forms and producing drama concerned with modern themes, and taking these to the streets and to the villages. This can be a most powerful expression of community education.

Since there is an intellectual component in community service and since play has a universal appeal, the two in combination have even more to

offer. This has been realized by teachers in the Solomon Islands, who have produced "The Coconut Climbers" - a game which can be played by any number bringing out into the open the moral problems which face school-leavers. The dilemmas posed are real, with no one "right" answer but capable of evoking many different responses.

Concept of Resource Centres

Reference was made earlier to schools developing an extra dimension as resource centres of help to the neighbourhood. Not only schools but other institutions not normally associated with community service, e.g. police stations, could also do so. (In Canada, the Bank of Montreal has a special programme to train and employ youths who have dropped out or got into trouble, an enlightened policy deserving public commendation; in certain areas of London the milkmen acquaint the Social Services Department with instances of human need which come to their notice in the course of their rounds, and elsewhere, the postmen are responding similarly.) In the context of this paper what is important is that not only do teachers-in-training (yes, and experienced educationists too!) need to know about the techniques of involving students in service and using the human resources within the locality to help with the task of education but police, administrative officers, doctors, agricultural officers etc. need to know how most effectively to use what young people can contribute. How many police officers, in any country, would know what to suggest, if students came offering their help? How many medical officers have used students in health campaigns? (How many ministries of health throughout the Commonwealth will have distributed the Commonwealth Secretariat's paper on "Youth Contribution to Health Care" to their medical officers?)

New Elements Required in Teacher Training

Arising from this seminar, it is hoped that colleges of education will make provision for teachers-in-training to learn, through actual practice, how to identify local problems which can be tackled by their students, how to translate these problems into projects, how to relate these projects to other parts of the curriculum, how to ensure that the community participate or respond positively, and how to make this experience both down-to-earth yet at the same time stimulating.

In proposals for "Community-Based Education" made some three years ago, the Educational Research Unit at the University of Papua New Guinea envisaged a primary stage, where adult members of the community would learn alongside their children; a middle phase, where active work in the community would alternate, day by day, with classroom study; and a tertiary phase, at the conclusion of which graduates would spend a year of service in the community.

The Community School

The large size of Papua New Guinea, the rural scene in which so many of its schools are situated, the comparative newness of its educational system, all distinguish it from the circumstances facing most of the Pacific Islands. So, what may work in Papua New Guinea will not necessarily apply to the other islands. Nevertheless, some of the implications of the proposals made by the Educational Research Unit some four years ago (they have, incidentally, been modified in subsequent discussions and only now are some of the basic concepts being put to the test in a number of pilot projects) are worth looking at:

- (a) The theme of Community Education pervades all three levels: it is not introduced just at one stage and then forgotten or faded out.
- (b) The whole community, and not the children only, share in the educational process. The disillusionment that has set in recently regarding the "returns" expected of education may perhaps stem from this one single fact rather than the shortage of employment opportunities in the modern sector. (Children were never intended to be the sole beneficiaries of the cargo.)
- (c) The later age of entry into school; this has been touched on earlier in this paper.
- (d) The school programme would be integrated into village life.
- (e) More use would be made of local skills and craftsmen (and fewer teachers consequently employed).
- (f) The teaching approach would be geared to traditional methods of doing rather than of hearing.
- (g) Teachers would be posted back to their areas, enabling greater use of the local vernacular in the children's early years of education.

Members of the seminar may like to consider whether any of these advantages claimed for a community-based education system that has been suggested for Papua New Guinea would be desirable, and politically possible to implement, in their own countries.

Additional advantages might be expected when schools develop an extra dimension as resource centres for the whole community:

- (a) Older girls could manage some kind of kindergarten.
- (b) Nutrition and domestic science would be used by clubs for school-girls, women and young people.
- (c) The sports area would be available for community games.
- (d) New types of crops and new methods of looking after livestock would be on public display.
- (e) Simple machinery, developed through appropriate technology, for treating rice, coffee or cane would be available to the community.

