

# ON TO ETERNITY

**Record of Presidential Addresses and Resolutions  
of  
All India Adult Education Conferences  
held from 1966 to 1973.**

*Edited by*

**S. C. DUTTA**

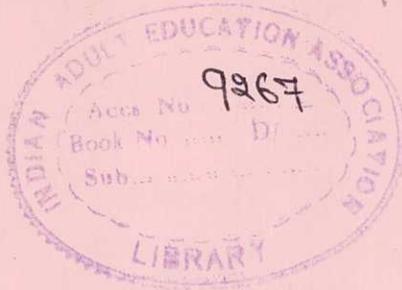
Hony. General Secretary  
Indian Adult Education Association.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Indian Adult Education Association has so far published two volumes of the book "On to Eternity". These volumes are the record of the presidential addresses and the resolutions of the All India Adult Education Conferences held from 1938 to 1958 and from 1959 to 64. The present publication covers the period from 1966 to 1973.

The period from 1966 onwards has been very significant in the history of the Association. During this period it has made sustained efforts in evolving and developing the concept of Life-long Integrated Education and in popularising it in the country. It has also given content to the concept of functional literacy and its implementation.

During this period the Association has played a great role in establishing two organisations namely "Indian University Association for Continuing Education" and the "Indian Council on Education for Democracy". Due to the effort of the Association and the University Association, the University Grants Commission has started giving matching grants to the universities for the establishment of Departments of Adult/ Continuing Education. A few universities have already set up the departments and some others are in the process of starting programmes of continuing education. The Council on Education for Democracy is taking concrete steps for the removal of political illiteracy from among adult men and women of India.

The Association is determined in promoting the cause of adult education in this country in spite of many hindrances. This volume it is hoped will give guidance and inspiration to persons engaged in the promotion of adult education in this country. Our commitment to improve the quality of the life of our people remains undisturbed and we are ever ready to bring the necessary social change in the country thru' wider and deeper diffusion and expansion of adult education.

**Shafiq Memorial,**  
New Delhi.  
January 26, 1974

**S. C. Dutta**  
Hony. General Secretary,  
Indian Adult Education Association

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**DR. MOHAN SINHA MEHTA**

*20th All India Adult Education Conference*

*25th August, 1966, New Delhi.*

Our Annual Conference is an occasion of special importance to us and our Association. At this Annual Session we subject ourselves to a little self-examination and make an effort to review the progress we have made towards our objective. This year is particularly unique in one respect. Only a few weeks ago the Education Commission under the Presidentship of one of our distinguished Scientists submitted its report. No other commission has ever been entrusted to survey the entire field of Indian Education since 1882.

You will, therefore, agree with me that it is a matter of deep satisfaction to us that this session of our conference was inaugurated by Dr. D.S. Kothari, the Chairman of this remarkable Commission of talented and chosen scholars. We would naturally devote our attention to the recommendations of this Commission. Before doing so we wish to express our deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Commission for giving a place to the subject of Adult Education in their report. Instead of doing this in his absence, it gives us special pleasure in recording this feeling of happiness and gratitude while he is in our midst.

During the last 27 years a large number of distinguished leaders of our country including High Court Judges, Vice-Chancellors, Legislators, Journalists, Social reformers, educationalists and other respected public men ventilated their views in their presidential speeches on the social and intellectual significance of Adult Education for the general progress of the country. My esteemed colleague Mr. Dutta, our able and devoted General Secretary, has compiled in two volumes the presidential addresses delivered at the Conferences of Indian Adult Education Association. It is a record of which not only our Association but the country as a whole could be justly proud. As we look around and find so much ignorance about

the concept and philosophy of Adult Education in our country and then we read the proceedings of our Conference we come to the depressing conclusion that the clarion calls sounded on this platform year after year for over a quarter of a century did not reach the ears of the leaders of public opinion and persons in authority. We did not see a proper measure of resources invested in the all round education of the citizens of the country. It is true even now that those words of wisdom did not find their way to the places where educational policies and developmental decisions are made. It is, therefore, necessary for us to continue this humble effort to re-emphasize the need and value of approaching the question of the education of our countrymen with a liberal, comprehensive and farsighted attitude.

This time our task has been made much easier because only a few weeks ago the report of the Education Commission was submitted to the Union Government. Some of us might be inclined to wish that the commission had given more specific suggestions with regard to way in which the purpose they had in view should be achieved. Had they emphasised the importance of Adult Education for our society at this juncture to a greater extent than they did, it would have aroused even greater enthusiasm from the ranks of Adult Education workers. On one point we attach the highest importance alike in the context of our acute food situation and the general desire of rural development, and that is the education of young farmers who have not had the benefit of school education. The Commission has, perhaps by an oversight, not given to it the attention it deserves. But I have no hesitation in saying that the Education Commission has rendered a great service to society by drawing the attention of the Government and the public to the various phases of Adult Education and in recommending energetic action in this behalf. In selecting six broad fields in which they recommended the implementation of the programme of Adult Education in India, (paragraph 6 of Chapter 17) they covered, broadly speaking, the principal and the most important aspects of the subject. Some others which have been left out might also be regarded important by some of us. But on the whole we owe it to ourselves and the society to express our deep gratitude and joy for the Commission's progressive outlook.

It would not be right for me to describe the scope and purpose of Adult Education to this audience. There is no point in preaching to the converted. To us all, who have found time to come to this Conference, the philosophy of Adult Education is not only dear but clear. We believe that it is the duty

of society to take knowledge to the people. The social system in which the benefit of learning was the privilege of a few is now completely out of date and has to be discarded. Every person irrespective of his birth, occupation, social status or position has the right to have the opportunity of learning. It is only then that a citizen can rise to his full stature and will be able to live a full life. He then realises and enjoys the good things for which he or she is intellectually suited. When this principle is stated and when one sees this point embodied in the Constitution, it appears obvious, and is readily accepted. But then in actual life it is seen to be soon forgotten. In our society we find ourselves far away from its realisation in practice. There is such a lamentable self-contradiction in our life today. We have in this country adopted a fully democratic system of life and Government. Alongside of it no proper or universal effort is set on foot by which our democratic system could be sustained and stabilised. It could show itself in the one and only form—the adoption of a nation wide comprehensive scheme of Education. So long as this subject remains neglected, let us have no elusion in our minds about our position. Our democratic ideal will remain exposed to danger. A proper and universal system of Adult Education would be the strongest support for the maintenance of free institutions in society.

In other civilised countries Adult Education has, in its many facets and phases, enjoyed the general support of their leaders and their Governments. I shall not weary you with the story of the development of Adult Education activities in countries like Canada, Australia, America and the United Kingdom. It is a heart warming account, and for an Indian it is somewhat depressing to know that while Adult Education programmes were started in other countries more than 100 years ago, we are still only scratching the surface of the problem, as it were.

Let us recognize that Education is not to be restricted to children and youngmen who go to schools and colleges for formal learning. Education in the sense of acquiring useful knowledge which is to be put to use both for individual development and for social good, for cultivating taste for beauty, aptitude for right action and to grasp the things of the spirit (which is the essence of all religions) is a life-long process. In fact it would be true to say that when a boy or a girl leaves school or a University he or she has not completed his/her education, but has only been prepared to receive proper education in the right use of knowledge both for himself and for the World in which he or she will function. This is not to be supposed as a distant

ideal concealed in the clouds. It should be accepted as a living creed of all educational thinkers and workers. It should form the basic principle of our educational policies. I take it that the Education Commission lends its support to this broad concept.

Having re-defined our philosophy, let us now view the state of the society in which we live and labour today. The distance between what is and what should be is appalling indeed, when we consider the position of India in the civilized world, which is its due on the bases of its history, and its achievements in art, literature and philosophy, one is overwhelmed with the state of our backwardness and the enormity of the task which has to be undertaken.

In the other parts of the contemporary world Adult Education acquires today a new meaning and a special urgency, because knowledge is growing so fast, science and technology are taking great strides forward and the problems of social adjustment, political life and international relations are showing such complexity and importance. Even the more advanced countries, with well educated citizens feel it necessary to re-educate their people through formal and informal means. Without doing this they feel they will be left behind in the race for progress. Obviously if they do not do so they become out of date and inevitably fall into the category of uneducated or at best semi-educated groups. Efforts are being made by those societies to bring knowledge to the door of the individual so that he functions as an intelligent, wide-awake and loyal citizen of the community.

Let us now look at this picture and that ! Our country has a claim to a position of importance in the civilized world of today, and yet we carry in the body of our citizens more than 200 million human beings who, from the point of view of learning and living standards, lead a sub-human existence. This body of men and women, far from taking an active or intelligent part in the affairs of the community, cannot read or write, nor are they aware of what is happening in the country. They are unable to write their own name, not to speak of reading the head lines of a newspaper. Whatever may be our pretention in other fields—such as the pride of having a very progressive constitution, and advancing stage of industrialisation and record of having produced some of the most distinguished scientists, poets, judges, engineers, doctors, orators and philosophers, the dubious distinction of having such a large number of utterly illiterate people is indeed a most serious stigma in these claims. This situation makes us, members of the Indian

Adult Education Association feel much depressed. Our fears and worries are reflected in the problems which cast a dark shadow on our national life today. The standard of productivity of our farmers stands so low as compared to that of other countries. Similarly the output of work of an industrial labourer in our country compares very unfavourably with that of a Japanese or a German worker. Similarly in various other departments of life you find that the human factor and its potentiality in the physical as well as spiritual spheres remains neglected and undeveloped. This is the challenge which our country's leadership has to face and accept. Unless this responsibility and its implications are fully understood our future remains grim and dark. It is only by addressing ourselves sincerely, earnestly and whole-heartedly to this big national problem that we can hope to break through the vicious circle which holds our neck with a tight grip.

The most pressing and the most important task before the country is to adopt bold and well thought out measures to eradicate illiteracy in this country as soon as possible. Let the country accept the recommendation of the Education Commission and put 20 year period as the target for the achievement of this high purpose. But this period should begin now and *not after 15 or 20 years* ! No time should be lost in making plans and taking action on this project of urgent national significance. It will need a great deal of preparation. The implementation of this programme would be mainly the responsibility of the Government, but the purpose will not be achieved unless all sections of society are brought together such as Governmental agencies from the village and Panchayat Samities to the highest functionaries in the Central Government, Voluntary agencies, employers, Trade Unions, Educational institutions, Social welfare bodies, various Departments of the Central and State Governments Philanthropic bodies. Every sector of society should contribute as a matter of duty, if not as legal obligation so that every man and woman in the country below the age of 45 becomes functionally literate within the time limit set for the purpose. That is, he should be able to use his learning for carrying out his ordinary business of life. We should not be content with less than this standard. Public opinion should be roused to support this great national effort. Every party, every section of the people indeed every profession in society should work in the success of this scheme, so also the radio, newspapers, village and town Councils and all other organisations. There has been enough of talk, deliberation and show of enthusiasm in the past. The opinion on the subject with regard to the ideal is already unanimous. What is needed is a strong bridge over the gulf which separates the word from

the deed. Our generation should provide the engineer, who would design and construct such a bridge within a very short time. Literacy is an essential attribute of a civilised society and for that reason this blot of illiteracy should be wiped away from the fair face of our country as soon as possible.

