

**NEW  
DIMENSIONS IN  
SOCIAL EDUCATION**

**BY  
S. C. DUTTA**

**Indian Adult Education Association  
17-B, Indraprastha Marg  
New Delhi.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The world is changing rapidly. Large scale scientific and technological changes are taking place with a rapidity of a whirlwind. People's mind, action and behaviour are not able to keep pace with these changes. The result is that we have 18th century practices still rampant in this space age. To set right this mal-adjustment, adult education will have to be given the highest priority in India, if we are serious about the principles enshrined in our constitution.

Within Adult Education movement itself we must do a bit of rethinking. We must reorientate our programmes and practices to suit the changing conditions. The present booklet is an attempt to help in that process. It is a collection of articles written over a period of ten years, urging upon adult educators to break new grounds and blaze new trails to make adult education serve the need of the hour. This booklet would serve its purpose if it could initiate the process of rethinking on the problem of Social Education, and help in the discovery of New Dimensions in Social Education.

12th Feb. 1962.

17-B Indraprastha Marg,  
New Delhi.

S. C. DUTTA

Hony. General Secretary  
Indian Adult Education Association

## Prologue

The Indian Adult Education Association was formed about twenty years ago and it had to pass through many trials and tribulations. That it withstood dark days—days which held no hopes of better times—is a tribute to the unflinching devotion of its founders. Among these, many are still in harness and to them the Association, I hope, is today a source of satisfaction and pride. Dr. Zakir Hussain, Shri Rustam Masani, Shri Chet Singh, Shri Saiyidain, Prof. Humayun Kabir, Prof. N. G. Ranga and Shri Bilas Mukherjee have been a source of strength to us, who were honoured to carry forward what they had reared, and I do trust the Association has acquitted itself worthy of the dreams they had for it. I would like to take this opportunity to express the Association's gratitude to them, to the late Dr. Amaranatha Jha and the late Shafiq-ur-Rehman Kidwai, as well as to many others, who, in their diverse capacities, helped to build up the organization. That the Association is today one of the foremost non-official agencies would, I hope, give them the satisfaction that their sacrifice was not in vain.

Since the inception of the Association, vast changes have taken place in the country, these have made their impact on social education, and have affected the form as well as its content. It has also, during the period, spread out far and wide, covering a much wider population than it ever did before. During the last ten years—since Independence—the concept of adult education has undergone a radical change. The fifth National conference of the Association at Rewa laid the foundation of Social Education and this marks a departure from the earlier concept of adult education. Most of the social educators are familiar with the nature of change that marked our acceptance of social education. There are, to be sure, differences of opinion of a minor nature, among the workers in the field, about the

precise definition of social education, or of adult education. But broadly speaking, there is unanimity with regard to the goals. It would not be wise to attempt a definition of either social education or adult education in terms of rigid formulae, for both are evolutionary concepts which change from time to time in their meaning and significance, but its purpose — to help individuals adjust themselves to meet the new demands created in society—has always remained constant. Obviously new demands have arisen and adult education has to adjust itself accordingly. It is in this context that social education has derived from adult education and the Association has striven to help the movement in its evolution. It has attempted to convey the impact of new conditions on adult education and invest it with a sense of direction and purpose, necessitated by these changes. It has gathered considerable experience in the course of these many years and it is time now to unravel the meaning of the experience so that in future the movement will not lack the benefit of the past.

To begin with, perhaps, the most outstanding feature in the history of the movement during this period is that today the impulses behind social education have changed, because it functions in an atmosphere radically different from the one in which adult education as a movement came into existence. Adult Education came into existence primarily because it answered people's urge to become free ; social education came into existence as a response to people's aspiration to live better. The dawn of the era of planning invests social education with new meaning and new possibilities. Planning provides the framework within which people could overcome the impediments which had withheld the promise of a richer and fuller life. This is the context in which social education has operated and will continue to operate in future. It is for us now to find out the manner in which social education can fulfil itself best.

### **Framework**

One important problem that has defied solution is that of an institutional framework for social education. In the

early days, most of the work, in the field was carried on by voluntary effort of public-spirited men who were inspired by a zeal for adult education. Today, however, the situation has changed. It is not that public-spirited men are lacking, but that the government has taken over much of the work that earlier had been done by voluntary workers. This situation has its good as well as bad points, but if results are any indication, it would seem that the advantages of voluntary organisations far out-weigh those of official ones.

The reasons for this are partly inherent in the nature of the state machinery which militates against the ethos of social education. In a state machinery far too many extraneous influences un-related to the needs of social education, as it operates, plays a part and these influences bear down disproportionately against efficiency in the field. One has heard of the famous Parkinson's Law and social education institutions under Government are not free from the vices of a bureaucracy so vividly portrayed by the discoverer of Parkinson's law. For a movement like Social Education, which seeks to make an intimate and personal impact on people, a bureaucratic structure is hopelessly ill-suited. It may be argued that there is a popular control over bureaucracy. This popular control however, is exercised on basis, few of which are relevant to social education. Political decisions are determined by political considerations which need not necessarily be in the interests of social education. These are hard facts which officials who are interested in social education have to face, however, genuinely interested in social education they may be.

In the institutional framework provided by the State altruism or devotion to a cause finds little scope to express itself. Exhortation to Government officers to remain sincere to the cause are meaningless, for the peculiar logic of a public administration is such that to save one's body, one occasionally has to sell his soul, if he is to remain influential. Further more, the criteria of efficiency, the basis on which promotions are made are not always those which determine the growth and development of social education. As a result,

the perspective of workers are not always guided by needs of promoting the movement or to ensure that social education, in its essential aspects makes an imprint on the community. An outstanding instance of this is the somewhat trite controversy of the physical target system which despite protestations, has yet to be replaced by a more reliable guide for achievement.

This question—the one of finding an institutional framework for social education—is one, which must be faced squarely. We are all talking of the social education movement. But has it the true characteristics of a movement? Is it, for instance, rooted among the masses? Has its functionaries learnt yet to understand, sympathise and help the core of the community to achieve its aspirations? As a corollary, we have also to ask ourselves whether an organ of the state, with all the limitations—some of which I have pointed out, ever sponsor a movement, which will enthuse the masses to reconstruct the very pattern of their lives?

The answer is a categorical “No”. Not merely because of theoretical considerations, but also because of what we have seen in actual practice.

What is the alternative?

### **Deofficialisation**

The Association has time and again stressed on the advisability of leaving social education entirely to non-official agencies. The advantages of such a step have been pointed out in numerous resolutions adopted at conferences and seminars. To recall these, would be unnecessary but I would, however, point out one single factor which establishes the relative superiority of non-official agencies. This is that a voluntary agency, has to be responsible to the community it serves and the day it ceases to reflect the urges of that community, it will loose the people's support. This factor compels an attitude among non-official agencies which is different from the irresponsibility of the official one. There can be no greater guarantee for effectiveness of social education than this.

In the light of this, we have to seriously consider the role of the Association for the future. These past five years have shown without doubt that the Government has not succeeded in giving a proper direction and meaning to social education ; under the circumstances, it would only be fair for us to suggest the Government to implement some of the resolutions on voluntary agencies, which the Association had adopted from time to time. Would it not be worthwhile for them to make over the responsibility for the conduct of social education to a non-official agency ? We have before us the experience of the Mysore State Adult Education Council, which prima facie makes out a case for our views. While the details of such an arrangement would need to be worked out broadly there is no reason why we should not have voluntary organisations of social education directing social education work at state and district levels. The argument that there are not enough number of social education agencies in the field is a clever one, but not a true one for the conditions obtained in the country today are such that social education work is cornered into official circles. If this is reversed, I have no doubt whatsoever that such agencies would come into existence and carry the tradition of voluntary work in social education which official intrusion has broken.

*—Annual Report presented to  
the Fifteenth All India Adult  
Education Conference held in  
Lucknow, Dec. 1958.*

## Social Education and Educational Institutions

In India if social education is to have any meaning and purpose, it must accept social approach as the most important method of work. Accordingly, setting up social education centres throughout the country becomes the need of the hour. With the resources which we have, it will take years to achieve the objective of having a community centre in each village of India. This calls for readjustment of our need to the resources available. For this, we should look at our entire educational system as an integrated whole, with the school as the pivot. The school should not only guide and direct the physical, mental, social and emotional growth of boys and girls, but also improve the quality of community life. It should concern itself with the happiness, welfare and success of the people, their recreation and amusement, their health and their occupational success. If this concept is accepted, the school would become a positive agent of social progress.

But this would need a thorough overhaul in our present educational system. The attempt to have a national system with fixed text books and examination standards will have to be scrapped. The school will have to adjust its programmes and procedures to the needs of the pupils and to the cultures of the communities it serves. The curriculum will have to be rooted in the soil of the community culture. The school will have to seek a living situation within the realities of community living. Books can contribute to this programme but cannot control it and therefore will have to be adjusted. We must say goodbye to the concept of classes, periods and subjects. Instead the life activities of communities must furnish the basis of educational programme in the schools.

In order that the school should become a centre of

community activity, teachers must be trained properly as social education workers. They must be provided with many and varied opportunities in their pre-service and in-service training to have vital and significant experiences which grow out of

- (i) the needs, interests and capacities of children,
- (ii) Community problems, issues and resources and
- (iii) the broad areas of living in present day society.

Thus, if the schools can become schools of social action, meeting the needs of children, serving the home, building health, fostering wholesome recreation, recognising civic needs, stimulating creative activity, encouraging vocational interests and developing vocational skills and cooperating with other community service agencies, life in the community will achieve a significance and a utility. Then the school will become an instrument of development and progress of the community and will be able to fulfil the real purpose of education. Instead of having to find money to set up social education centres anew in the villages, let us reorientate the entire school system and make the schools serve the needs of the community. Not only will this approach help the country produce better future citizens but will enable us to make the present ones better citizens.