Avoiding the School Leavers' Trauma

By virtue of the school serving as a centre, young people would not endure the traumatic experience of leaving and dropping into an aching void. They would "graduate" from a period where there had earlier been proportionately greater stress on studies to a phase where they would use the facilities more as a club. Nor need the programme be inconsiderable e.g. radio, newsletters, competitions, sports, libraries, projects to raise funds.

Do members of the seminar view the possibility of grafting these additional roles and activities onto their existing schools as impossibly idealistic? Do they think that teachers could be trained to assume this greatly widened responsibility?

Competitiveness characterizes formal education. Students contend against each other for marks, and examinations finally sort out the winners and the losers. If this struggle sharpened a spirit of individual initiative, then one might be reconciled to the exclusion of a spirit of compassion. But there is little evidence amongst school leavers that academic study has developed a capacity for personal enterprise or self-reliance. So neither initiative nor co-operation is conspicuously nurtured by the present system.

Francis Bugotu, Permanent Secretary for Education in the Solomons, recently pleaded that the Pacific Islands should build on their traditional patterns of shared responsibility towards the young, the sick and the elderly rather than, say, western models of professional social work. Why not begin with education? In our reference to tutoring, we have described one method by which students can help each other. In selecting and training officer cadets, the British Army employs a battery of techniques which stress both team work and initiative. If competition there must be, let students compete to solve problems of significance to the community, let them compete to bring help where help is most needed. Would members of the seminar care to suggest how the curriculum, and even examinations, might foster team-work and/or initiative in community service?

Holidays Can be Used, Too

The holidays present opportunities for community involvement in a number of different, even opposite directions. For those who attend high schools, as boarders, far away from their homes, involvement in their own community is possible only in the holidays. For others, despite whatever support this seminar may give to the suggestions outlined in this paper, the curriculum and/or the atmosphere in their schools may prevent anything meaningful by ways of community service being undertaken during term time: a major project might, however, be tackled in the holidays.

Furthermore, holidays allow youth organizations to come into their own and make their particular impact, perhaps with a work camp. Certainly, rural young groups, the YMCA/YWCA in Fiji, the Yangpela Didiman in the highlands of New Guinea, possibly do more to bring about the involvement of young people (be they students still, school-leavers or the unschooled) than the schools. Some would plead strongly on this account (and they would quote the famous reports of Philip H. Coombs - on "Non-Formal Education for Rural Development" and "New Paths to Learning") that ministries should correct the imbalance in the support given to non-formal education vis-a-vis the schools.

Even Disappointment Can be Educative

For the youngsters whose schooling ends at this point, the reluctant leavers or push-outs, what follows is far from being a holiday but a fruitless hunt for the unattainable job. Nevertheless, the gap may be an important part of their education, something they could never learn in the classroom. Disappointment is a hard teacher, but perhaps they may have to endure a period of disappointment (so long as disappointment does not deepen into despair and despair into a destructive or delinquent lifestyle) to discover that their expectations are unrealistic. At this age, attitude may be as important as skills.

After the unavailing search (for millions of young people today a modern "rite de passage") they will be more ready to respond to what a short,

intensive course can offer them,* be it conducted by a mobile training unit or at a multi-purpose training centre, in functional skills, on the lines of the Village Polytechnics in Kenya.

The Privileged Few Should Share

For the favoured few, the upward bound students, perhaps we should, as a deliberate act of policy, create a gap between school and college in which they break away from their books to discover at first-hand what life is like for the less fortunate. More and more educationists are advocating this break, and an increasing number of countries are providing the organizational framework in which these privileged young people can engage in a period of full-time service to their nation. Members of the seminar may like to consider what would be entailed in setting up, perhaps during the crucial period when they are awaiting examination results, a modified "domestic" version of the Peace Corps/VSO/VSA that would enable their own young elite to make their contribution to national development.

* See "The Short Course in Development Training" by D. Masarov and G. Fradkin (Massada Press, Ramat-Gan, Israel)