However, it is most unfortunate blunder to consider Adult Education as synonymous with literacy. Let us now leave this great and serious error behind us and enter the extensive realm of Adult Education as it is understood in the world. We should then survey the Indian scene. The Education Commission has pointed out some important landmarks in the whole area. I wish they had also spelt out the value of liberal education for the adult citizen, for the broadening of his or her outlook and for inculcating in him moral and aesthetic values of life. Their influence on the moral and spiritual well being of the community should not be under-estimated. Besides, importance should be attached to the improvements of professional competence and vocational skills of all workers in whichever segment of society they may be placed. This factor has a close bearing on the economic progress of society. Our development plans will not achieve their full purpose unless the mass of the people at all levels and stages and in all stations of life are given the opportunity of improving their ability and skill and using it effectively not only for their own advancement but also for the common good of society. This would be covered but only partially by the concept of "continuing" education. The purpose could also be secured through a thorough going system of Correspondence Courses. And further it will be helped by a nationwide net-work or well organised and properly administered Libraries.

After drawing a general outline of the scope and purpose of Adult Education, it is necessary for us to place before the society our ideas as to how this ideal is to be reached. In other words we should turn our attention to the important subject of organisation, means and resources needed for a broad based and a universal system of Adult Education. In this scheme, it is worth repeating, the plan of making the entire population literate within a short specified period of time should take a very high priority. For this it is evident that the question of organisation assumes the highest importance. In this country we have become accustomed to tolerate the grandiose schemes with lofty ideas co-existing with a complete absence of move for their implementation! In almost every department of our public life there would be found innumerable reports containing valuable schemes and suggestions but most of them lie buried under layers of dust in offices and public buildings

without any body thinking about them or their contents. This is a deplorable state of affairs and should be borne in mind. On this occasion let us be forewarned and emphasize the importance of producing practical and suitable proposals for organisation and administrative action to implement the schemes considered necessary for society.

Before getting down directly to the subject of organisation, it is necessary to refer briefly to the part which our Universities should take in promoting Adult Education in the country. In paragraph 61 of their 17th Chapter, the Education Commission has brought out this point with clarity. Perhaps it could have received a little greater emphasis in view of the great deal of time which has already been lost and bearing in mind the present state of affairs in our country. This Conference, I feel confident, will fully endorse the view of the commission in this respect, namely that the academic community of scholars should come out of their Ivory Tower and bring their talents deliberately and effectively to the service of the community. Far too long have the Indian Universities neglected this important duty to the society. It strikes one as a very strange and depressing fact in our educational history, strange because the record of universities in many Western countries (whom we have imitated in many ways, good and bad) has been indeed rich and admirable. Whether the University is taken to the community, as has happened in North America, or the community is brought to the University Campus as is the British tradition, an earnest and carefully planned attempt is urgently necessary to satisfy the intellectual appetite and educational needs of the community. The Education Ministry, the University Grants Commission and the Universities should all put their heads together to take action in the pursuit of this goal. Credit courses and non-credit courses, residential and extra-mural studies, extension lectures and training and re-training schemes, refresher courses and vocational training centres and numerous other methods and schemes could be worked out by the Universities, according to their resources in talent and finance and in response to the needs of the community in which they are located. Fortunately a change of attitude is already noticeable in the Indian University world today for which we should be happy and feel sincerely grateful. A small beginning has been made, but the vast field remains fallow and unsurveyed! The country has a right to expect this service from the enlightened body of scholars, who are respected for their learning and who should lend their support in the effort to raise the moral, social, economic and political level of the life of our people.

It is necessary to underline the view that in developing Adult Education in its various forms, stages and varieties, the Government agencies and non-official organisation both have an important role to play and it is further desirable that there should be a very close co-operation and understanding between the two. Neither of them alone is capable of delivering the goods. The Government should have the imagination to supply financial resources and the non-official bodies should press into service the power of idealism, moral fervour and a spirit of dedication.

In organising educational schemes when they are entirely financed and sponsored by government, the methods employed should be liberal, flexible, and responsive to particular needs and conditions. The delay, the inefficiency, the lack of understanding and the somewhat unimaginative use of "red-tape" has done a lot of damage to several good projects. One failure has often the risk of becoming a major obstacle in the way of another effort in the same field. Not all the officials, even when they serve in education ministries or departments possess the right attitude or the proper approach or understandings, of local or particular situations. Some do, and then they produce admirable results. Occasionally extra-ordinary acts and omissions occur in the Government Departments to defeat the real purpose of a good scheme. Examples could be cited from experience to illustrate this point. It is this lack of understanding which led to the diversion of funds from Adult Education items in the budget to non-educational purposes. In brief, it is our considered view that for social services in general and for Adult Education in particular, a slow-moving, rigid and unresponsive administration can be a serious danger indeed.

While we are at the subject of Governmental administration, it would be proper to refer to another cognate subject of some importance which too influences the progress of Adult Education Programmes. It is this. Adult Education schemes, as distinct from formal education will call for the close cooperation of many ministries and State departments. Not only in the formulation of policies but in their implementation, such cooperation would be invaluable. Indeed some schemes might be usefully undertaken jointly and the responsibility shared by one, two or even more Departments of the State. We can well visualise the necessity and desirability, for example, of consultation, even close collaboration of the Ministries of Education, Health, Labour, Defence, Agriculture, Railways, Commerce and Industry etc. in schemes of Adult Education. This point is too obvious to need further explanation. The

need for quick action, liberal approach and consideration of the wishes and situation of the beneficiaries of the scheme will have to be taken into account by the Ministries and Government agencies concerned, if satisfactory results are expected.

After this general statement, it is now my wish to invite your attention to the basic subject of organisation required for generating a big momentum in the whole scheme of Adult Education on a comprehensive scale throughout the country. It gives us immense satisfaction to see that the Education Commission has recommended the creation of a National Board of Adult Education, (paragraph 68). These ideas have been advocated by the Indian Adult Education Association for a long time. At our 9th Conference held at Nagpur in 1952, this proposal was first mooted. Since then this demand has been repeated time after time. The 10th National Seminar also suggested the formation of statutory autonomous Boards at the State level also. This proposal was supported by the Central Advisory Board of Education and as also by the Committee on Plan Projects (COPP) of the Planning Commission. In the opinion of the latter the Central Board was to be of an advisory character but it was hoped that a convention would develop to make its recommendations generally accepted. At the National Seminar held at Poona on the initiative of the Planning Commission in November last year, this proposal was again endorsed. It is thus clear that the need for a strong, effective body with wide powers for making policies and implementing programmes has been long felt and its establishment has been pressed for about 15 years. The moment the importance of a broad based and thorough going scheme of Adult Education is recognised, the creation of such a body as has been suggested by the Education Commission will follow. This may be taken for granted. It will focus public attention on the big cause. It will be a forum for thrashing out ideas on policies, methods and organisation. The Board will help the States with expert advice and guidance. Another valuable service which it would render will consist in the creation within its fold a strong Research wing for a thorough investigation into the various facets, problems, difficulties and complexities involved in the programmes of Adult Education for different regions and sections of the people. The usefulness and the importance of research in this field cannot be exaggerated. The Board, provided its constitution is appropriate and not too unwieldy, would establish close cooperation not only between official and non-official elements, not only between the Union and States but also among the different agencies and organisations working in the field. This will indeed be a

valuable service. I feel confident that the Conference will lend its support to this proposal. Once again let us express our indebtedness to the Education Commission for this recommendation. With the states possibly establishing small and effective Board for their own region to work closely with the National Board, the programme of Adult Education in its varied aspects and numerous segments would be greatly strengthened.

I venture to suggest one more idea in this connection. Apart from the Board to deal with the programme of Adult Education in general, each State should, I feel, appoint a competent senior officer as Literacy Commissioner. His function would be to organise and direct literacy campaign and to see that the whole State attains full literacy within the specified period accepted as the National target. He should have the necessary staff and resources for this task.

When the national and State Governments and public opinion in the country show a full comprehension of the scope and purpose of Adult Education in its multitudinous aspects—as it is understood in the developed countries today—and they also see its close relation with the social, economic and political progress of the country, it can be confidently hoped that within the next 20 years the entire national life of our country will present a new look. It is bound to be brighter, cleaner and healthier from every point of view. No segment of the life of the community will remain stagnant or depressed. We would then come out of the state of inertia and leave behind the present sense of frustration. The community as a whole would march forward together, with faith and confidence and with the strength supplied by useful knowledge and creative and cooperative attitude. The dream of our great leaders like Gandhi and Tagore and the great philosophers whose words of wisdom are enshrined in our classics, will come nearer to realization. All of us who are engaged in this field carry within ourselves this faith and this conviction.

Before I conclude my remarks I consider it essential once again to stress the comprehensive scope and connotation of Adult Education. Its service should reach the farthest corners of the country, the humblest and the lowliest sections of our people, the farmer and the labourer, the white collar workers and the professional persons, the scientist and the lawyer, the artisan and the technologist, poet and the artist, the specialist and the general citizen, all men and women, (the women need this service more urgently). Every section part of our society should, in the due course, benefit from the knowledge which is

daily growing in volume and variety. Every individual and group should be in a position to take an active part in these fast changing and progressive times, and the complex situations in which they live. This appears to be an almost impossible ideal but, as has been wisely said, it is not the destination but the journey to that goal which is more important. We should have the vision clearly to see what we are aiming at, and the wisdom, strength and sincerity to move steadily forward towards that ideal. This is what the Indian Adult Education Association has been pleading with the authorities and the public alike.

Fellow delegates, you have assembled here in the hope that you would be able to influence the minds of the nation's policy makers. You do not have to learn any thing from me, all that I can say is to wish that your *tapsya* bears rich results. That our conference may turn out to be a *Yagnya* to purify our hearts and enlighten our minds. I ask you all to take back with you a little spark from this holy fire and with it perform a similar *Yagnya* in the part of the country to which you would return. Let the sound of our hymns and the force of our fervour for the cause of Adult Education reach our Rulers to produce effective and fruitful action.

## SHRI A. R. DESHPANDE

*21st All India Adult Education Conference*

*October 20, 1967, Mysore*

I thank you all and particularly those who have been kind enough to put me in this position of responsibility. I suppose they knew what I am and what I am likely to say. If you are disappointed or annoyed, please apportion the blame unequally. Put more on them and then, kind heartedly, less on me. I wish the honour had gone to some devoted field worker, or to a scholarly educationist who has scanned thoroughly all the literature and the reports and the statistics and the proceedings and the presidential addresses of the national and international Adult Education organisations. You will soon find that what I say will be lacking in this solid mass.