### **Universities**

Other educational institutions which can also help mass education are the colleges and universities. Our universities and colleges have not so far paid any attention to adult education work. Being modelled on the pattern of English Universities, they have tended to develop certain attitudes which, regardless of how appropriate they may have been at the time of their origin, have no relation to the present need of our country. This does not mean that they should leave their objectives, on the other hand my contention is that the universities in order to pursue their objectives unhindered, must come down from their ivory tower of the "objective pursuit of knowledge" and help in the movement of mass education.

Today, our low economic condition, the crisis in moral and spiritual resources and the worsening international situation have endangered the fabric of our civilized existence. The democratic way of life to which we aspire can be lived only by a highly educated people, because it demands an active, intelligent, independent, self-reliant and trained cooperation from each and every member of the community. It becomes essential to educate the community to maintain the democratic order of society, which is necessary to enable universities to pursue knowledge, research and thinking unfettered. It is in this context that I consider adult education to be an essential part of University contribution to nation's development.

There is a dearth of suitable personnel to conduct adult education work. Adult education work requires a type of person who must have the qualities of public leadership and the ability and knowledge of a teacher. He should be a teacher-cum-leader. He requires the best of mental equipment and training. Universities can provide both. Let them undertake to train such workers. In India, till today the Government has casually thought that adult education work could be done by immature students, untrained volunteers and school teachers. Now realisation has dawned for the need of accepting the principle of having trained persons for this work. We have not enough persons to do this task efficiently. Universities can render a great service to the cause of adult education by starting training colleges for adult education workers, providing necessary theoretical and practical training. Training Colleges for Adult Education Workers is the need of the hour and the universities should find their way to make this contribution.

### **Sharing of Knowledge**

Universities can also help the Adult Education Movement by sharing their experience and knowledge with many unfortunately less educated people who are not in a position to go through the mill of a formal college education. They can organise extension lectures, lectures on even highly technical subjects can be given in a popular way for the benefit of these less educated trainees.

Universities can also hold periodical camps of a short duration on specific subjects. About five years ago, the Delhi School of Economics held a summer camp in Kashmir. The Indian Renaissance Institute of Dehra Dun holds each year, camps on current political thought. Universities can also hold such camps. Not only will camps serve as refresher courses but provide a fine opportunity for community living and corporate thinking. Short courses on academic subjects also could be started by them.

Lastly, universities can serve as a lever of community activity and social progress. They can stimulate educational activities amongst people in localities around them, improve their health and sanitation, organise recreation and leisure, develop cooperatives and inculcate in them the love for co-operative living and community action. It will help students to learn to develop socially. It will educate them to the realities of life in our society. Their learning will be realistic and not merely academic.

Universities, then, will be socially useful and will provide the necessary link between the people and educational institutions. For organising all this, it may be necessary to set up in all Universities, an extra-mural department. It is earnestly hoped that the Universities will realise their responsibility and consider ways and means to provide the necessary link with people at all levels of intellectual attainment and help to produce happy human beings and useful citizens of a democratic country.

—*Indian Journal of Adult Education, June 1955.*

## The Community School

Few countries can vie with India for the place that tradition had accorded to the school and the school teacher in society. The Gurukuls and Pathashalas, the Maktabas and the Madrassas were educational centres, where children received instruction but also sources of authority to which the villagers could turn to for advice on problems confronting them. Perhaps, had these institutions kept pace with the march of time, the school, today, would not be an institution often considered redundant to their daily lives by a majority of adults—nor the teacher, one who did not have any place of significance in their lives. As it happened, however, partly because the school passed out of the hands of the local communities and because an alien authority converted schools to suit its purpose, the village school is divorced from the community it serves. Its curriculum is unrelated to the life of the people and consequently its functions have little meaning for the villagers. Under these circumstances, it is only inevitable that the school and the school teacher should have lost their position of leadership and the privilege of carrying enlightenment to the broad masses of people.

### Leaven of New Values

Yet, perhaps, on no occasion in India's history did society demand of the school and the school teachers the integral function of acting as a leaven of new knowledge, new values, new skills and a new pattern of social behaviour and personal conduct. The urge of the people for a happier and more prosperous life implies their acquisition of new norms in each and every aspect of their lives. The school teacher can deprive the school of the role to assist the people in this quest only at his peril. The experience of public participation in nation building has shown that peoples' enthusiasm focuses itself, before everything else on the school building. What

they expect of the school, however, is different from what the schools have been able to give them these last so many years. If the school is to fulfil the expectation people have of it and if it is to be restored to a position of importance in the community it will have to project itself into the life of the community and implement programmes which will meet its needs and respond to its aspirations. It is in this manner that the school can answer to the challenge of the times. This is the importance of the concept of the school-cum-community centre and we have to consider the broad lines along which the school will have to orient its activities for this purpose.

First is the role of the school in educating people for civic responsibility. Hitherto civic power in the hands of the village community was limited; nor was there any scope for this power to express itself into avenues which would really have helped people solve many of the important problems that faced them. Today, the need to increase those powers have been recognised as the only way of ensuring democracy and various steps towards this have been envisaged by the Planning Commission. Besides, the numerous development schemes of the Government offer an opportunity for this power to be used for the welfare of the community. The realisation of this opportunity would depend on the extent to which the power is used wisely and for common good. This implies a consciousness of opportunities that lie before the villagers and an awareness of means to secure for themselves the full benefits of those opportunities.

### **Centre of Social Action**

The role of awakening people to latent possibilities, of instilling in them correct attitudes which will help adults discharge their new civic responsibilities, is a role that the community school can play. For one thing, the resources of the country will not permit an agency in every village specifically charged with this exclusive work. Besides the school teacher is one who the villagers accept as their respected comrade and is in a position to advise and guide them, and be their friend. The school building also offers itself as a venue for school teachers to conduct various activi-

ties necessary in social education. Everything considered, therefore, the school is best situated in the village to undertake this work of spreading enlightenment and a new message among the villagers. For this purpose, the school should become a centre of social action where people are brought together and with the assistance of the school teacher plan out specific projects to meet community problems facing them. In addition to this type of activity the school should also become a centre of community recreation where under the guidance of the school teacher recreational programmes are arranged for the villagers by the villagers. These recreational programmes should be enriched with an educative content. The school teacher should also organise from time to time study classes among the literates. At these study classes, the school teacher may take up any particular problem—social or otherwise—which faces the people and indicate to them the nature of problems. There is a vast movement of extension and of community development that is being developed over the entire country. With the assistance of village level workers, the school teacher may help the villagers acquire new insights into their problems. He can help the village level workers by explaining to people the specific items of programmes which the village level worker introduces among the villagers. These may be the introduction of a new method of agricultural processing or of village sanitation or a better practice concerning animal husbandry. While, the school teacher need not necessarily introduce these activities himself, he can reinforce the work that the village level worker will be doing in the village. The school teacher will also have to organise literacy classes for the illiterates. An important part of the literacy work is to organise post literacy programmes. This is important if the new literates are not to lapse into illiteracy again.

### **Revision of School Curriculum**

At first sight, the responsibilities of the school teacher discussed above may seem formidable and yet a little thought will show that it is not so. Once the view that the school should function as a community centre is accepted, a revision

of the present school curriculum follows. There is, as is well-known, a great dissatisfaction with the present system of education. It is pointed out that this system of education does not serve to make children into useful citizens and that it is not related to the needs of the community nor of the land. These arguments for the revision of the present system of education are familiar enough to need repetition. However, one may indicate the lines along which the school curriculum at the village level needs to be reoriented.

The emphasis in the education has been all along on teaching of subjects with a view to help children to pass examinations. This spirit pervades the village school too. Often one finds that in these school, the teacher leads a recital of numerals or of alphabets and the children repeat after him. This is more or less the same manner in which all subjects are taught to the young people. This is not merely an inefficient method of teaching, but also a manner which neither makes learning interesting nor the lessons relevant to child's environment. As a result no integration between the school and the community ever takes place. The school teacher must now think of bringing about this integration.

### **New Approach**

The basic perspective of new approach should be to make education help children acquire a sense of social cohesion, the intellectual ability to correlate knowledge with actual experience in life and to translate knowledge into practical ability. If this is accepted, the method becomes obvious. The pupils in the school will participate in community life, share its problems and its joys to the extent to which their tender minds can. Hence, the planning of the school curriculum should be such as will bring out and develop this aspect of the child's life. Thus, the community functions of the school are not something tagged on to certain functions of the school which have been thought to be different all along. The school is the matrix of social action and of social perspectives. Its teachers as well as pupils are a part of the community to which they will contribute as much as they can

and therewith enrich their own lives, and that of the community.

All this naturally raises the question of appropriate training of school teachers. Hitherto the school teacher has not been equipped with the training that will enable him to undertake this type of work. Consequently, the training programme of school teacher would include in it an intensive course of providing him with certain new skills on the one hand and certain new attitudes on the other. The manner in which he puts across these aspects of social education programmes are matters of techniques. The training schedule of the school teacher should include a comprehensive programme which will enable him to acquire these techniques. These techniques include methods of approaching adults, ways and means of developing specific programmes, etc.

An even more important aspect in the training of teachers is the necessity to inculcate in them a sense of values. The programme of development that has been envisaged for the country is one which will lead to a socialistic pattern of society. This pattern of society eschews any authoritarian conduct between one section of the people and the other and between the authorities and the people. It implies an approach which is democratic in spirit. It is a recognition of the equal capability of the human mind to see reason when the mind is opened out to it. It is, furthermore, a recognition of the dignity of human personality which does not permit the concept of the superiority of one man over another. These are essentially questions of attitudes which are dependant on the sense of values one cultivates. The cultivation of values does not come either out of text books howsoever brilliantly they are written nor of lectures howsoever eloquently they are delivered. To instil these values what is of the utmost necessity is to provide an experience of behaviour based on those values. The training centre must provide such experience in their daily life. In this manner the teachers will acquire and imbibe these values. Having once imbibed them, the teachers will reflect them in their day to day work.

—*Indian Journal of Adult Education, June 1957.*

## Co-operative Education and Training

The subject of "Cooperative Education and Training" has to be considered against the background of one basic fact, that the cooperative movement in India was officially sponsored. The movement was intended, indeed, to be for the people but by its very nature could neither be one of the people nor by the people. Furthermore, that it was officially sponsored, endowed it with certain unwholesome undertones which prevented it from acquiring that vitality which springs from the impact of mass interests and concern in the movement. Experience in other countries has shown that as long as the movement does not originate from the masses, it will either be robbed of its ethos or else wilt to extinction. Cooperative Education has therefore to place before itself two cardinal objectives. On the one hand it should strive to create mass concern and interest in the movement and on the other strive to inculcate in the functionaries of the movement such attitudes and habits of behaviour as would erase the undertones that cling to the movement. The cooperative movement will succeed to the extent to which its general membership exercise effective control over the institution and to the extent to which its functionaries are trained to appreciate and encourage the exercise of that control.

Certain reasons have afforded opportunities even to authorities in the cooperative movement to justify the desirability of official control of the movement as against popular control. Vera Anstey has pointed out reasons which she considers valid for the "continuance of the paternalistic nature of government control and initiative despite theoretical objections." The Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1928 had concluded that it was essential to retain official supervision and control to prevent inefficiency and corruption in the movement. This was, at least in part, due to the fact that they were both dealing with cooperative credit

societies, to which the cooperative movement had restricted itself in large part and which were mostly confined to the impoverished and technologically backward rural areas.

This situation of rural conditions has not improved dramatically. Yet, the trend is unmistakably towards improvement in the economic conditions and the technological standards. One may therefore anticipate conditions which would provide occasion for spreading out the cooperative movement over wider facets of people's economic life; one may also expect better objective conditions to permit successful insistence, for behaviour consistent with the principles of cooperation on the part of the general membership as well as of public functionaries in the movement. This would correct one great drawback of the cooperative movement which necessitate bureaucratic control and consequently thwarts its growth.

In the context of the Indian conditions, Cooperative Education may include the following :

- (1) Education of the masses in the tenets of cooperation; this we may call membership education;
- (2) Training of personnel who have to carry on membership education;
- (3) Training of functionaries on the cooperative organisational techniques, sales promotion, marketing, warehousing, etc;
- (4) Training of supervisory staff.

### **Membership Education**

Let us take up firstly the education of the general members in the tenets of cooperation.

In land where the illiterates outnumber the literates times over, educational methods adopted in other advanced countries will be of little avail in converting the cooperative movement into a mass movement or in rendering it more effective and efficient. Cooperative education has also to vary

in its nature between sections of the population, depending on the levels of literacy, capacity for intellectual integration and the mental discipline of different sections. Methods of approach and techniques of education will vary accordingly with each category. For, besides illiteracy which bedevils the effort for education, the habits and thought of illiterate adults render the formal methods of education through lectures and talks futile. Special methods of communication are necessary. Of these, recreational and cultural activities form an important vehicles for unconscious education. If cooperative institutions, in addition to transacting business, are to take on the responsibility of educating its members, they have to be equipped to undertake certain methods adopted in social education. Through charts and audio-visual aids, through cultural activities, habits implicit in cooperative functioning may be conveyed and instilled. The fact that such activities are undertaken by cooperative institutions will serve to popularise the cooperative concept. In a limited sense this was also one of the recommendations of the Cooperative Planning Committee (1945) on Cooperative Education and Training. The Committee recommended that talks on subjects of general interests or topical interests may be delivered by a few paid workers and "to make the talks attractive", the recommendations read, "they may be interspersed with "kathas", dramatic performances or musical interludes or displays of lantern slides or films of general interest." What is suggested here is, however, not a mere diversional role for such activities. They should rather become vehicles of communicating fundamental concepts of the ideology and philosophy of the cooperative movement. To my mind, a great emphasis must be laid on membership education, if the cooperative movement is to become a bulwark of democracy and not dengerate into self acquisitive or a bureaucratic venture.

The need for cooperative institutions to take on functions of educating its members and the general public is, I assume, beyond debate. To do so however the functionaries in the institutions require to be trained in methods of mass education. As has been stated, these spread out over a wide range of skills. Preparation of simple reading material on

cooperation for the use of such adults who have just acquired literacy skills, preparation of charts and other graphic aids which will focus the functioning of cooperative institutions require training of a specialised nature. Organisation of activities for educational purposes require specially cultivated talents.

It will be obvious that the same set of personnel would find it beyond their capacity to cope up with two set of functions which require whole time attention. In Canada, as has been pointed out by the Committee on Cooperative Education, some of the bigger societies employ "fieldmen" who function as education secretaries. These fieldmen, the Report says, "organise study clubs or forums, recreational activities such as excursions, socials, debating and public speaking contests." In the United States, according to the Report, the practice of employing full-time educational directors has been growing and the educational programme include such items as quiz and public speaking contests etc. In India, considering the complexity that the programme would involve and also its imperative necessity, a cadre of trained personnel should form an auxiliary corps to the army of cooperative workers.

### **Training**

It should be the responsibility of the cooperative movement to organise training of such a personnel. The training syllabus, as stated above, should include knowledge of adult psychology, abnormal psychology, methods and techniques of mass education, audio-visual aids, organisation of recreational and cultural activities, techniques for the preparation of simple reading material on cooperation, etc. This can be undertaken in cooperation with the Indian Adult Education Association and its two specialized affiliated institutions, the Literacy House and the Production, Research, and Training Centre of the Jamia Millia. The Government including the Reserve Bank should provide funds and theoretical guidance in technical aspect of cooperation wherever required.

The training of cooperative workers for the technical aspects of running the institutions is being undertaken by

various agencies of the co-operative movement. It is necessary that these institutions do not confine the training to the mere technicalities of running cooperatives. They should also provide training in the fundamentals of social education. This is specially necessary in view of the fact that cooperative institutions have to deal with members, majority of whom can understand the movement better through gestures reflecting principles of the movement rather than through the spoken or the written word. It is also imperative that in their functioning the cooperative workers should leave as little discrepancy between practice and principle if the cooperative movement is to strike a sympathetic chord among its members. This would involve the inculcation of human sympathies in the workers and fostering in them an understanding of the mechanics of social relationships. Adequate provision would need to be made for this, at least as much as is needed for the technical aspects of the functioning of the co-operative institutions. Co-operative workers, in India today are not merely economic agents but are what I would call social workers and educationists and should be properly equipped to grasp the values inherent in healthy social relationships.

### **Link With Social Education**

Social education has become a part of developmental activity in the country and is considered, to be the forerunner of all programmes designed to lead to improvement. A link between this movement and the cooperative movement needs to be established so that the effect of one enriches the results of the other. Organisational coordination between these two movements require to be set up for this purpose—from the all-India to the local level. Just how this is to be done is a matter which needs to be seriously considered. To my mind, a beginning perhaps, could be made by organising jointly the training programme for cooperative workers for membership education. Another field in which the two could work together is by utilising the social education centres for organising initially, consumer's cooperatives. There are many voluntary social organisations in urban as well as in rural areas which would be prepared to help in organising coopera-

tives under proper guidance and supervision. The cooperative movement hitherto has more or less remained confined to certain sectors of economic life of the people. There is no reason why with the anticipated expansion of the economy of the country, the cooperative movement should not widen itself. This expansion will take place with the improving economy of the country, and the success that educational activity may achieve in rallying the large masses of people to the principles of the cooperative movement, which must develop through people's own effort and be based on the principle of self help and cooperative action.

—*Indian Journal of Adult Education, June 1956.*

## Social Education and Recreation

The tenth All-India Adult Education Conference is meeting in Calcutta towards the end of this month. The Conference this year is unusual in more than one respect. It is to consider "The Place of Recreation in Social Education". Normally, our conference carries its programme in two phases. It reviews the work done and gives lead about the line of action to be followed in the field of Social Education. This year, the Conference is to review the social education work in the Community Project areas and give its considered opinion on the place Recreation occupies in the field of social education.

Recreation is an essential element in any programme of education. For adults, it is something more. Perhaps, it is the most important element in the programme of social education. For, if social education is to have any purpose, it must enrich the lives of our people and contribute to the development of their critical faculties and their social sense so that they may be able to distinguish between the true and false in the realm of knowledge and the good and bad in the realm of conduct. Social education centres must play an important role in the renaissance of our national life and help to focus the actual and potential cultural resources of the local community and make them actively interested in their own improvement and thus provide an environment and atmosphere in which that interest could joyfully be translated into cooperative and growing activity. To quote an eminent educationist of our country : "No community or person however ignorant and oppressed by the burden of making a living will reject persistently all attempts to bring a little light and joy and good fellowship into their lives. They would welcome the chance to sit and to smoke together in the evenings, to sing songs, to stage little plays and to hear folk tales, bhajans and religious poetry. Why not then make a start in

that way and provide, to begin with, just a pleasant meeting ground for villagers where they can gradually contribute to their own amusement and relaxation. With this beginning it is not at all unlikely that some of those who assemble there may talk about their common problems and discuss their common needs and difficulties. This would provide an excellent starting point for the formation of discussion groups and gradually pave the way for talks and lectures on subjects of general interest and usefulness to the members." Thus, it will be seen that through recreation, social education can achieve lasting results.

Recreation not only provides opportunities for self-expression and development of individual qualities but influences the growth of social attitudes and social values. Opportunities for developing team spirit are provided by recreational activities. The basic human quality, of subordinating one's own interest for the welfare of larger and larger groups of mankind and ultimately the society, is developed. Through recreation, group life, cooperation, loyalty and group conscience are developed. It is possible for one to discover through recreation the meaning of freedom and cooperation. Through recreational activities we can also practice democratic principles as a way of life. Incidentally through recreational activities, we can attract people to our educational programmes.