Before I begin, I must pay my admiring and respectful tribute to all those devoted workers for the cause of Adult Education who are with us, no more. My heart goes to the late Shri Hari Sarvotama Rao, whom I mention as a typical representative of that brand. Hari Sarvottama Rao's unflinching devotion to the cause of literacy and adult education fired one with zeal though one disagreed with him. He never yield on a matter of principle or even on a detail, as he had the strength and courage of his conviction. Those who lack that readily yield on detail and also on principle as and when convenient. They put their minds at ease by calling it the noble virtue of compromise and adjustability and give it a dignified garb of the art and science of Human Relationship. Be that so Hari Sarvottama Rao was differently cast. Had he tried that way, he who had suffered politically like Bal Gangadhar Tilak in the first decade of this century could have climbed up the ladder of party politics easily, to be a Minister in the post Independence years. But, he chose constructive work as his field and remained devoted to Adult Education till the last. This band of workers is unfortunately thinning out now. Let us pray, may their tribe increase.

Friends, it seems to me, in this twentieth year of Independence that Adult Education has been lost in the woods. In the early beginnings it wended its way by a narrow foot path as a lone traveller and on occasions blazed the trail. It found a bullock cart track and went ahead with jingling of bells. Then it came on what appeared to be a pucca road and got into the State transport for a comfortable easy journey over the hilly track. But that State vehicle was prone to suffer from engine trouble and the Adult Education passenger had to get down and push it now and then to start the engine again. That also became a vain effort as the petrol was exhausted. The ever-changing drivers have now left with empty cane in search of petrol, leaving the adult education passenger to find his way in the thick woods. And the pity is that he is watching the skies for a foreign helicopter to lift him up.

Friends, we have assembled here today to ponder over all that has happened and is happening to Adult Education. I think, this is a moment for an honest searching and a thorough check up. What is wrong with me, with us, with our workers, with our institutions, with our people, with our leaders, with our Governments, with our country and with our Nation, that such an admittedly vital programme as that of Adult Education should be continuously in a troubled state of body and mind? Should ever remain underfed and should have a biggish head, a swollen tummy and skinny legs and arms? Let us feel its pulse with anxiety and concern.

In the last quarter of the last century, when Adult Education started on its legs, the immediate hot problem was literacy, and it was right to concentrate whatever resources available on it. Not that the early pioneers did not know the wide scope of Adult Education. They did, and they practised it, but not under the label of Adult Education. The great movements for freeing the Indian mind from the iron chains of religion, caste and custom started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and strengthened and spread by Swami Dayanand, Ranade, Agarkar, Swami Vivekananda and other great men was in substance Adult Education, though not in name. Under the label of Adult Education they concentrated on literacy. A history of adult education of those days is yet to be written. It is a difficult task as the records are not now available. The material has to be searched out through biographies, autobiographies and reminiscences of those days. I came across such material in my Marathi language and I am pleasantly surprised to find that such approaches as have now been categorised as individual, home, neighbourhood, group, class and mass have been tried by some one. I find in the reminiscence of Justice Ranade

written by his wife Ramabai, how he made that illiterate woman literate and that too, functionally, by devoting hours late in night, after his strenuous judicial, social and political work. He had to teach his wife behind the walls, so that she may not face the teasing and taunting of the elderly women of the rigid orthodox joint family. These reminiscences are now available in English translation.

### **Lack of Recognition**

Confining remarks to the field of Adult Education one finds that a queer trait of our mind is not to acknowledge our predecessor by name except when absolutely necessary in our own selfish interest. References by names are always of the current dignitaries or of those in whose reflected light the present ones shine. Read any account of adult education, say of Denmark or of England or of some such western country. One finds that even the smallest innovation, idea or technique in Adult Education is accredited by name and date, howsoever ordinary the man responsible for the contribution be. This has to be here with us also. We complain that talented and devoted workers are not coming forward in sufficient numbers in Adult Education. Why will they, if even this smallest gesture of recognition is not seen by them and they know that their successors will obliterate even their memory ?

Another thing : somebody, who is otherwise a very important person indeed, finds himself involved in Adult Education. He feels that all that has been is somewhere wrong. No doubt he is right in feeling so. But then, he thinks he has some brilliant new idea. He gets annoyed if he is told that it is not new and has been tried with such and such results and these and these consequences.

I am sorry, I have strayed a bit. Picking up the thread, I was saying it was right and correct to have concentrated under Adult Education on Literacy. The initial approach to a particular field of Adult Education is determined by the socio-economic conditions or to use simple words, the life conditions of the people. The wider scope of Adult Education has to become manifest while pursuing the initial approach correctly, zealously and sincerely. Otherwise, the wider scope is torn from live experience and becomes a copy-book exercise.

### **Drop-outs**

I remember an experience as a student of the Ferguson

College, Poona in 1919-23. An enthusiastic professor and some young lecturers would start night classes for literacy and would invite students to volunteer as teachers. College students of those days had few other attractions and distractions and responded well. So many came that the classes had, to begin with, one student teacher for each illiterate adult. This went on well for two-three weeks. Then the illiterates began absenting, the student-teachers became deserters and the class disappeared after a month or so. This was happening year after year and finally the initiator's enthusiasm was also lost and the effort was given up.

Why, why, why? The question troubled the minds of literacy workers in similar situations every where, in villages, in towns, in cities and in educational institutions and voluntary organisations. The questions is still there and has not lost its original sphinx like character. If we do not answer it correctly, we and our literacy work will be eaten up.

Several answers occurred to the workers and were also suggested by onlooker experts. The answers were, interesting literacy methods, special teaching material, trained teachers and such other ideas in that sequence. Some went even to the extent of compelling attendance of illiterate adults by legislation. In that live work situation, the wider scope of Adult Education in a truly Indian context, began to reveal itself, not as a disassociated part, but as an inherent integral component even for the success of a literacy programme. The first people's short-lived governments in 1937-39 were in a desperate hurry to make a frontal attack on illiteracy, but when after the din of the battle with illiteracy was over and they sat down to count the gains, they found disappointingly little. But the lessons learnt were significant. The Bombay Government of those days then appointed a Committee to look into the state of Adult Education. The report of the Committee, popularly known by the name of its Chairman, as the Manshardt Committee, is according to me, a significant landmark in the march of Adult Education. But as said earlier, that peculiar trait of our mind which does not accredit even the near past, has consigned it to oblivion. It was surprised to find that some members of that committee have to be reminded now of what they said then.

The substance of the recommendations of that committee was to the effect that literacy should be a part of a programme of Adult Education which should be linked with the life of the people. To my knowledge, the Bombay City Social Education Committee which was known as the Bombay City Adult

Education Committee till 1949, tried best to implement the recommendations. I do not have information of what the Bombay Government and other Provincial Governments did.

### **Social Education**

It seems, however, that the Adult Educationists were equally perturbed and a simultaneous thought movement spread all over India. The Central Government's Mohanlal Saksena Committee made substantially similar recommendation in 1947. The then Madhya Pradesh Government formulated a massive scheme of Social Education. The new concept of Social Education emerged and was accepted by the Central Advisory Board of Education.

A reading of the addresses of the Presidents of this Conference and its resolutions since 1938 to '47, shows how inevitable it was that under the all pervading umbrella of Adult Education a new concept of it as Social Education should have emerged, as specially suitable for India—as it was and is, but now suddenly ushered into Independent democratic form of Government and universal adult franchise. I am tempted to quote from our Rewa resolution of December, 1947.

“This Conference welcomes the new scheme of Social Education which aims at giving a wider and deeper connotation to adult education to include social and civic training in it.....”

What happened to Social Education from 1948 onwards is a tangled tale. It discloses another peculiar trait of our mind. When a new scheme emerges and the powers seem backing it, its known exponents and unknown opponents, the convinced and the dubious, the enthusiasts and the weathercock, all join in one loud chorus of JAI. No one stands courageously singled out in opposition, on the firm rock of his convictions. Kening that this new ship is going to set sail with a strong favourable breeze everybody tries to dump all sort of his own cargo load into its hold, perhaps with a concealed wish in the sub-conscious that the ship may sink with all that weight. I have been protesting but a helpless witness to this process. If one examines the various programmes of Social Education, the expanding syllabi for the training of the Social Education Organisers and the increasing and changing job charts for them, it will not be difficult to find out what extra, non-educational cargo has been loaded and one can guess by whom and why?

I maintain and express with all emphasis words are capable

of, that Social Education is the ideal concept which is suitable for India and its people as they are in fact and not in fiction. The late Dr. R.V. Parulekar, for whose well considered opinions and views all educationists have profound regard, began his presidential address to the eleventh session of this conference at Patna in 1954 by saying :

### **Orientation to Adult Education**

“The most outstanding event that has happened in India, in the field of Adult Education, since the attainment of Independence, is giving a new orientation to Adult Education by naming it social education.”

Further on, in his address Parulekar rightly pointed out that Social Education programmes tended to relegate the literacy part into the background. He stressed the immediate need of arresting that tendency. Everyone who has understood Social Education correctly will agree substantially with Parulekar. It is really unfortunate that this should have happened, mostly after the Ministry of Education had to hand over the responsibility of implementing Social Education programmes to Community Development. What happened was this : I have referred earlier to the live work-situation in literacy effort to which threw out the sphinx like question. It was to make literacy work related to life and meaningful and interesting and attractive that the other programmes of Social Education were conceived. Someone's misunderstanding and misconception lost track of that and the other programmes meant more. To illustrate, the other programmes were the sugar-coating of the quinine pill of literacy. The adulterator increased the sugar and reduced the vital and costly content of quinine.

If there is still any misunderstanding persisting in any quarter, let it be said in top voice again and again that literacy and further continuing education of the neo-literate and the semi-literate is the core of Social Education for which and around which the other activities have to be developed as wake-up and follow-up programme.

Having reaffirmed this, let us now proceed to the contemporary history of Social Education. In the year 1962, the Commonwealth Education Conference was held in India at New Delhi. In the field of Adult Education “Social Education” was considered significant enough for discussion, and India had to contribute the leading paper. In the concluding session, rich tributes were paid to India by other Commonwealth

countries for the outstanding contribution of Social Education to the field of Adult Education.

### **Social Education Dropped**

Then in the year 1964 the Education Commission was set-up and it completed its task in the next two years. What had happened to Social Education in the last 3-4 years that it should not even be mentioned by its proper name in that thick flexible volume of the Education Commission's Report? Are we, and if not we, at least me alone, entitled to ask the reasons for this? I stand corrected. The words "Social Education" occur in print thrice in that Report. Once in the index, at page 688, but this seems to be somebody's mistake as the words "Social Education" nowhere occur in pages 7, 17, 18 given as references. The other two places where the words "Social Education" occur are on page 438 where the Report on Social Education of the Committee on Plan Projects and its recommendation for establishment of Central Board of Social Education is mentioned. It seems this was unavoidable as the COPP Report and the Board had already been named so.