In our country recreational activities are being used in most places as essential to the programmes of social education. In many places dramas are used not only to create interest among the people of the locality towards social education programmes, but also to give them lessons in moral values. But most of these lack proper planning and integration. Our cultural resources, which are great are not properly utilised and integrated with the programme of social education. In many places the modern recreational visual aids are also used, but again the integration between the visual aids programmes as such and the objectives of social education are not brought about. It may be because the people who are asked to work it up have not sufficient vision and idealism, it may be

because those responsible for planning such a programme have not the necessary competence, but the fact is that today the recreational activities which are being undertaken in social education centres lack integration with our educational objectives. If we have to get out of this situation, we must properly integrate the objectives of social education with the purpose of recreational activities and must utilise the cultural resources of our country and the artistic talents available in rural areas for the development of the Man.

—*Place of Recreation in Social Education*  
(Published in 1954)

## Social Education and the Second Plan

Adult education to be effective must take cognisance of the socio-economic trends in society, and thus obtain a sense of direction and purpose. It is, therefore, necessary for us to consider the effect that the Second Plan is likely to have on society and find out what role social education should have in this context.

In a sense, the Second Plan is even more significant than the First. The first plan was primarily aimed at restoring some of the imbalances in the country's economy created by the war and partition. The Second Plan has much wider horizons. On the basis of what had been achieved in the first Plan it seeks to move forward to higher levels of economic standards and to create a society of progressive social values. Concretely, the objectives laid down for the Second Plan are as follows :

- (1) a sizeable increase in national income so as to raise the level of living in the country ;
- (2) rapid industrialisation with particular emphasis on the development of basic and heavy industries ;
- (3) a large expansion of employment opportunities ; and
- (4) reduction of inequalities in income and wealth and a more even distribution of economic power.

It has been estimated that the successful implementation of the Plan would mean an increase in the per capita national income from Rs. 282 to Rs. 331 allowing for a growth of population from 384 to 408 millions.

The implementation of the Plan involves changing the employment structure of the economy of the country. Hitherto there has not been much of a change in the occupa-

tional pattern of the Indian population. About 70 per cent of the working force has been, and continues to be, dependent on agriculture or allied occupations. The employment of the other 30 per cent is variously divided ; mining and industries absorb 2.6 per cent of the working force. Agriculture has not increased its productivity to an appreciable extent as to create additional employment opportunities. The Planning Commission has, therefore, pointed out that further addition to the working force in agriculture should be prevented and productivity should be increased through intensification of production rather than through the addition to the working force on land.

An important objective of the Plan is to reduce economic and social inequalities. It has recommended various measures of a fiscal nature and a number of steps are contemplated which will, on the one hand, raise the existing lower incomes and on the other, reduce higher incomes. There is also the question of regional disparities and the Planning Commission has kept in mind the need to ensure a balance from region to region so that the less developed areas will not lag behind the more developed ones.

### **Technological Progress**

Economic development is primarily dependent on advances in technology—improvements in methods of production, both agricultural and industrial. Technological progress in its turn, derives motivation from socio-political factors. Experience in western countries has shown that for a movement for technological progress to occur in a democratic society and in a democratic manner, the social and political conditions must be such as will provide the great mass of people with the confidence that technological progress holds promise of an improvement in the quality of their lives. It is this confidence that the Planning Commission hopes to provide the masses through appropriate institutional arrangements. Therefore not the least important is the type of society that the Plan envisages. The Planning Commission has recognised that, if the masses of people are to strive for

economic and social development, the appropriate society which will result from planning has to be one which will incorporate the values of a socialistic pattern. This pattern, the Commission has defined to be one in which "the benefits of economic development must accrue more to the relatively less privileged classes of society", and one in which there will be a "progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power". Such a society, the Planning Commission believes will "create a milieu in which the small man who has so far had little opportunity of perceiving and participating in the immense possibilities of growth through organised effort is enabled to put in his best in the interest of a higher standard of life for himself and increased prosperity for the country".

The Plan, therefore, impinges not merely on the economic life of the people but also on the social; and the problems involved are essentially human problems—of stimulating in people aspirations for the objectives of planning, of creating in them the ability to meet the challenge presented by social control of the country's economic and natural resources and of preparing them for technological progress that an efficient exploitation of natural resources requires.

These aspects of planning are of primary importance in underdeveloped countries and planning in these countries is, if I may say so, far more personal in character than in developed countries. The mobilisation of the human resources for planning in a democratic system implies acquiescence of the people in the objectives of planning and their spontaneous and voluntary participation will be forthcoming from the will generated by an understanding of the plan. It is this aspect of the Second Plan that we are most concerned with here. We have also to examine the future that the Plan will mould and discuss the role social education will have in that context.

In the rural sector, the programme of community development has already been in operation for the past five years and we are all familiar with the basic concept that people are themselves responsible for their well-being and that the

State should assist them in their striving towards it. The programme therefore provided for a number of services necessary for the people for their well being and through social education programmes people were to be stimulated to use those services. An important presupposition of this programme was that its activities were to be conducted by local communities who would interpret Plan according to their needs and implement them. Indeed, the Second Plan, it has been claimed by the Planning Commission, was based on the plans which the communities at the village level had formulated.

By the end of the Second Plan, this programme of community development is to be spread out to cover every village in India. Naturally an agency which would undertake the responsibility for the programme at the village level becomes important. The Planning Commission has recommended that the programme at the local level should be entrusted to village Panchayats. It has been pointed out by the Planning Commission that during the last five year the number of village panchayats increased from 83,087 to 117,593. According to the programme of the Planning Commission, by 1960-61, the number of panchayats is to be increased to 242,564.

### **Panchayats**

The Planning Commission has envisaged a crucial role for these panchayats. According to its recommendations, legislation should confer on these village panchayats, functions relating to development in addition to those of administration of land reforms, land management, civic and judicial functions. These are heavy responsibilities but without these, programmes of development will neither be realistic, nor will the people feel a direct impact of the implications of these programmes. The functions of the panchayats in respect of development consist of developing common land, framing programmes of production, etc. These functions naturally impose a responsibility on the social education movement to undertake a nation-wide programme which will enable the community face up to these tasks.

One of the important institutions to do this has been the newly conceived Janata colleges. At these Janata colleges village leaders are to be brought together and trained to fulfil the new responsibilities that they will have to shoulder. This involves not merely instruction in various subjects but the building up the personality of the leaders. It is necessary to instil in them the values which a democratic system seeking to establish a socialistic pattern of society demands. If Janata colleges have to be successful and—that they must be successful is imperative for the success of Plan itself—it is essential to have the right type of personnel which will man these colleges. This personnel should be a source of inspiration to the village leaders so that they may appreciate and imbibe democratic values of social conduct.

### **Community School**

Another important method of bringing about this is to invest the village school with a social role. The school-cum-community centre concept envisages that the school must not merely be a place where children are taught the three R's but should become the focal point of a revolution in rural life. It should be enabled to influence the attitudes of adults, as much as those of children, towards right conduct in social life. The programme and curriculum of the school will have to be geared to the life of the community. One hopes that the school teacher will be trained and equipped to do this. It is equally essential that he should be helped to live with the dignity that the new role in society accords him.

It would also be necessary to intensify our work among rural woman with a view to make her a competent housewife and to create in her an awareness of the needs of her family, community, country and the world. Another salient purpose should be to stimulate local leadership among women to solve their own problems.

During the Second Plan, industry is expected to take great strides. On the one hand there is the programme for the development of heavy industries and of power and on the other there is a big programme for the development of cott-

age and small scale industries. Rural industries which have hitherto struggled against the heavy odds of insufficient means for improvement will receive a great fillip with the various provisions in the plan for their development. This again is another field which provides the social education movement with new purposes. The movement must provide for the climate of "technology mindedness" to grow.

Hitherto the social education movement has been more intense in the rural areas than in the urban. Under the Second Plan there is need for intensification of activities in urban areas also. This is specially necessary in view of the fact that the Plan's emphasis will be on industrialisation which will consequently accelerate the growth of cities and the working class population.

### **Workers' Education**

In the field of workers' education also the social education movement will face new tasks. In the Second Plan, the Planning Commission has considered a number of steps necessary for the cultural, economic and social life of workers. Perhaps the most important of these is the proposal to associate workers with the management of industries. This will, the Planning Commission hopes, give employees a better understanding of their role in the working of the industry and satisfy their urge for self expression. The Commission, therefore, has suggested the formation of councils of management consisting of representatives of workers, technicians and the management. Such councils to begin with, are proposed to be tried out in the large establishments of organised industries and extended to other industries, in the light of the experience gained initially.

This is an important step in the history of the working class movement. It makes it incumbent on workers to acquire the ability to acquit themselves well in this new role. It will be the task of social education to help them do so. The Planning Commission has recognised the need for workers education and has made provision for necessary funds.

Another field in which the social education movement will have a significant contribution to make is in the trade union movement. The movement so far has been manned by personnel drawn from outside the ranks of the working class. It must now find leadership from its own ranks. Social education will have to work towards the evolution of that leadership.

### **Non-official Coordinating Agency**

Social education has been in operation, over the last five years. The operation of the programme has thrown in its wake many ambiguities and many problems. While various efforts are being made to solve these, the programme itself has revealed its potentialities to awaken people to shed their inhibitions and help them take the path of progress. The experience of these past five years have enriched the prospects for the future of the movement. The whole country will be under its impact by the end of the Second Plan and the extent to which it will help to revolutionise production techniques, the extent to which it will help people appreciate the new civic and social responsibilities which devolve on them, will depend on the earnestness with which its problems are solved. The demands that the Second Plan will make on the movement will present many problems of a fundamental nature. To solve these the cooperation and assistance of experts in many fields of social sciences would be necessary. It is therefore essential to develop an agency which will bring about this coordination. This Agency to be useful will have to be one which will be sensitive to the needs of the movement and capable of adjusting itself to the tempo of the movement. The agency must be one which can function unhampered by the pressures of a bureaucracy and which will be free to experiment and venture out boldly. One hopes that the government will see the necessity of such an agency, and take steps to encourage its growth.