What is this and why so, one is left to wonder quietly in private or actively in debate. And you may do so in either or both ways if at all you feel, the question demands an answer and you have not got it.

Perhaps this is a new subtle technique of silent extinction by no mention, and that too in the presence of persons who were originators of social education and were once upon a time very vocal of social education, persons who sat as experts in Social Education Committees and on occasions accepted the honour of getting chaired. They would know if Social Education had a moment to murmur "you too, Brutus."

Does this mean that what the best among Adult Educationists thought in the dawn of Independence was totally wrong and Social Education was misconceived? Does it imply that they were not best? Does this mean that the concept actively pursued and thoughtfully developed since then till now deserves to be dismissed summarily, without giving any reasons? Was not justification for change necessary as it found given elaborately while dealing with other sectors of Education?

Here is disclosed another peculiar trait of our mind. We do not allow a concept or a plan or a scheme to develop, and tend it when in distress. We are like the nomadic fighters in the film "Lawrence of Arabia" who do not pick up their woun-

ded and leave them to die or even kill them. Social Education was indeed bruised in fighting with ignorance and literacy, but is it proper not to heal it and to desert it to die unattended ?

It seems we are becoming very much changeful. Change, change, change, change for the sake of change, that seems to be the developing slogan. This has, I feel, dangerous possibilities especially in the field of Education where an idea takes years to reach all levels and to become consolidated enough to give the desired results. Such too often changes and experiments have done more harm than good and have thrown our educational system into disarray and into a state of increasing disturbance. This is what the public feels and the consequences can be seen every where.

Well, friends, let us leave that there. Why should one not feel gratified since Social Education has been in substance referred to in the Report by its surname "Adult Education" if not by its proper name. If we are not quite intimate with a person do we not call him by his surname and is not that the good old custom and good manner too ? We have reasons to be satisfied, and we have expressed our sense of gratification over the keen awareness of the importance of Adult Education in national life reflected in the report. We have also expressed our deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Commission for giving a place to the subject of Adult Education in their Report. A favour indeed, since we have not the strength to demand that it is the right of the people to have Adult Education and it is the duty of the State to provide it. And more so because I have heard it said at first the idea was to exclude Adult Education like medical or legal education from all the aspects of Education on which the Commission was to advise. This may be contradicted if incorrect.

Well, friends, reactions can be different. The Education Commission's Report, so far as it deals with Adult Education, does not create a feeling of assuredness in me. Referring to the covering letter of the Chairman submitting the Report to the Minister for Education, it seems Adult Education is not one of the "main points" "that immediately come to mind" in bringing about what may be called an educational revolution in the country ? It is said, "Education for agriculture.....should be given a high priority," but nothing is said about and priority for Adult Education. I concede, the omissions may not be international, but with all the humbleness I am capable of, I have to say, that even unintentional omissions communicate and convey.

### University Adult Education

Had nothing been said about Administration and Finance while dealing with other sectors of Education, one would not have worried about the absence of treatment of that aspect in Adult Education. But it is not so. While detailed examination of that aspect has been made in other sectors of Education, the two short paragraphs under Adult Education, refer to University Adult Education only. It has been accommodated under the single sentence "Needless to say, the Universities should be specially financed and equipped for the purpose of the Adult Education work which they undertake. "Complements to University Adult Education for getting this sort of assurance and this accommodation with Adult Education and not with University Education, though Adult Education has none.

I am a good deal perturbed by the penultimate paragraph 17.69 with the caption "Adult Education—A total Governmental Function." I sense trouble here and also feel the weakness of the argument and the fallacies which are there but do not appear on the surface. We may take this for analogy. Every government department has its staff which requires medical help and care of all sorts. There is thus "pluralism", and "wide and varied range." It can, therefore, be argued that "it is necessary to recognize" medical help and care, "as a business of every department" and so on, using the words in this paragraph one can come to similar conclusion that functioning of medical help and care services "cannot admit of departmentalism". Applying this logic to the Contributory Health Service in New Delhi, under the Ministry of Health, one can easily picture what it would mean in detail.

The Ministry of Education has to be given the total responsibility for Adult Education. Any attempt to escape or avoid the responsibility will be harmful to the cause of Adult Education and will mean more expenditure for the Government as a whole. This does not mean that another Ministry or Department should not do Adult Education. They should and must, but they will have the character of an agency of Adult Education, independent to a large extent, but dependent on the Ministry of Education for ideological and technical guidance. This has to be the organisational set up for maintaining the integrity of Adult Education and for avoiding duplication of supporting services and the consequent increase of costs. This point has to be examined very carefully and in detail I suggest, we do it in a National Seminar.

Concluding, friends I think Adult Education is all the more in thicker woods now. There is little ground for being optimistic enough to expect any substantially massive work in the next few years. Such substantial massive work requires trained and experienced personnel. Even if adequate funds are made available, where will it come from? In these last twenty years or so we have not built and maintained it. The scene is similar to an emergency army on demobilization. The trained Social Education Organisers and other Adult Education Workers have been transferred to some other department and where liquidated have sought other jobs. Those who have remained there are rusting and relapsing as there is nothing significant or much enough to do. The personnel will have to be reassembled and reoriented. This will take time, but if not done thoroughly, the work turned out will disclose weaknesses and defects.

This is the state of Adult Education today, but I would like to end with an optimistic note. All that Adult Education needs for a healthy active mind and a physically fit body can be secured by creating very strong demand by a very determined and angered public opinion which governments cannot afford to neglect. We can do this if we really mean and have the will.

Friends, all these days something within me has been urging me to say, all that I should say at this juncture, freely, boldly, even bluntly and unreservedly. I think I have done so to some extent. Please feel free to react similarly to what I have said. Thanks.

**DR. MALCOLM S. ADISESHIAH**

*22nd All India Adult Education Conference,  
23rd December 1968, Pondicherry.*

**Greetings**

I bring you, the twenty-second Annual Conference of the Indian Adult Education Association, Unesco's greetings and good wishes. The greetings that I bring you are a measure of thanks to the many men and women of your Association, such as Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh and Shri J.C. Mathur, who have been and continue to be associated with Unesco and its global adult education mandate. The greetings are also an acknowledgement of the contributions that you have been making in response to your inexhaustible needs and profound experience to the theory and practice of adult education. These include your remarkable clearing house with its abstracts and reference service, its research and publications programme centering around the Indian Journal of Adult Education and Proudh Shiksha; the seminars and round tables on current national and international challenges and responses of adult education; and your practical programmes with Gorakhpur youth, Khadi women and the Meerut adult illiterates. In so greeting you, young and old, men and women, I am simply emphasizing the common bonds which hold you and Unesco together and expressing the hope and determination that these bonds will be further widened and strengthened.

In conveying to you Unesco's good wishes, I look to the future tasks that confront us, to the ever-receding horizons that lie ahead to us, to the beckoning finger that invites us on and forward. I can recall my own start in adult education, as I, a seven years old, toddled around with my mother the villages of Sithukadu and Pammal in the Chingleput district, and Vaniyambadi and Arni in the North Arcot district, sounding the Kaimani to her songs, distributing milk and clothes, passing around pamphlets which provided instruction in reading and writing on the feeding and care of babies. That was 50

years ago. And since that time, I have been involved during the last 50 years, in the intellectual, emotional and practical life of adult education, as a student in Vellore, as a teacher in Calcutta and Madras and as an international worker in Paris and all over the world.

From this vantage point of our accumulated experience as adult educators, I would like to take stock of our world, our country and our educational system and wish ourselves well in facing clearly and fearlessly the disturbing questions that arise and the challenging hints, if not responses, that are thrown out.

### **Our Educational Heritage**

Our experiences as adults and all that we have been slowly, surely and painfully learning, raise disturbing questions about our educational system and its legacy.

### **The child at home**

It is true that as infants from the time we blinked open our eyes on the strange, real, disturbing life around us till around five or six years of age, we were consumed by an insatiable thirst for knowledge, feeling, seeing, touching, sensing, smelling, tasting, asking, worrying, and in fact driving our parents and the elders around us to the point of nervous exhaustion and mental fatigue. (Even in those days an oft repeated, quite common cry was "Oh! stop asking and shut up", which was more often than not accompanied by a slap of the ears.) But after that period, there seems to take place a slow and certain deadly change to quiescence, conformity and passivity in the child—a kind of anti-learning attitude, a sort of anti-education ambience. For one thing, in our families and societies, the children who sit quietly, with folded hands and impassive countenance, asking nothing in the presence of their elders, learning nothing from their peers, who in other words are growing up as silent, statusque morons, are held up as the ideal children. The highest praise a parent wishes to earn is the comment: "Look how nice, quiet and well-behaved those children are". The thirst for knowledge now becomes simply romantic mouthing. Whatever it meant, it had been slowly and surely killed.

### **The child at school**

Against this social and familial setting, it is not surprising

that we have developed an educational system in which compulsion and not freedom is the hallmark, where conformity and not spontaneity is dominant. The child (over whom stands the truant officer) or the student (over whom stand the credit systems) is compelled to go to school. He is forced to choose this subject and read that textbook and not any that he likes and would choose.<sup>1</sup> He is forced to listen to what he is being taught, delivered *ex-cathedra*. Conformity insidiously becomes his way of life, involving acceptance of one type of instruction, one type of approach and one type of learning. He is then required to repeat what he has been taught and what he has been asked to read during one whole year and in some cases for as much as three years, in the course of six or seven three-hour sessions called examinations. Having been forced to work for grades and not learning, he is then given a piece of paper, called a certificate, a diploma or a degree, which then, if he is among the more fortunate ones, gives him access to one kind of employment in society rather than what he would or could choose for himself, and what is even more serious, opens one window on to our wonderful world out of which he must peer at life all his life. And if he turns away from this system, either because he or his parents are too poor or are the wrong colour, caste or political grouping or because he is bored unto death or outraged with its irrelevance, he is termed a student drop-out, a social wastage, for whom adult literacy or head start programmes have to be devised as a rescue operation, or is called a student-in-revolt who has to be jailed. If he fails in his exams, he is called a repeater or calls himself "a failed SSLC, inter or B.A.," and we run tutorial and evening classes to "recuperate" him.

It is from the vantage point of the relatively free adult, the voluntary nature of adult education and the spontaneity of the methods and choices<sup>2</sup> that characterize this system, that we can

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1. In my life, I have known only one person who refused to read all the compulsory textbooks and reference works which, as usual, had been prescribed for him for his B.A. Honours degree. Apart from considerable time he devoted to music, from which he earned part of his living as a student, his study during the three years was concentrated on a single author—Sigmund Freud and his classic, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He wrote all his seven papers around this one subject and managed to get his degree—all power to him.
  2. While the mass education and information of radio and television is staggering, adult education through these media is still feeling its way and so far has not succeeded because of its inferior quality. It has succeeded more in schools and universities partly because it has a captive audience. In adult education, the audience is voluntary and will not assemble unless the quality of learning is high.

look back with a critical eye at the adverse aspects of compulsion and conformity in our school system.

There is an element of exaggeration in my portrayal, there is something in the nature of a caricature in my description. I find that some exaggeration, like caricaturing, is a useful instrument, similar to that used in a blow-up of photographs or the microscope which enlarges a microbe, so that you can get to see that particular aspect of reality, and provided you remember it is not all reality, that it is the tree and not the forest. As adults we know that all rights carry obligations and that the compulsory nature of schooling and the free and universal dissemination of knowledge which is its purpose is basic to the growth of man and to his free, full and equal development.

### The learning process

The learning process in our educational system which I have described as simplistic or irrelevant, raises the question as to whether all the elaborate apparatus that we have inherited as the school system is right or necessary.<sup>3</sup> We first learn facts. When at school, I heard a certain discordant metallic noise, I learned that it was the bell ringing. Second we learn to relate facts through a process of association. When the bell rang, it meant the period (or torture) of compulsive concentration had ended, and I could go streaming out of the class, moving my hands and legs freely at last, asking the real questions that were bubbling in my mind and jumping around generally in the freedom and spontaneity of life outside the classroom. The third stage of learning was the study of alternative relations between facts and it is on this that most of the learning process is concentrated. This purveying of various alternative combinations and permutations linking facts, with some clear biases directed at me so that I would choose this relationship rather than that, had become my education. It was not till much later as an adult that I realized that what needs to be learnt is the nature, structure, the why and wherefore of the facts surrounding me—man, nature, environment,

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3. Or again, was it mere chance that our educational legacy is erected on the school, which irony of ironies, derives from the Greek word "schole" meaning leisure. "I grow old learning some new thing each day" declared Solon in the Fifth century B.C.

community—and the ability to discover for myself possible relationships.<sup>4</sup>

### The timing of learning

Probably the most serious problem in our educational legacy is the distortions introduced in it by the time element. At the simplest level we think of the learning process as being related to a given time period in our lives. Back of this tradition is our inherited pedagogy and psychology, now outmoded and proved false, telling us that the capacity to learn is limited to our youth, that old horses can only be put out to pasture. Astride this antiquated pedagogic doctrine, time enters learning.<sup>5</sup>

To be a literate or a farmer, you must have four years of primary schooling. To be a skilled industrial worker you must have seven or eight years of learning. To become a teacher or technician, ten or twelve years of education is necessary. To belong to the scientific or liberal professions, fifteen or eighteen years of successful study are needed. Education is thus equated with intensive intellectual work for a specific period of time, after which there need be no more education. How many of us have joyfully walked out of the last day of the examination hall, promising ourselves a prolonged holiday during which we will never have to open a book? How many of us define rest or leisure as a time period when we will do no thinking? How many of us leave the Convocation Hall with a diploma in our hands and the conviction in our hearts that we have now completed our education and must turn to some-

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4. To be perfectly fair, this learning process also includes learning the ability to cheat. My father, a man of discipline and routine, had all his life associated 1 p.m. every day with his lunch. As soon as he heard the clock in the drawing room strike one, terrible pangs of hunger would overcome him and my mother had to serve lunch promptly. Hence, at my home in Vellore and Pallavaram, 1 o'clock meant lunch, never one minute earlier or later. But when my father came to Paris, my wife was caught in a real conflict, leading to a near crisis. I could never come home from Unesco promptly at 1 o'clock. By the time I completed by morning appointments, cleared my desk and came home it was around 1.30 p.m. So my wife, after study of her environment and the nature of the persons involved, established a new harmonious relationship by simply putting the clock back in my Paris drawing room by half an hour every morning—and voila! everyone was happy.
  5. For a brief and clear expose of past and current pedagogic theories of learning, see *L'education des adults*. J.R. Kidd, Paris 1966.

thing else, work, marriage, raising a family. In fact, this "stages-of-life" theory on which we, particularly with our Hindu tradition, have been reared—as learner, earner, head of family and retiring ascetic—nourishes the false practice that it is possible to be spoon-fed enough education at one time to last a life time. So we educate the child and deny education to the adult. We may, and do, complete one stage of life but never the process of learning. To cease learning when we leave school, is to die at the age of seven or fourteen, or eighteen or twenty-two.

### **Dated learning**

But the intervention of the time element in the educational system is even more serious. Normally the time spent in the educational system runs from 7 to 15 or 18 years. The average expectation of life in India today is 55 years, and the age of retirement, so called, ranges from 58 for civil servants and teachers to 70 or 80 for business men, farmers and politicians. This means that the educational equipment that the average Indian receives during his first 7 to 15/18 years, must serve him for the remaining 30 to 50 years of his adult life. But the content of knowledge and information purveyed and the methods of instruction and techniques of learning used are derived from the current 7 to 15 year society and not from the future 30 to 50 year world. It is even worse, for the students of today are being taught by teachers who can only speak of and from a world they knew and understood, that is a world which is at least 20 years before their period of active teaching; and this is to serve the world 70 years later. But that world they knew is going; it has gone. That society is changing; it has changed. And what is more, the passing of the past and the changing of the present are complete, inexorable and unpredictable. And so our educational legacy has built a system which can only interpret the present in terms of the past, and visualize the future perspectives in terms of current scene. Our educational system imparts knowledge and information which is dated at the very moment of its birth. The student seems then to be sent to school to strengthen his shoulders and broaden his back so that he can carry this archaic impedimenta, this antediluvian baggage in order to be an acceptable adult when facing society.

### **Nature of Society**

What is this society and its evolutionary process that the student in school today and the adult at work faces? There

are many ways of presenting the perspective evolution of our society.

### Structural evolution

From the point of view of economic growth and structure we can distinguish three types of society in our economic history. In the pre-industrial society, which is referred to as the third world, 80-90 per cent of the work force is engaged in primary (agricultural) industry, 8-15 per cent in secondary (manufacturing) and 2-5 per cent in tertiary (service) industry. In the industrial society, that is Europe, 20-30 per cent is engaged in primary, 40-60 per cent in secondary, 15-25 per cent in tertiary and some 5-15 per cent in a new sector which emerges in this society and which may be called the quarternary (science and technology) sector. The post-industrial society, of which the prototypes are emerging in the United States and the Soviet Union is one in which 6-10 per cent are engaged in the primary sector (by 2000, this would fall to 2.5 per cent in the United States), 20-30 per cent in the secondary sector,<sup>6</sup> 40-60 per cent in the tertiary sector and 20-25 per cent in the quarternary sector. India is somewhere between the pre-industrial and industrial stage,<sup>7</sup> and on the basis of the current and perspective plans will move into the stage of the industrial society towards the last decade of the present century.

6. In the United States, labour in the industrial sector declined from 30.4 per cent in 1950 to 27.2 per cent in 1960 and will be 20 per cent by 2000. The shift of labour from the production sector (primary and secondary) to non-production sector (tertiary and quarternary) is seen in the following figures :

In the United States from 59 : 41 in 1940 to 47 : 53 in 1964 ;  
 In the Soviet Union from 82 : 12 in 1940 to 76 : 24 in 1964 ;  
 In Canada from 61 : 39 in 1940 to 54 : 46 in 1960.

7.	<i>Labour force distribution as percentage</i>		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
India in 1961	70	14	16
Model based on developed countries	35	30	35
Planning Commission model for 1986	49	25	26

*Source* : Three Decades of Transition 1956-1986—Planning Commission, New Delhi, March 1965.

### Constituents of change

Whatever the age and stage of our or any other society, the one overriding feature common to all today is change. Change is development. Unesco's World Conference on Adult Education meeting in Montreal in 1960 describes the seven changes marking our decade ; technological development, acculturation, status of women, nationalism and the new States, power blocs, unity and interdependence, and the population explosion.<sup>8</sup> Change in society is precipitated by several factors—affluence, automation, cybernetics, urbanization, communication, breakthrough in biology, breakdown in religious, ethical and moral values. In terms of individual human identity, change comes about through the struggle to remain an individual, the war on poverty, the changing balance of work and leisure time, and the many forms and faces of rebellion and protest. And in terms of the universal community the constituent elements are, the threat of nuclear warfare, the emergence of many new nations, the determination of the non-white races to achieve a just and dignified standing, the population explosion, the ever-increasing and more visible disparity between the have and have-not nations, the struggle between the socialist and non-socialist societies and the imperatives of international cooperation.<sup>9</sup>

### Rate of change

In all these forms and expressions of change, it is the unpredictability and speed with which change occurs which is decisive. It used to take 37 years between a discovery and its use in production. Now the time interval is 9 to 14 years. That is, in the lifetime of the boys and girls now at school, there will be at least three or four startling changes. It took my father all his working life of 30 years to increase his real income and consumption to a level which is now reached by his children and his children's children in less than 10 years. This means that today's students will increase their incomes three or four times more than we did. Employment and occupations which are still determined in our country largely by circumstances of birth and level of parental earnings will

8. Final Report : World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, Unesco 1960. For a similar description of the Indian scene, see the *Development of India*—P. Pant, the Scientific American, New York, September 1963.

9. *Emerging Desigus for Education : Designing Education for the Future*. Denver, Colorado. May 1968.

for them depend on skills and education. Similar ineluctable and rapid changes have occurred in travel where for the world as a whole 20 per cent of GNP is being expended and in 1966, 130 million persons travelled over the globe, in a kind of neonomadism, spending \$13 billion. There is also the rapid rise of the conglomerate corporation<sup>10</sup> which in just one country in one year (1968) has led to merging of \$12 billion of capital. In education, the number of scientists doubles every ten years; over half of the totality of scientific findings was obtained during the last 15 years; 90 per cent of all scientists in the world's history are living today. To take just one discipline, for over 200 years Newton's principles were the basis of physics. In the past 60 years since Einstein's formulation, physics has changed repeatedly and is in a state of permanent crisis.