—*Indian Journal of Adult Education, December 1956.*

## Social Education and the Third Plan

With the Third Plan now on the anvil, speculation is rife on the size, character and the pattern of outlay in the Plan. So also a considerable volume of speculation on the allocation for different programmes in different sectors. Present indications are that the size of the Plan will be a modest one and that the emphasis in its objectives will be biased, fairly strongly, in favour of heavy industry.

It is a matter of opinion whether we can afford to do with a modest plan and whether, with the problem of our agricultural production still nowhere insight of being solved, we should look forward to an era of heavy industrialisation. It is also a moot point what the criterion for judging the size of the plan should be—whether it should be in terms of employment potential or whether it should be related to the resources available or whether it should look forward to increasing national income. While all these are inter-related, an emphasis on one of those will lend the Plan a character, which will be entirely different under different circumstances.

While these considerations are, if one may say so, only remotely relevant to social education, what is of immediate import to us is whether the Plan will recognise the role of social education as such in planning and whether adequate provision will be made for the programme to fulfil itself.

In this connection, grave doubts exist in the minds of educationists. A feeling has gained currency that the allocation for social services is likely to be slashed and that in this, social education is likely to be a worse sufferer. The indications are that social education will find an allocation of Rs. 5 crores, which would mean that there would be no increase over the allocations in the Second Plan, although the

social education movement as part of the Planning has expanded considerably since the First Plan was launched in 1951. It would be admittedly early to comment on this belief, but, to forewarn is to forearm.

Experts in Planning who have studied the course of economic and social growth in developing societies are unanimously of the opinion that what hinders growth is the quality of human material, which suffers from the warping effects of underdevelopment. Health and education are, therefore, considered to be the hard-core of any planned programme and great emphasis on these is obviously essential if mobilisation of human resources is to take place on a scale which would make good the deficiencies in material resources. This would constitute valid justification for higher allotments under social services, if, indeed, justification were necessary at all to improve human material.

The role of social education in this context has been well brought out in a resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the Indian Adult Education Association, at its recent meeting. The resolution points out the need for inculcating certain attitudes and creating certain social institutions which would help further the objectives of planning. These, the resolution rightly points out, can be promoted primarily through a well directed programme of social education. The resolution furthermore is of the opinion that, bearing in mind the responsibility that devolves on social education, an allocation of less than 25 crores would be inadequate. It has therefore called upon people in general and social education workers in particular to mobilise public opinion to provide adequate allocation in the Plan. Considerable success has been achieved by social education in various plan programmes. It is now necessary to bring to bear on the planning body an awareness of these success. It is also necessary that we should educate public opinion on the implications of the plan programmes in different sectors and the role which people need to play in making the programmes successful.

—*Indian Journal of Adult Education, May 1960.*

## Social Education in Community and NES Areas

The community development programme, as a technique of planning in underdeveloped countries, depends primarily on the educative process of creating in the community the conviction of human control over environment—both social and physical. The programme, therefore, consists of a set of services necessary to enable people to exercise that control and is preceded and accompanied by educational activity on the implications of the programme.

In the community development schemes now in operation in India, social education was conceived as the method of providing the educational background for the operation of the schemes. Its purpose was declared to be that of bringing about in the people a change of outlook and developing in them a will to desire and seek their betterment. The programme itself consisted of a number of problem-oriented activities which, it was thought, would bring to people an awareness of the significance of the community development schemes. We have to consider to what extent social education has fulfilled the expectations with which the programme was incorporated in the community development schemes. We might begin our review of social education in community development and NES blocks with the comment made on it by the Programme Evaluation Reports.

The first Report had pointed out that there was considerable scepticism among government functionaries about the utility and necessity of social education programmes for development schemes. The Social Education Organiser, the Report had said, was often enough considered a supernumerary and that in any case, his functions had not been found to be quite relevant to the immediate needs of community deve-

lopment. The Second Report published recently, does not indicate that the criticism to which the programme was subjected had been met or that efforts were conceived to remedy errors in the programme which had been pointed out earlier. The objectives which had been set for social education appeared either superfluous or devoid of significance to community development. It was superfluous because social education tended to duplicate extension work that was being carried on in other spheres of the scheme. "Some Social Education Organisers," the Second Report said, "sincerely believe that whereas it is the job of an agricultural supervisor to lay a demonstration, it is their job to prepare the people for it and convince them of its value. Obviously such distinctions between telling how a thing should be done and why it should be done, however well they may appear in theory, are likely to break down in the field." It was devoid of significance because for one thing, social education confined itself to "routine activities" like literacy, recreation etc., which had no direct bearing on development programmes. Also, according to the Report, the range and variety of programmes under social education was so wide that it lacked both focus and purpose.

### **Change of Outlook**

This confusion between extension work and social education appears to have arisen, at least partly, because social education was not primarily conceived as the means to create awareness in the minds of people on the need for rural development. Instead, it was, to a certain extent expected to execute the development programme itself through its problem-oriented activities which in practice clashed with other services of the scheme. Consequently, we have to examine the assumptions on which the present programme was conceived. In other words we have to examine whether problem-oriented activities provide the correct perspective to social education and whether such activities can bring about a change in outlook.

The basic presupposition for any change is, obviously, the conviction that change is possible. This conviction is often

absent in underdeveloped communities and has robbed the human mind of the incentive to change. Moreover, life forms a pattern evolved through history and norms, whether they relate to social behaviour or vocational practices have been sanctified by tradition and justified by custom. To bring about a change of outlook, therefore, involves not merely a change in an individual aspect of life but in the premises on which people base their lives. Most of the premises are, however, inarticulate and not until have they been made articulate can it be said that changes can be brought about. Social education, if it should prove its necessity to community development, has to orient itself towards this aspect of the programme. It is perhaps somewhat a simplification to suggest that, for people to accept a change in outlook, all that needs demonstration is the material benefit of the changed outlook.

Seen in this context, social education acquires the significance of the ideology of community development schemes. The ideology of the scheme is, indeed, not related to any dogmatic social objective but to a philosophy which will explain human control over environment. To combat forces that deny this and to rebuild in its place a system of values in life which will convey people a feel of that control is what appears to be the role of social education. The activities of the Social Education Organiser, therefore, need to be not problem-oriented but ideology-oriented.

This perspective will invest social education programme with a new meaning. Literacy will no longer form the basic activity of the Social Education Organiser. Recreation and cultural activities will no longer appear as isolated items but the means of conveying this ideology. Extension activities of other functionaries will then acquire a new dimension for they will cease to be isolated streams of knowledge but spring from and correlated to a wider philosophy.

### **Evaluation and Targets**

Another reason why the social education programme in the Community Development and NES areas has not been

able to come to its own is the general context in which it is functioning. It is hardly necessary to refer here to the problems of evaluation and of determining targets in community development programmes. One thing that has, however, become clear in the course of our experience with the operation of the community development schemes in India is the unsuitability of fixing physical targets. Physical targets have the tendency of acquiring the importance of the very ends of community development schemes. Targets have been fixed and willy-nilly have to be reached. Everybody's effort is geared towards the figures in those targets—whether in term of expenditure or of production output. This pursuit of targets creates an atmosphere which grates on the educative process, for the educative process is not easily perceptible, involves patience and does not offer anything spectacular to show.

The effect of this situation on the social education programmes has been disastrous. Because no methods of evaluation—and of fixing targets have yet been evolved in social education—"targets" of social education were fixed in terms of literacy classes and recreation centres. The result was that under the pressure of having to fulfil those "targets" the immediate and the sole concern of social education workers became the number of literacy classes or recreation centres they had opened. The broader objectives—of education and of ushering in a cultural renaissance suited to the requirements of the community development schemes—had, obviously, little relevance in this scheme of things.

The problem of targets is wide in its implications and affects the entire programme of Community Development. Perhaps, because the programme was conceived as a part of the First Plan, it had certain definite objectives—of restoring the imbalance in the country's economy caused by the war and partition—and community development schemes could not be envisaged, unhampered by the urgency of fulfilling targets demanded by these objectives of the Plan. Community Development, however, is based on the concept of felt needs of the people. Logically, therefore, the only criteria of targets can be in terms of the felt needs of the people.

While, essentially, there need be no contradiction between felt needs, which will be local in character, and objectives of planning, which will be national on scale, nevertheless, a conflict of priorities may need to be resolved. Social education must become means of resolving this conflict. There is always the danger of social education becoming the means of suppressing either at the cost of the other. This will only aggravate the conflict and consequently must be watchfully avoided.

### **Machinery for Local Development**

A question which has relevance in this context is that of suitable organisational machinery for the implementation of community development programmes. Whether development schemes can be implemented, without losing sight of their ultimate objectives through the existing administrative structure of the country, is a moot point. Much thought is being given to this question and whether social education will function in a manner which will enrich the community development schemes, will depend on the solution of the problem. In this situation, the role that is sought to be assigned to Panchayats as agencies for the implementation of programmes will take a great step forward in providing social education and community development schemes with new sights. Hitherto, Government functionaries at the village level have been acting as a buffer between the people and programmes. If Panchayats are provided with opportunities without restrictions to devise ways and means to express people's needs and aspirations in the implementation of programmes, community development movement will retain its distinctive character. If, however, Panchayats are not provided these opportunities for complete self-expression and responsibilities for implementation of community development programmes are vested in functionaries who also possess coercive powers inherent in revenue officials, one may be pardoned for misgivings, for there are justifications for such misgivings. An administrative structure, which at its lower levels is yet to acquire an impact of reorientation about the purposes of administration, coupled with an absence of the feel of power among the people would

not be quite the most conducive instrument for the implementation of community development schemes.

### **Correctives**

So far as social education is concerned, however, there are certain correctives which deserve serious consideration.