### Consequences of change

Yet another way of looking at change which is now built into our society, is to look beyond the present production and consumption stage, wherein the major part of the Indian family budget is spent on the necessities of life, on meeting what the economist calls elementary wants. This stage will continue for a long time in India, as we will have to move into the mass consumption cycle with all its attendant joys—of physical and spiritual satisfactions and egalitarian variety, and its evils—of senseless, fictitious and spurious wants. But once elementary wants are met, a whole new world of further wants is opened up, particularly in the post-industrial society, for creative work, life-long education, development of all-round abilities and self-realization, complete mobility and information, free physical activity, enjoyment of beauty<sup>11</sup> and freedom and

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10. That is one company, such as ITT, operates telecommunications, manages mutual funds, bakes bread, manufactures glass, builds houses and rents automobiles. When I was teaching economics here in the University, we defined monopoly as a million dollar holding and worried over the social effects of monopoly, duopoly, oligopoly and monopsony. Today we are at the start of a new study of the dangers of giant monopoly as against the results of the infusion of new management and a kind of modern Mahabaratha, the war of the giants.
  11. Already we see that the dirty, the shabby and the smoky are unproductive. Our concepts of beauty, our standards of harmony are changing. Who can stand before the austere integrated constructions, the modern urban units and sophisticated designs of Le Corbusier's Chandigarh or the sound : light magic of Puranakila and not realize that new standards of beauty and form are a-coming.

the demand for living in tolerance, compassion, fraternity and truth.

I do not wish to imply that in the future all will be honey and roses. Far from it. Part of this change that I have described will show in increased inequities and continual conflict. The widening gap between the rich and poor countries (individual incomes are rising annually by \$45 in the rich and \$3 in the poor countries) will grow even wider as the Third World moves into the industrial and the industrialized world moves into the post-industrial stage. But there will also be more opportunities for the rich to work with the poor, for the surplus of trained personnel and over-abundant resources of the post-industrial societies to help and support the efforts of the developing world—a kind of a world social security system—only then such a system will not remain an urgent and moving but unheeded call in a papal encyclical.<sup>12</sup> It will have bite to it.

But this involves a recognition that we are also inexorably moving into a world of interdependence and mutuality. The brain drain which I have joined many of you in castigating means from this point of view simply that the entire educational and scientific system of Europe and the Third World is an appendage to the American research enterprise. Equally, it means that United States research is dependent intellectually on all these countries: the Kumba rocket station in Kerala; the Indian programmer I met last month in Washington earning \$60,000 working for Rand Corporation. In fact there is taking place a Pareto-like (indifference curve) distribution in the spectrum of world research projects.

The future fast-moving, changing, post-industrial world will have more conflict built into it, not less and so romantic appeals to the sturdiness of common sense, the natural harmony of socialist societies or the moral certainties of other societies will not help. For that society will be marked by constant shifts and movements, rather than stability; frictions arising from work content and ideas of life; differences in self-realization; continued polarization between youth and adults, teacher and student, parent and child, progressives and conservatives. But here again, are we being slowly prepared for this kind of society of conflict, through the medium of the dialogue rather than consensus, the use of debate and strife rather than passive acceptance and unintelligent agreement as our way of life for tomorrow?

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12. *Populorum Progressio*; Encyclical letter of His Holiness Pope Paul VI. Rome, 1967.

### Society, education and change

I would like to pose again the question : how is our society reacting to this fact of change, to its extraordinary rate and pace, to its multiconsequence ? We should perhaps begin with a certain sense of humility and realism by recalling Toynbee's warning that historically cultures tend to be increasingly and rigidly coherent and stable and to resist strongly and violently any change—the Goths at the gates of Rome, Galileo facing the Ecclesiastical Council, Dreyfus before the French Tribunal, Gandhiji confronting a nation and world of violence. The result is the continuing and periodic collapse of civilizations and self-destruction of cultures.

But there is in society today a new element, an element borne possibly out of our instinct for self-preservation. This instinct has helped transmute greed into thrift, violence into argument, murder into litigation, suicide into philosophy and has forced the strong to consent to eat the weak by the due process of law. And today, instinctively our societies know that if they resist change and attempt to block off or destroy the fresh winds as they did in the past, either in defence of a xenophobic nationalism, the sacred sovereignty of the nation state or high-sounding ideology with its dogmas of liberty, free enterprise, revisionism, reformism, left or right deviationism, it will be not one society, not the other culture which will be destroyed, but all of human existence.

And so today, every society is in greater or lesser measure, happily or sadly, willingly or resignedly planning for change, examining the nature and source of its culture and how the change which must take place can be harnessed for the common good. But this movement today is no more than a beginning, an intention, a resolve, a rendezvous with destiny. For it to be turned into a programme, there is only one way, one instrumentality—that of education.

It is this strategic, monopolistic position of education in relation to the future of man and his creation, culture, that underlines the serious questions that I have earlier posed about our educational legacy. The school system is reacting to change, albeit slowly, by its emphasis on mathematics and science, by its attempt at comprehensiveness and vocationalization, by beginning to be conscious of the twin phenomena of the student and information explosion. The issues at stake for education and society are serious. The change that I have been talking about means concretely, as I have said, that a technician graduating from one of our technical institutes in

Kanpur or Calcutta loses his skill in twelve years through new developments in engineering. Twenty-five years is all that is needed for our science graduates from Madras or Madurai to find that all that they have learnt as students is outdated. If our science teachers in Bombay or Kerala are teaching the pupils today what they learnt when they were themselves pupils, that is so much useless baggage. Eric Ashby's comment, that every science Ph.D. should be annulled every ten years and its holder required to take the course again, may be more than an offhand remark.

It is not surprising therefore that society today involves education in a profound crisis—both in concepts and systems. In terms of concepts, education is not conformity but learning to think which is the basis of divergence and dialogue, not learning to conform but learning how to disagree and debate. In terms of systems, its inherited assumption that life can be divided into two stages—that of acquiring knowledge (as in filling a storage tank) and that of giving it out (as when the storage tank taps are opened), is now shown to be false. Education is no longer preparation for life. It is part of life. Education is no longer the gateway to society. It is in the centre of society. Education cannot be grounded in national realities only, if they are nostalgic rather than prospective. Education and work are no longer in conflict; work and life no longer devour each other. All work and no play does not make Jack a dull boy. Education is work: it is part of working time and production. Education is play: it is the coming life of leisure.

### Adult Education—Its Contribution

Such, anyway, are the bases and conviction of what has been called adult education. Adult educators always knew this little but terrible secret. They knew that education is not a one-shot affair, that it cannot be forced down like castor oil and concentration camps, that one can bring the buffalo to the water tank but only the buffalo can decide whether or not it will drink and when. But adult educators also have their share of the blame for the current crisis of society and education. They have tucked away very carefully and very far out of sight<sup>13</sup> this previous jewel in their poor, torn, swaddling rags.

13. As carefully and as far out of sight as my wife who, on going out, hides the house keys so that on return she has to spend the better part of a day trying to locate them. I have always felt that it would take me less time to earn the money to replace what she might otherwise have lost or had stolen. In some areas it is easier to go ahead and make a discovery than to spend time and resources in order to find out whether it has been made. I am told that the average engineer spends 20-50 per cent of his time hunting for the information he needs.

And that is how adult education finds itself today in the world and in India—in rags. It is the poverty pocket in every educational system.<sup>14</sup> It is the poor relation in India. In this country we spent in 1963-1964 over 200 crores rupees<sup>15</sup> on primary and secondary education, and only about half a crore rupees on adult education. We enrolled over 21/2 crores of children in primary and 11/2 crores in secondary but only 369,000 in adult education courses. There is a slight improvement when we turn to the private and business sector which enrolled 1.7 crores pupils in primary and secondary schools and 13 lacs in adult courses. Has there been a slackening off in interest in adult education in the country since Independence, as suggested by Gunnar Myrdal?<sup>16</sup> How else can one explain that there was no known allocation made to adult education in the First Plan, the allocation of 1.9 per cent of total educational expenditures in the Second Plan and an even more piteous 1.5 per cent in the Third Plan.

The reasons for this sad, criminal and dangerous neglect of this phase of education are many. For one thing, in hiding away its basic doctrine, adult education's functionalism to life has been overlooked. For another, while school education is institutionalized, concrete and definite, adult education is a large, higgledy-piggledy, amorphous morass. There is a Minister of Education for schools in every country. In no country is there a Minister of Adult Education, nor should there be one. Adult education must be free, voluntary, spontaneous, like the wind blowing where it listeth, meeting needs as they arise, using a myriad of methods and instruments from newspapers to radio, from institutes to annual meetings of the All India Chamber of Commerce, the Trade Union Congresses or the Conventions of the Association of Nagasuram players. But then like so many noble ideas and sentiments, everyone is for it in a vague, sentimental and platforatory kind of way, but no one person is really prepared to do anything about it.

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14. There have been or are notable exceptions, particularly the Scandinavian and socialist countries and the industrial world is generally becoming awake to this treasure.

The computation of national expenditures on adult education varies. There is no common agreed basis as to what comprises adult education. P. Coombs computes that in industrial countries the costs of non-formal education are equal to those of formal education. *The World Education Crisis*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1968.

15. 1 crore=10,000,000 ; 1 lac=100,000 ; \$1=7.50 rupees.

16. *Asian Drama*. Vol. III. G. Myrdal. Pantheon, New York, 1968,

In the case of India of course we have the added problem of our size, our priorities for development and the struggle for survival. Which comes first, more food or more reading material, better clothing and housing or adult education? In the long pull the relationship is reversed and the priorities establish themselves but for today one should be guarded in making easy generalizations or resounding exhortations about the imperatives of adult education to a people whose vast majority are still struggling with the subsistence demands of life. This being said, adult education is the tool for the farmer and the country's 80 per cent rural masses to raise their subsistence standards.

But how I wish this was all that was involved to explain the depressed position of adult education. I fear that at bottom, whether it be India or the United States, the Soviet Union or the Congo, the relative neglect of adult education and the fact that it has not yet come into its own is due to the whole system and legacy of education which I have earlier alluded to. That legacy makes adult education an irrelevance. It gives adult education the semblance of a luxury, which you can afford when you have met all your other wants. It relegates such activity either to the idealistic poverty-ridden voluntary agencies and its devoted but penniless leaders or to governmental agencies seemingly concerned with such highly uneducational matters as agriculture, health, industry and labour.

It is against this background and faced with the crises in society and education, that adult education seems at last to be waking up and coming into its own, not so much by becoming a great super sector of education or society, with crores of rupees at its command, a separate department of government, a minister, imposing buildings, equipment and staff—for that would be a betrayal of its mission and denial of its vocation: but through the birth of an idea which it has known and cherished and which is now sweeping men and societies everywhere: the idea that education is a way of life, that education is a life-long process. In the process of giving birth to this idea, adult education as a separate educational stage, as a distinct educational method, as a unique education experience, may wither and merge itself in the greater truth—life-long education. If it does, and when it does, education will have recovered its mission.

### **Life-Long Education**

The length, breadth and depth of the dimension of this adult education truth lies in its simplicity. Education is life-

long. This corrects the time distortions of our current educational heritage. There is no temporal division of life into youth and age, school, work and retirement, learning, child-bearing and rearing and grass widowhood. Every year, every month, every day from the cradle to the grave, step by step a person learns, is open to learning and is given the opportunity to learn. We are entering a world where no one knows what the morrow will bring. And so we must equip every man every day, in every way and in fact in every moment of his life to be the master of his fate, to be the captain of his destiny, for it is he who is changing and must change—and not the external world which remains changeless.<sup>17</sup>

Life-long education reaches out to all life because it is all of life. There is no sector of life—whether it be the family, the school, the university, the business, the office, the club, the farm, the factory, the temple, mosque or church, the hospital, the cinema, or the recreation hall—where the effort to learn and train and develop the part of the individual involved in that sector is not possible. For all around us everywhere are lessons to be learned, knowledge to be garnered, information to be culled and the personality developed in some subtle or obvious way.

This idea has far-reaching and wide-ranging implications for all of education, in all countries, as Unesco's General Conference meeting in Paris last month declared in ringingtones :

In industrialized and developing regions alike, the basic concept should be that of life-long education embracing all levels of the educational systems, all forms of out-of-school education, and even all policies for cultural development. Unesco should help Member States, particularly by pedagogical research, especially in the fields of methods and curricula, and by perfecting educational structures and administration, in improving the quality of education so as to obtain the best possible yield from available resources. Life-long education, the planning of which should be integrated into overall economic and social planning and which should be inspired by a spirit of participation should contribute to the implementation of the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation.<sup>18</sup>

17. "Change and decay in all around I see" is moving poetic imagery of changes that man and man alone wills in his external environment.

18. Conclusions arising out of the General Policy Debate. 15C/78 Rev. Unesco, Paris, 1968.

I can but summarily raise some questions on the implications of the concept for the objectives, organization, content and methods of education.

### **Educational Objectives**

The concept of life-long education forces a redefinition of educational objectives and brings us back to focus all education solely and singly on man and his growth and development. In primary and secondary education, the purpose will not be the passing of exams but the capacity of each pupil to learn and grow. In universities it will not be getting a degree and the wild scramble for grades and class but the ability of the undergraduate to know how and where to seek information and use it. In the libraries so filled today with books that there is no place within it to study, the user will once more find in it simply one more source of information. In the business firm, co-operative and trade union, in the farm and factory, work and leisure will gradually cease to be an oppressive drag on the worker's daily monotonous existence but become part of a continuous process of living and learning. Thus the centre of all education, of all teaching and training, of all learning becomes man—man as child, as youth, as worker, as farmer, as head of family, as businessman, as administrator, as scientist, as teacher, as politician; with concern for individual abilities rather than with increasing production, with blazing new trails for civilization rather than treading wearily the old beaten paths, with knowing oneself instead of cheating others, with satisfying one's continuing, consuming curiosity rather than over-specializing one narrow and monotonous task.

### **Educational Organization**

Life-long education is introducing profound changes into the organization of education. First the planning of education has been hitherto and traditionally restricted to school education. Why? Because this sector of education has been susceptible to quantification. It has dealt with target figures of future or enrolled students, future or serving teachers, school building costs, books and equipment estimates. These quantitative parameters for educational plans were derived from manpower estimates to which were added a certain dosage of what is called consumption education. This was basically the approach of the educational chapters of India's first three Five Year Plans and the draft Fourth Plan. It is a pity that the planners were defining education in terms of school education at a time when mass media was blowing the educational doors wide open. The comparative pedagogic effect of all their

teachers on primary school children in Madras City as against that of just two actors, MGR and Shivaji Ganesan, ought to give the educational planner in the State of Madras much food for thought.

Educators were of course disturbed at, what they called, the quantitative approach to education and its planning. Many kept insisting that it was the quality of education which was decisive for society and that behind all this facade of figures, parameters, manpower estimates and opportunity costs, lurked the individual, the pupil, the child, man whose spirit cannot be quantified, whose mind cannot be measured and whose conscience is beyond mathematical equations. This of course does not mean that quality cannot be quantified, as otherwise quality becomes synonymous with vagueness.

Equally, for quite other reasons, the economist was aware of the partial nature of the planning of school education. For one thing, the opportunity cost concept forced the economist to avoid the temptation of the educational planner, to restrict his vision to school education. From Adam Smith's cutting commentary on literacy : the most essential parts of education to read, write and account, can be acquired at so early a period of life that the greater part even of those who are to be bred to the lowest occupations have time to acquire them before they can be employed in occupations :<sup>19</sup> to Soviet economist Strumilin's careful computation of the comparative costs of adult and school education in their effects on the workers' productivity :<sup>20</sup> on to more recent computations of the pay-offs of school education and adult illiteracy in

19. *Wealth of Nations*. A. Smith, London, 1952.

20. Years	Adult Education Only	School and Adult Education
1st year	0.16	0.30
2nd year	0.15	0.23
3rd year	0.14	0.15
4th year	0.13	0.11
5th year	0.11	0.08
6th year	0.08	0.04

Source : International Social Science Journal No. 4. S. Strumilin. *The Economics of Education*, 1962.

Venezuela;<sup>21</sup> the economists have always approached schools as institutions specializing in the production of training, as distinct from firms which are institutions that offer training together with production, and some schools like those for barbers specialize in one skill while others like universities offer a large and diverse set of skills. For the economist, schools, firms and farms are substitute sources for particular skills. He has been aware that such substitution takes place through shifts over time.<sup>22</sup> I can still hear the American economist Anderson pleading with the educators at the International Conference last month in Paris to count the opportunity cost of appointing guidance specialists in schools and advocating a more economical alternative to that of creating in some poor African countries a new cadre of educational planners. For the economists, learning and working, teaching and time, have complementary elements and relations. Further, in developing tools for measuring the internal and external productivity of education, the economist has had to treat the whole of education—school and out-of-school as a continuum.

The economist's universe of discourse carries him even further. He knows that in the pre-industrial and industrial system, there is necessarily a decreasing investment in education relative to growth in GNP. The demand in industry and agriculture for educated personnel is less than the graduation of the schools.

21. Average Income by Level of Education and Age

Level	Age	Annual Income in Bolivars (1 Bolivar=1.75 rupees)
Illiterate agricultural worker	13—18	1,000
"    "    "	19—65	1,500
Illiterate industrial worker	13—22	2,500
"    "    "	23—65	3,750
Primary Education	13—22	5,000
"    "    "	23—65	7,500
Secondary Education	18—32	12,000
"    "    "	33—65	18,000
University Education	22—35	30,000
"    "    "	36—50	45,000
"    "    "	51—65	58,000

Source : *Informe sobre el sistema fiscal de Venezuela*.  
Vol. II. 1958, Caracas.

22. *Human Capital*. G.S. Becker. Columbia University Press, New York, 1964.

In technology, university enrolments are lower than demand.<sup>23</sup> There is declining interest in part-time studies and further education. There is little demand for in-service training or the technical updating of workers, farmers and those employed in the services. But he also knows from his analysis that the key factor of economic growth under the coming post-industrial society will not be capital and labour but mass culture and education, consumption and services, health care, trade and human contacts, recreation, leisure and co-operation. This means that in the society of the future, all our current dreary controversies as to whether investment in man is a concept virtually empty of theoretical content,<sup>24</sup> whether it is capital saving or capital consuming, whether or not it is really consumption expenditure will be a matter of interest only to the archivist. Investment in Man will be at the heart of economic growth. The development of Man will become an independent factor, not a residual<sup>25</sup> factor of economic progress. There will be no over-investment in human resources.<sup>26</sup> All growth will depend essentially on the human factor—inventiveness, teaching, information, social participation, human welfare and cultural creation. So a universal and modern educational system will acquire an independent role of its own with no subordination to the Gods of production, which will naturally involve a complete change in pedagogy. Necessity will no longer be the Mother of invention. Invention will be the Mother of necessity. Man's existence will depend on his own decision. He will be master of his fate and lord of his universe.

But that is in the future. In the meanwhile, educational planning must break through its traditional quantified school frame and cover all of education. The new definition of educational planning which emerged from the International Conference on Educational Planning meeting in Unesco House last August, represents an important step forward for educational planners and administrators. The 96 governments represented there declared :

Educational planning can only be an effective instrument of comprehensive development if it contributes, through the

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- 23. *International Role of the University* : World University Service, Leysin 1968.
  - 24. *Asian Drama*, Vol. III, Chapter 29.
  - 25. *Productivity Trend in the United States*. J.W. Kendrick. Princeton University Press. New York 1961.
  - 26. *Education, Manpower and Economic Growth*. F. Harbison and C. Myers. McGraw-Hill. New York 1964.

choices which it makes possible, to a renewal of the education process. The latter should be conceived as a *permanent*—life-long—process, and the confusion arising out of traditional identifications between education and school education, between school and presence of the teacher, between teacher and salaried official should be resolved. Thus, for instance, participation in non-school education tends to increase, both in developing countries where certain types of community action can profitably replace formal education and in developed countries where the potentialities of individualized education—particularly programme learning—are being offered to increasing numbers. Further, education shall be *comprehensive* reflecting the many aspects of development which it is called upon to serve.<sup>27</sup>

Unesco's General Conference last month established this declaration as the directives for the future.<sup>28</sup> One's imagination boggles at the effect of this concept and directive on the entire educational structure. Primary schools will become schools for the local community, second-level schools, general, technical and agricultural, will function for twenty-four hours each day staying open for inservice education of workers, farmers and those in the services. The universities will offer a year-round programme so that all can go to college, full time, part time or by correspondence.

### Adult Literacy

Thus, the concept of life-long education breaks through the established compartmentalization of the educational system. There can no longer be the familiar antinomy between science and arts, the humanities and technology, general and vocational learning, utilitarian and non-utilitarian education, primary versus secondary, school versus adult literacy. Each country and each society will have to apply the concept to the totality of its educational legacy and learning needs. For India, we have a ten point canvass of our educational legacy set forth in the *Asian Drama*<sup>29</sup> and an even more moving and arresting picture in the report of the Education Commission.<sup>30</sup> Its tragic

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27. Final Report: International Conference on Educational Planning. Unesco, Paris 1968.
  28. Resolution on the Future Programme for Education. 15 C/PRG/9 Annex. Unesco 1968.
  29. *Asian Drama*, Vol. III.
  30. *Education and National Development*. Report of the Education Commission. Government of India. New Delhi 1966.

reminder that India in 1961 was more illiterate than in 1951, and even more so in 1966, is matched by its three-stage literacy programme—of literacy instruction, teaching of knowledge and skills to solve daily problems and continuing education. How can you speak of life-long education when there is life-long illiteracy, of continuing education when there is continuing mis-education, of never-ending learning when 67.4 per cent of the country's work force, 82-87 per cent of jute and mining workers, 81 per cent of plantation personnel, have only un-education?<sup>31</sup> It is here that the three point programme put forward by the Education Commission to arrest the growth of illiteracy in 10 to 15 years calls for full and immediate action: a five-year primary school for all, part-time education to the 11-14 year olds who have not gone beyond primary school and vocational education to young adults of 15-30 years.