Firstly, it will be well to find an organisational structure which will be less subject to bureaucratic pressures. This can be achieved if the burden of leadership of the social education movement is left to voluntary agencies. These agencies enjoy certain advantages which will help the social education movement retain its spirit. For one thing voluntary agencies, because they are the projection of popular initiative and enthusiasm, can evolve a more sympathetic accord among people than governmental agencies. And because voluntary agencies have to thrive solely on the confidence people place in them, they will reflect more keenly popular sentiments and adjust themselves to popular needs. They will also be less subject to adverse pressures which invariably develop in a bureaucratic set up. The government, therefore, should aim to assist voluntary agencies in all ways to ensure their efficient functioning—through placing at their disposal facilities necessary for their development.

Secondly, the success of community development schemes will require their implementation by local communities. This has been recognised by the Planning Commission. Social Education has a responsibility to render local institutions and local leadership fit for the purpose. This is an important aspect to which social education has to direct itself if a proper administrative structure has to be found for the implementation of the programmes.

### **Training of Social Educators**

Another fundamental problem to which serious thought has to be given is the training of personnel in social education as well as community development schemes as such. The training programme should equip workers of all categories not merely in new skills or techniques but more fundamentally

develop in them correct attitudes to the work before them and the right poise in their conduct among people. It must be borne in mind that they have to convey to people a conviction in new values. A weakness of our education has been that much of what it communicates to people is not reflected in the day to day life. The training programme must not be found wanting in this manner. It must enable an integration of what is taught and what is lived. It should embody the essential principles of the process that the trainee is expected to put across to the people. Thus, for instance, an authoritarian code of conduct between the trainee and trainer will not help the trainee to take with him a persuasive approach to the people in the field when he begins to function. To ensure this, training methods must be conducive to develop proper values and attitudes in the trainee. The emphasis in training methods should be on two-way communication rather than on lectures.

These are the outlines of some of the crucial problems facing social education programmes in Community Development and NES areas. The First Programmes Evaluation Report had prophesied a gloomy prospect for the social education movement if it did not adjust itself to the needs of development programmes. It is no new truth to say that with the failure of the social education programmes the Community Development programme itself will degenerate into a method devoid of all its distinctive significance. For the mutual success, therefore, these problems have to be faced and solved.

*(Paper (revised) read at the annual session of the Indian Conference of Social Work at Jaipur, 1956)*

## Social Education—Matrix of a New Civilization

Underdeveloped communities impose many impediments on the individuals to develop themselves fully. Inefficient technology, iniquitous social relationships and antiquated social institutions combine to create a socio-economic milieu which stands in the way of the society providing individual with economic security and social significance. Community development is the process through which compulsions which create those impediments are removed.

The role of social education in community development in such a society is, essentially, to perceive and remove the intellectual and emotional factors which inhibit an understanding of that process of community development. In other words, social education should aim to provide the proper mental climate for the process of community development to take root among the people. This implies also that it should attempt to eradicate such social practices and habits of thought which are detrimental to the essential principles of community development. Further, it should seek to build the appropriate cultural pattern of society to sustain that process.

### **Social Education for Technological Progress**

Poverty of material resources is, of course, the basic problem in underdeveloped countries. This poverty is, primarily, because technological advance in methods of production—whether industrial or agricultural—has not kept pace with increasing demands on the limited resources. To solve this problem, therefore, technological standards have to be improved and increased production ensured therewith. Consequently, this forms an important aspect of any programme of community development. The role of social education is to view

this as an educational problem and prepare the human mind to absorb technological change.

The basic presupposition for any technological change is the conviction that change is possible and that it is within the human power to understand and control physical phenomenon. This conviction is often absent in underdeveloped societies and has robbed the human mind of the incentive to technological change. Many of our vocational practices and social behaviour are based on old customs and traditions. Therefore any innovation would constitute a break through the entire pattern of life, and not of a particular aspect. The change, thus can only be total and not ad hoc. If, therefore, one is to succeed in introducing technological change, one has to stimulate in the adults a reevaluation of the assumptions—conscious as well as unconscious—on which the adult bases his belief and which guides him in his day to day conduct in life. This is the perspective that should always be before the social education workers and guide them in their work.

Change in outlook was declared to be one of the fundamental objectives of Community Development programmes in India and the Social Education Organiser was conceived as the main agent on whom rested the responsibility of bringing about that change of outlook. His role and functions in practice however continue to be subject of controversy and consequently demand clearer definition in the light of experience gained hitherto.

Initially, the function of the Social Education Organiser was clearly defined. The Manual on Social Education, in broad terms, stated that he would devote himself to help the villager to help himself. Dr. Radhakrishnan was approvingly quoted : "Nothing is good which is not self-chosen ; no determination is valuable which is not self-determination". The Social Education Organiser was to carry this conviction to the villagers. The Manual provided him with the perspective for his activities and the job chart named those activities. In course of time, however, it was found that his activities were either superfluous or devoid of significance to community develop-

ment. It was superfluous because his activities overlapped those of other extension workers. The Second Programme Evaluation Report also said, that the activities of the Social Education Organiser was devoid of significance because for one thing, these consisted of routine jobs such as literacy, recreation and cultural activities which had no direct bearing on the Development Programme; also because "the range and variety of programme being taken up under social education is so large that it may appear that anything falling under the heads "recreation" "entertainment" or "publicity" can be considered a fit programme for Social Education". And the activities of the Social Education Organiser lacked both focus and purpose.

Under the circumstances what specific problems facing the Community Development Programme can the Social Education Organiser tackle? To what concrete programmes of activities should he devote himself?

Firstly, he has the basic role as the ideologue of the community development programme. The ideology of the community development programme is, indeed, not related to any dogmatic social objective but to the very specific—that of helping people to acquire the feel of human control over environment. He must recognise that if he is to succeed in this he has to tackle the basis of the values which guide peoples' lives as they live it today. To be specific, the role of the Social Education Organiser should be oriented towards the ideological needs of the community development programme.

Seen in this perspective the job chart acquires a new meaning and significance. Literacy no longer forms the basic activity of the Social Education Organiser. Recreation and cultural activities no longer appear isolated items but the means of conveying this ideology. Extension activities of the other functionaries of the community project staff become meaningful because they cease to be isolated streams of knowledge but spring from and are correlated to a wider philosophy and in this manner the Social Education Organiser can help people see the significance of the programme in its entirety. Self-determination would then and then only be possible. This is

the perspective that should be stilled in Social Education Organiser during the training that he undergoes. He needs also the intellectual equipment to meet these sophisticated demands on his intellectual resources and initiative.

The training schedule of Social Education Organiser, therefore, holds the key to his success—indeed to the success of the whole programme of community development. The training programme, must be geared to suit the requirements of a worker who functions not merely to convey new skills but more—to convey the values in life to replace some of the existing ones which weaken people's conviction of their control over environment. The training programme must fundamentally inculcate in the trainee himself this conviction, for otherwise, how can he convince others ? Furthermore, the method of training should embody the essential principles of the process that the trainee is expected to put across to the people. During the training period, the trainers and the trainees, must in their own lives behave and act according to the new values and attitudes which we wish to transmit to the people. The methods and techniques followed in the training should promote democratic and cooperative thinking, living and action.

### **Social Education and Social Values**

Of the problems that face the Indian society today, the most stubborn is that of its antiquated social institutions. Whatever justification the caste system might have had in the past, it is now considered to be the aberration of an irrational social order. As a social system, it is iniquitous and prohibits the release of human resources for common social objectives. As a system of social values, it is even more disastrous ; it does not permit concepts of universal social objectives and warps perspectives of civic and political obligations. Civic and political power, instead of being directed towards social good, tends to corrupt ; for sectarian ambition constitutes the criteria of political judgment and decisions and not considerations of the social good.

Social scientists who have discussed the origin and

utility of the caste system have pointed out that the system is not merely no longer useful to India, but is definitely inconsistent with contemporary social needs. They also point out that the economic background in which it had originated does not exist any longer in India and that such forces as had preserved it, despite its incongruity, are yielding place to forces which operate to dissolve it. Social scientists feel that under the circumstances the battle against the caste system is to be fought on the plane of the subjective factors that sustain the system. In other words, the emphasis at this juncture is to be on education, more especially on adult education which would enable individuals to discard what is useless and build what is useful. Concretely, social education will have to perceive the emotional and cultural background which provides sustenance to a pernicious social system and attempt to provide for healthy norms of social conduct.

The Varnashram Dharma although no longer an article of faith for the broad masses of the Indian people, has the weight of history behind it and because of it, the Indian mind is perhaps obsessed with caste. Concepts of caste have seeped into other Indian religions which do not theoretically concede it. Society, to the Indian mind, appears to be obviously a system of castes. To make people free of this obsession, an explanation of the system as a social phenomenon, related to a particular milieu, is necessary. The history of the Indian society has phases in it when the caste system was merely functional in its character and was consequently not rigidly vigorous in its operation. Social education should take on an intensive programme which would bring out in clear terms this functional character which the caste system served and make clear its unsuitability in the present conditions.

Another reason which helps the perpetuation of the caste system is the absence of common cultural norms and practices in the Indian society as such. Because there has been no intercourse between different castes, each has developed its own cultural preferences and tastes. There is also the problem of disparity in cultural development of different

castes. Social education will have to devise programmes of activities which will bring out the common cultural traits among the various classes and reduce the disparity in cultural levels of the different castes. Religious rituals for instance, differ among the different castes. It may not be possible, though desirable, to do away with rituals altogether. What may be attempted is to ensure some uniformity in their observance so as to dispel notions of inequality.

That adult education in India has been given the specific name of social education is not without significance. A survey of the history of the movement will indicate that the movement was conspicuously concerned for most part with 'instilling in the general mass of people certain values which would lift individuals out of the narrow grooves of sectarian thought and provide them with a societal perspective.'

A fundamental task now awaits the social educationist. Doubt in the public mind about the caste system is vague and nebulous. Ruling ideas are those which decry it. It is for social educationists to stimulate people to question the validity and usefulness of the caste system in the present context. They must help the public mind to understand why the caste system is being decried and make it possible for the issue to be discussed without violence and bloodshed. The social educationist has the means at his disposal and needs only to bring his thought to bear on the problems. At any rate, he has to be clear in his own mind and his actions and programmes must reflect this consciousness about the caste system.

### **Social Education For A New Culture**

The role of the social educationist thus forms a complete pattern. He will assist the establishment of a pattern of social behaviour and practices of certain social values which will enable people to progress and establish a society based on equality of opportunity and freedom of thought and action. He will prepare human mind to absorb technological changes necessary for such a society. He will, in short, assist the development of cultural requirements of a new society that is being evolved in the country. To repeat a hackneyed but

significant phrase, he will be harbinger of a new world order of free and happy people.

In this sense, the social education worker has perhaps a much wider role and because of it, a difficult but creative one. His activities have to cover every aspect of human life, to discover incongruities between one aspect and another and develop harmony through an integrated approach. Thus, the role of social education of moulding the minds of mankind is exacting but nevertheless thrilling. We should regard ourselves as fortunate that we are partners in this exciting adventure.

How can the social education worker equip himself to do this ? Primarily, he has to develop an appreciation of magnitude as well as the ethos of entire process in which he has the role of a catalyst. More than that, he must regard himself as a part of the process and subject to the same logic the course of which he is attempting to alter and give direction. He must accept the same code of conduct, in both his personal life as well as in his relationship with others that he would like to see adopted in society. If a true democratic spirit is behind the movement, he must manifest that spirit in his life, in his dealings with the colleagues and with those who come in contact with him. A persistent malady of the Indian mind has been the diversity between principle and conduct, between theory and practice. Perhaps, a reason for this is that the socio-economic compulsions have warped the moral aspirations of the broad masses of people. Community development aims to remove those compulsions. It is the task of social educationist to restore wider intellectual horizons and broaden moral aspirations. It is the awareness of this great task that should guide the social education movement. I am confident that the movement in India is sufficiently developed and will be able to play the role history has allotted to it.

—*Adult Education in Community Development (Published in 1956)*

## Review of Adult Education Movement—I

Another year of Independence dawns, with its message of hope and opportunity for doing good. In the past five years, India's achievements nationally have been enormous. The emergence of India as a democratic force steering clear of the two power blocs is a hope for a bright future for the people of the world. The way the general election was held and the manner in which the people participated in it, proves the soundness of the foundation on which democracy is based in India. But in order that democracy is strengthened and preserved, people must be educated. With this in view, immediately after Independence, the Central as well as State Governments started schemes for Social Education. They have now been going on for nearly five years. It will be worth while to review their achievements. The Social Education scheme, while admitting that literacy was not enough curiously fixed targets for literacy in various states. What was conceived in the scheme, was forgotten in actual practice. Training in citizenship and all round development of man was reduced to a few lectures in civics, history, economics, and current national and international affairs. Taking the scheme even in its limited objective of making people literate, the result achieved is far from satisfactory. In no State has the target been reached, nor the expenses incurred bear any reasonable relation to the result obtained. Apart from the basic defect of laying emphasis on literacy the State Government failed to achieve anything even in literacy.

The only way Social Education can succeed is to make literacy centre, a dynamic social education centre, focussing the actual and potential cultural resources of the local community, making the members actively interested in their own improvement and providing an environment and an atmos-

phere in which that interest can be joyfully translated into cooperative activity. But this cannot be put into practice by government departments. Social Education, by its very nature, depends for its success on the cooperation of the people and their enthusiasm.

Unless people are enthused and aroused to improve their lives and develop themselves and their society, social education can never succeed. A government department with its tradition of authoritarian exclusiveness and red-tape cannot succeed to enthuse the people, nor can it grow out of its narrow groove to experiment with new methods and new ways. For making Social Education a success, we require men, who have living contact with the masses, who understand their day to day needs and necessities and have the capacity to act as their guide and friend. Therefore, to make Social Education a success, the government must work through non-official agencies. Apart from being in living contact with the people the non-official agencies have the advantage of elasticity in their methods and working. They are not tied down to copy-book rules and can experiment with new methods and technique. Wherever non-official agencies have been associated with the work of Social Education, marked success has been achieved. In Mysore and Bombay, there are independent adult education councils or committees which have done very good work and achieved substantial results. In other places in India, social education can also achieve equally brilliant results, only we must be prepared to experiment with a new organisational machinery far removed from the old bureaucratic set-up. The Government, instead of directly undertaking the work of Social Education, must promote and help non-official agencies. It should only supervise the work of non-official agencies and provide them with materials and equipments for the centres in initial stages. Independent social education committee consisting of representatives of non-official agencies, educational experts and representatives of welfare departments of the government should be set up in each state to plan and execute the scheme of social education. If we can thus de-

officialise the work of social education, in all the states, our task of bringing knowledge, light and happiness to each door will be achieved easily and quickly.

—*Indian Journal of Adult Education, September, 1952.*

## II

In the history of Adult Education Movement in the country, one of the most significant developments has been the initiation of the Community Projects Programme in 1952. It may be recalled that at Patna conference the main resolution related to Social Education Programmes in Community Projects. The resolution had expressed great satisfaction at the role which had been assigned to Social Education. It had also expressed gratification at the emphasis placed by the Government on the local initiative. The resolution, had further, suggested the pre-requisites for a successful operation of the programme. Considering the magnitude of the work undertaken and the influence it bears, the success or failure of social education work in Community Projects would naturally have great effect on the future of the social education movement as a whole.

Starting with 55 pilot projects, the Community Project programmes have been expanding year by year and by the end of the first Plan, a quarter of the country is expected to be covered by one thousand two hundred blocks with 2,447 social education organisers functioning in them. At the end of the second Plan, it is estimated that there will be 3,808 blocks and the total number of Social Education Organisers functioning in the country will be 8,250.

The main activity of the Social Education Programme in the Community Project and NES areas has been literacy, recreation and the starting of community centres. Considerable success appears to have attended the efforts of the Social Education Organisers in terms of physical targets. On

October 2, 1955, 20,000 adult education centres and 43,000 community centres were functioning. It has been claimed that 400,000 adults have been "trained" and 114,000 community entertainment programmes have been organised. Yet the Programmes Evaluation Organisation Report on Social Education forecasts the gloomy prospects that "Social Education may exhaust its appeal much sooner than its protagonists at present think possible." It is necessary to examine why this is so.

The novel feature of the Community Development Programme was that developmental activity was to be undertaken through extension methods—through a process of educating the masses. The Social Education Programme, one assumed, was the basis of all activities undertaken in the project areas. The functions assigned to the Social Education Organiser sounded fascinating. He was to be an agent of educating people and bringing about a change in their outlook. As time went by, however, the necessarily tardy pace of education appeared inconsistent with the urgencies of the administration which required quicker results. The educational aspect of the programme tended to drop into oblivion. The race was to fulfil targets. The Social Education Organiser became a propagandist intent on selling new ideas, little concerned with the process of education which inclined to be slow. In the alternative, objectives of education and of cultural renaissance distorted themselves into inane literacy classes and purposeless recreation centres. It is little wonder, therefore, that the Social Education Organiser was unable to establish his roots among the people and the programme failed to acquire a significance commensurate with the revolutionary role it had.

One of the reasons for the distortion of the original perspectives is to be found in the general criticism that is made of the operation of the entire programme of community development as such. Fixing of physical target may be necessary to set immediate objective before project workers. If, however, targets tend to acquire the nature of ends in themselves, the concern for means recedes. Targets have been

fixed and have to be reached any how. Everybody's effort is geared to it. An atmosphere is created which grates on the educative process, for educative process involves patience and certainly does not lend itself to rough-shod methods of treatment. The Social Education Organiser, in his turn, becomes a prey to the temptation of adopting the line of least resistance. Literacy classes and recreation centres convey a spectacular significance and their numbers can be counted. Also, since his activities are concerned with other physical targets for the Project as such, he becomes a propagandist peddling, perhaps, a new seed or a new fertiliser. There is little opportunity for him to take a long-range view and attempt education on the fundamentals of the villager's life. Nor is there an atmosphere conducive to it.

The conclusion, therefore, seems inevitable that Social Education, because no methods of evaluating its effects in quantitative terms have yet been discovered, is incongruous in bureaucratic set-up. It is also difficult for a government to permit itself the luxury of putting in effort without having something tangible—often spectacular—to show. It would perhaps be best if the government instead of undertaking such activities on its own, assist non-official agencies to provide for the educational background needed for the implementation of the development schemes. Where such agencies do not exist, local bodies or panchayats may be equipped and aided to undertake such programmes.

### **Rural Institutes**

During the year, an event of considerable significance to the rural institutes functioning in the different parts of the country was the publication of the Shrimali Committee Report. It may be recalled that in October 1954, the Ministry of Education had appointed a committee consisting of Dr. L. K. Elmhirst, Dr. L. H. Foster and Shri J. C. Mathur with Dr. Shrimali, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Education as the convener to survey the functioning of rural institutes in India and to lay down the patterns for such institutions.

The Committee's recommendations are comprehensive. They deal with the functions of rural institutes which will meet with the requirements of our rural conditions and have laid down the curriculum which such institutes could follow. The Committee has dealt with the organisational structure of the institutes and has recommended measures to establish links between these and the urban universities. The Committee has estimated that an institute would involve an expenditure of Rs. 5,50,000 (recurring) and capital expenditure of Rs. 65,00,000. The Committee suggests that since rural education is still in the experimental stages, the government should take up five or six of existing institutions and develop them. It has also recommended the establishment of National and State Councils of Higher Education for Rural Areas, as a first step towards the implementation of the Committee's report.

The recommendations of the Committee are commendable and one hopes that the government will take early steps to have them implemented. At the moment, it appears that no significant steps have yet been taken beyond starting the nucleus of a division of Rural Studies in the Education Ministry. Many types of rural institutions have been functioning in the country and we have considerable experience, particularly as a result of the working of the Vidya-peeths of Mysore. The recommendations of the Shrimali Committee if implemented will go a long way to help them meet the problems with which they are faced.

### **Literature for Neo-Literates**

Another direction in which considerable progress was registered during the year under review was in the production of literature for the neo-literates ; the Ministry of Education has brought out graded books on several subjects. Voluntary agencies like the Jamia Millia, Delhi and the Mysore Adult Education Council in Mysore have been publishing a good deal of literature. In collaboration with the Ford Foundation, the Government of India organised four regional workshops where authors were acquainted with the needs of neo-literates and trained to write books to suit them.

The problem of assessing the utility of works which would indicate the nature of books to be published is being attempted to be met through the joint efforts of the Jamia Millia and the Indian Adult Education Association. Sponsored by UNESCO, a project is being worked out which will survey the literature produced and assess the extent to which it has fulfilled the needs of the neo-literates. Based on these findings, a few specimen books will also be produced.

### **Urban Adult Education**

Hitherto, in adult education, the accent has been primarily on the rural areas. Considering the remoteness of villages to educative influences, this was inevitable. However, adult education activities in cities cannot be ignored. The Indian Adult Education Association has accordingly prepared a memorandum for the setting up of Coordinating Councils in the major cities in the course of the Second Plan. The Bombay City Social Education Committee has been functioning for a number of years now and has evolved a pattern of work which might prove suitable in other cities as well. In the memorandum prepared by the Association, it has proposed to coordinate the work of various agencies in the cities to focus the endeavour to one concerned end. It also proposes the setting up of a special Fund at the disposal of respective city committees which will be used to fill any breaches that may exist to make the programme effective. Thus, for instance, if there are no agencies in some city for undertaking literacy activities, the Fund will be utilised to promote such agencies. It is hoped that the government will accept the proposal and fill a lacuna which exists in the adult education movement today.

### **Training**

Among the other problems which face adult education work, an important one is that of training workers. Adult education workers have to function in a manner which will remove a great many socially undesirable norms which are current in society. Though the workers themselves come

from the same society and are not above its influences, it behoves of them to adopt attitudes in work which will not bear traces of those influences. To equip such workers psychologically and mentally should be one of the functions of their training. Platitudinous slogans or symbolic gestures, which may reflect the social values which we wish to implant in society, will not be of much avail. What is required is to condition workers to patterns of behaviour consistent with the objectives we seek. One of the ways of doing this is to convey to the workers a comprehension of the present structure of society and of the social mechanics which are necessary if the deep seated social prejudices are to be eradicated. How this is to be done is a serious problem which adult educationists have to consider.

The Indian Adult Education Association, in a scheme, has attempted to chalk out a project which would enable the determination of the criteria for evaluating results of adult education programmes and also to determine the organisational needs for the programme. It would be of lasting benefit to the movement as such particularly for the government agencies, if assistance was forthcoming to the Association to implement the project.

This opportunity may be availed of to urge upon the Government to adopt appropriate policies to aid voluntary agencies and assist them fulfil a vital role in the adult education movement in the country. This cooperation, if it is to be fruitful, must be based on such principles as would not impair some of the advantages which voluntary agencies possess. Thus, compared to Governmental agencies voluntary agencies possess relatively greater flexibility. This renders it easy for them to adjust policies to local conditions and to effect rapid changes in their work so as to meet the demands of local conditions. Furthermore, unhampered by the requirements of red-tape, there is a greater opportunity, desire and the appropriate perspective to experiment. New methods of work and new techniques have to be determined yet. Voluntary agencies can play a significant role in carrying

out these tasks. Government assistance is essential for voluntary agencies to sustain an even tempo of activities.

*Annual Report Presented to the  
All-India Adult Education Conference  
held at Delhi 1955*

### III

In a world where large-scale scientific and technological changes are being brought about, one finds that people's minds, action and behaviour are not keeping pace with the changes. While Science has advanced, bringing Nature almost under the control of man, we find that man's behaviour has not as yet adjusted itself to those changes. Man has not been able to utilise properly the Power that is within his grasp, nor has he been able to adjust his behaviour to the advances made by Science and Technology with the result that we have 18th century practices still rampant in the 20th century. This mal-adjustment must be set right. Adult Education alone can perform this task.

In India, the present situation, with the rapid industrialisation and the consequent urbanization of the country and the emergence of the Welfare State, have placed a heavy responsibility on Adult Education. We have to prepare the minds of the people to realize the responsibility which devolves on them as a result of the acceptance of a Welfare State and to prepare them to participate in the task of building the Welfare State. We have to foster among the people a desire to intelligently use the facilities and the resources which the Welfare State is providing in an ever-increasing measure and also to encourage the outlook of participation in the activities of the State and the community rather than passive acceptance. The scheme of democratic decentralisation has given us a focus and a responsibility and it is my appeal to my fellow educators to measure up to the responsibility which history has cast on us.

“Adult Education for Social Responsibility” is the task of the present age, and all our programmes, all our methods and techniques, should be geared to the task. And Social responsibility includes political and economic, for a social man is essentially an economic and political man.

Rapid industrialization of the country is forcing the village communities to be disrupted. We have to evolve suitable techniques to develop new communities in the towns and cities which are growing in ever-increasing number. Community organisation as an educational process will have to be used in increasing measure, so that peoples’ problems could be solved by community action. Organised discussions, to all intents and purposes, is the main educational weapon of the full grown citizen. The arts of communication have now reached the point where it is possible to question the supremacy of the printed word as a stimulant to discussion. Films and radio occupy a considerable portion of the modern imagination. These are perhaps, more malleable tools to further the group activities proper to social education. As things are, audio-visual media are going to play an increasing role in social education. Therefore, it should be our task to interest ourselves in film production and programme planning of the Radio and also of T.V. Instead of treating them as media of entertainment, let us treat them and use them as media of Social Education. There should be closest of co-operation between Adult Education, Films and Radio and our Association should provide the nucleus for such a co-operation.

But the most important and the disturbing factor in the whole situation in the country is the attitude of the Government. While the Government wants Social Education to permeate all activities in Community Development, its attitude on the whole towards Social Education is, shall I say, step-motherly. While the Government leaders cry from housetops that development of human resources is the *sine qua non* of the Plans, they are very miserly in providing funds for Social Education. Our modest request to provide 25 crores of rupees in the Third Plan does not seem to have evoked a favourable response from our Planners, with the result that our targets

are still Things and not People. This imbalance must be set right. Happily for us, the World Conference on Adult Education at Montreal, which was attended by the representatives of the Government of India have drawn up a declaration saying that "Governments should treat it (Adult Education) as a necessary part of the Educational provision of every country."

—*Annual Report Presented to the All India  
Adult Education Conference, held in  
Aliabada, October 1960.*

## Epilogue

The Indian Adult Education Association completes twenty years of its existence towards the close of this year. At this time, it is necessary to look back with a view to plan its future. Where do we go from here, is a question which is uppermost in the minds of adult educators of this country. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to recapitulate where we are and what is being done in the field of adult education. We have agencies in this country which are carry-on the work of adult education in diverse ways. There are literacy classes, social education centres, community centres, Vidya Peeths, Janta colleges, Leadership Training Camps, Youth Clubs, Mahila Samities, Study Circles, Radio-listening groups, Libraries, Reading Rooms, agencies carrying on education through recreation, and agencies carrying on education through economic development. The co-operative societies have also of late, undertaken programmes for membership education. There are training courses for Panchayat members. A few Universities have also started Extension Lectures and evening colleges for employed adults. In some places, the scheme of school-cum-community centres has also been given a trial. Thus we find that a large number of formal and informal institutions are carrying on social education work. In this plethora of agencies, and activities, which come under social education, a question arises whether it is necessary for us to select a few agencies for carrying on social education or allow for multiplicity of agencies. Another question which arises is about the sponsorship of these agencies.

To my mind, social education by its very nature must be informal. It receives its sustenance and develops only if it is organised informally and on a voluntary basis. To give it an institutional base, would endanger its growth and reduce it to a substance-less formality. It is not necessary to have a rigid pattern of adult education agency to be duplicated

throughout the country. In our country, there are diverse communities which have different traditions and culture. Each adult education institution must rise on its own soil and must conform to the traditions and cultures of the people it seeks to serve. Moreover, it must be the outcome of the felt needs or the induced needs of the people for whom it exists. The greatest damage to adult education work in this country has been done by people, who have tried to transplant on our Indian soil, ideas and institutions borrowed from foreign countries having different culture, traditions and economic development. What may be good for a highly industrialized or highly economically developed country, may be harmful to our country. Therefore, it would be good if we try to utilize existing institutions in our country for promoting adult education work. Masses can be educated through diverse methods in diverse ways. All agencies should be utilized for this purpose. As is obvious, these agencies, should be people's agencies. They should draw their inspiration from the people for whom they are meant and should adjust their programme according to their needs and circumstances. Naturally, such organisations may neither be sponsored nor controlled by official machinery or outside agency.

Having accepted a variety of institutions and a variety of methods and techniques for carrying on adult education work, the next question is what should be the role of the Association? The Association must continue to bring together all the diverse elements in the field. It must continue to act as a liaison and a coordinating agency. Its role as a Clearing House of ideas and information must increase. It must continue to produce literature, to help various workers in the field. In its functioning there must be a change from its past. The Association must have a number of committees, on various aspects of our work. There should be a committee on Workers' Education, another on Co-operative Education, a third on Rural Education, a fourth on Informal Groups and fifth on Training. "Permanent Adult School" is an idea which is receiving increasing support in the country. We may have another committee on "Permanent Adult School". The work of these Committees

should be co-ordinated by the Secretariat and the Executive Committee of the Association. If this change is brought about in the functioning of the Association, it is our hope that the Association would be able to grow and stand on its own legs, for the field workers will have direct contact with the Association and will be willing to maintain and strengthen this national voluntary organisation of adult education. As it is, the Association today enjoys the confidence and support of active workers and leaders in the field of adult education. By this change, the Association will also enjoy the confidence of every field worker in the country. As the Association enters the age of maturity, let mature thought lead the adult education movement. This is our hope and prayer.

—*Indian Journal Of Adult Education*  
September 1959.