As a beacon light to this programme, there is being planned both a selective approach concentrating on large industrial and commercial concerns, public sector undertakings, intensive agricultural and other development projects and social welfare programmes with a built-in literacy element as well as a mass approach still using the concept of literacy derived from the idea of life-long learning.<sup>32</sup> The sorry record of earlier literacy programmes, based on romantic and abstract concepts of rights and justice and unrelated to man's real concerns, is known only too well: continuing strife and factions in the community, radio sets lying unused, the locked dust-laden village library and the almost complete lack of mobility of the people.<sup>34</sup>

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31. *Report on Literacy Among Industrial Workers*. Committee on Plan Projects. Government of India. New Delhi 1964.
  32. See *National Policy on Education*. Ministry of Education. New Delhi 1968. The mass approach involves education in agriculture, health and civics to the illiterates using traditional media such as dance, drama, song and puppet theatre and mass media such as radio, films and, when we have it, television. Through these media, change can be induced in three ways. The illiterate masses can be informed about the desired changes, the means of achieving them and their relation to each person's needs and aspirations. Second, in the ensuing dialogue between and among the people alternative means can be freely discussed, popular participation assured and literacy gradually built in. And so there is the continuing educational tool, to teach people to read and write, to instruct children and adults in farming, industrial and service sectors, and to train all those who desire and need special formation.
  33. *Village Meeting Places: A Pilot Enquiry*. National Fundamental Education Centre. New Delhi 1959. Only 5.5 per cent of our people move out of their State. In the United States 22.4 per cent move.

Our population problem is a further functional urgency which risks miring all our best efforts and hard-won achievements. Normally the effect of economic development is first to reduce mortality rates and after a certain time lag the fertility rates, so that a demographic equilibrium is reached. In India, it has been medical technology and not economic development that has sharply reduced mortality rates, leaving fertility rates untouched. The government seeks to reduce birth rates through a planned and directed family planning programme. The fertility rate depends on millions of personal decisions and hoary cultural traditions. The family planning scheme will thus succeed only in so far as it is part of the functional education of the adult. How can he or she be brought to understand that a small postponement (by two years) of the female age of marriage to 19 years will reduce the birth rate by 20 points in the next 25 years and 9 points in the first five years? Here is another call for action by adult women educators.<sup>34</sup>

It is when literacy is so sited in man—rural or urban—in his actual setting, when it speaks to him as a producer or consumer, involving him in the change of his conditions and his modes of life, when it is part of the global development of society, and so enables him to participate in the community and control his life, that it becomes what Unesco has come to call functional literacy. Such functional literacy which enables this phase of adult education to fulfil its mission is simply the application of the theory and practice of life-long education to it.

At the international level, which also is growing more illiterate daily, 52 countries have requested Unesco's co-operation in establishing such functional literacy programmes. To date there are such projects in 13 countries being aided by Unesco, in co-operation with FAO and ILO and financed by UNDP. In India, Unesco is joining FAO and the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Information in functional literacy activities aimed at improving agricultural productivity in an area covering 32 million acres scattered over some 100 districts round this great land mass. The educational programme will be carried mainly through special rural broadcasts by AIR, radio forums and listening and discussion groups formed and led by the adult audiences. This is for Unesco the first large-scale programme using communication as a means of introducing innovations. The relation between

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34. Indian Population Bulletin. Number III. Office of the Registrar General, New Delhi 1966.

innovation and functional education is a close and decisive one as recent studies in Mysore have shown.<sup>35</sup>

### Content of Education

A general acceptance of the concept of life-long education will call for drastic reform and restructuration in the curricula and programmes of study and training at all levels and forms of education. As all areas of knowledge are moving, changing and transforming, the content of education cannot even attempt being encyclopaedic. It cannot aim at covering or providing a ready-made system of knowledge, as today's system is tomorrow's debris. Education and training programmes based on acquiring pieces of knowledge will be self-defeating. The Jack of all trades will not only be master of none, he will be a walking menace. Research on the frontiers of human intellect shows that while man's abilities can be expanded indefinitely, his ability to retain factual knowledge is limited.<sup>36</sup> Does this leave no place for knowledge and information in a life-long learning process? No, knowledge must be taught, information must be purveyed, only along with the ability to retain and use that knowledge and information, and also along with the ability to acquire fresh information and use it purposively. So the educational curricula should cover the structure of a subject, involving the transfer of the students' skills to ever newer spheres and making universal the pupils' creative abilities.

The implications for higher education as the domaine no longer of an elective elite but the home of the masses, are even more drastic and far-reaching. Its programme content should revolve around the cultivation of abstract thinking attuned to various levels of reality, understanding of logical systems and cultivation of systems approaches and analysis. As science is the leading force in our nascent civilization, the scientific mind and scientific modes of thinking are more important than memorizing the findings of science. As science will be the leading force in the future, education is the crucial variable of the present. Because the scientific and technological world of tomorrow will be ushered in by the pupils now in school, their education today is decisive. It is on their preparedness, their

35. Farmer characteristics associated with the adoption and diffusion of improved farm practices. W. B. Rahudhar. *Indian Journal of Agricultural Education*. No. 17, 1962.

36. Final Report. Symposium on Brain Research and Human Behaviour, Round Table III—Learning and Memory. Unesco 1968.

creative abilities and mental dynamism manifested not in three gruelling hours in the examination hall but throughout their lives, that the progress of society will depend. In fact, it is already clear that the society with the best scientific, educational cultural system will in future occupy the position in the world once held by societies with the greatest natural wealth and more recently by those with the highest industrial potential.<sup>37</sup> It is India's educational system which is forming and guaranteeing its scientific potential.

### Methods of Education

The concept of life-long learning meets the explosion of knowledge and deluge of information by making education provide its pupils—the child, youth, adult, worker, teacher, family man—not a fixed sum of knowledge but a basis and technique for life-long creation—a creation and inventiveness he must have when his teacher is not there to tell him what to do. The school and the training institute will have to turn the object of education into the subject of and for his own education. Education must at all stages become self-education, so that with the tools acquired in school the adult will continue through life his education as teacher, worker, family and businessman through all the means at his disposal and which will be put at his disposal—the library, mass media, camps, seminars, training institutes.

This means that the normal teacher-student relationship is now of the past—the teacher through his *cour magistral* pouring forth vials of ersatz wisdom and the student being a passive immobile receptacle. Educational methodology, the training techniques and the learning process are drawing from the secret of the success of adult education with its true pedagogic and andragogic tradition. All education is a dialogue. All teaching is a contest. All learning is seeking and strife. All will be teachers and all will be students simultaneously and perennially. It is, at least in part, for the recovery of this truth of education and its concomitant view of life and society that we are witnessing the revolt of students in over 54 of Unesco's Member States in just one year, 1968, and withdrawal of youth from society. The problem of a society without the participation of its major component—youth—is like trying to play Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. That non-participation and the resulting loneliness, is for me the root cause for much of the desperation,

37. *Civilization at the Cross Roads*. 2 volumes. R. Richta. Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Prague 1967.

violence, delinquency, with their current outlets in affluent societies of self-assertion, dreadful noises which pass for music, wild driving and drugs. The violence will subside in time, the withdrawal will become a thing of the past but change and unpredictable change will be the constant of our societies, conflict and strife in the intellectual and spiritual areas the order of the day, and so too dialogue and debate, the permanent technique of teaching. That at least is the basis on which Unesco's renovated youth programme is being built and it is also an outgrowth of the concept of life-long education.<sup>38</sup> That concept has proved to be a risky one for all, including Unesco, as the Round Table of thirty university students and teachers meeting in September in Unesco House, showed when they concluded :

Some of the participants agreed that Unesco is not a revolutionary body but a reformist<sup>39</sup> institution for the promotion of certain ideals adopted by its Member States. Others, however, expressed doubts as to the ability of an organisation which they regard as bureaucratic and hierarchically structured to devise and conduct effectively action programmes concerned with young people and in particular university students.

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38. Unesco's General Conference last month confirmed this theory :

Life-long education, as a concept and as an activity, provides a partial response to the problems of youth in so far as these are an indication of a rapidly changing society. A growing awareness of these problems must be the starting point of general progress on the part of society where the interests both of students and of young urban and rural workers are directly concerned.

The universities must modernize, expand and strengthen their role as centres of higher education and research by involving administrators, teachers and students in a common effort to make the values of universal humanism accessible.

Reference : 15 C/78 Rev. Unesco 1968.

The unexampled speed with which Minister Edgar Faure obtained parliamentary approval for the orientation law reforming higher education in France is based on three principles ; student participation in university management, university autonomy and freedom for political thought and action within the universities and non-compartmentalized university programmes of study and research. Given our speeding world and the economy and deflationary drives of the country, the only question left is whether the Minister will have the time (one year) and resources with which to implement this revolutionary and far-sighted reform plan.

39. The derisive label "reformist" is youth jargon for an old fuddy-duddy, hopeless reactionary.

They further declared that :

Guidance should continue throughout the period of study to enable each student to find his way at a level in keeping with his capacities. This guidance takes into account social motivations and the individual talents of each student, but seems dangerous to some people, in so far as it can lead to an integration of minds in a system of pre-existing conditioning held in many ways to be arbitrary for students. This danger is all the more serious in that guidance is given from the beginning of the course of study.

The emphasizing of this fear that conditioning may destroy the possibility of criticizing the system itself, is at the root of the desire expressed by some of the Round Table to move away from the context in which the problems arise. In their view, the discussion turned upon access to higher education and guidance as viewed by contemporary society. The study of these two undeniably fundamental aspects of higher education is therefore not sufficient in a discussion of the role and nature of higher education in contemporary society. Several participants stressed that the younger generation has now become a considerable social force which has to be taken into account. It can influence society as an integrated group of a distinct quality and having its own aims, aspirations and forms of cultural and political action.

A section of the younger generation opposes a purely quantitative conception of the problems of access to higher education, and seeks an examination of qualitative problems. It holds that quantitatively, one can only improve the existing system at the technical level, without questioning it or transforming it. It wants to ask basic questions such as—access to what form of higher education and with what in view and guidance for whom and to what end?<sup>40</sup>

And the methods of selection and grading in our educational system based on unpedagogic methods of teaching and learning are slowly dying (the disruption of exams by students is no passing or isolated phenomenon) and must be replaced by a scientific system of evaluation and personal judgment.

And when this system of management and learning techniques spreads over our entire educational and training system,

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40. Final Report. Round Table on the Nature and Role of Higher Education in Contemporary Society. Unesco, Paris 1968.

the school will no longer be the present austere, bare, dreary, forbidding walled-in emptiness which stands unused for fifteen hours each day, keeping out the masses from access to learning. Have you compared the school and the university with the temple, the cafe, the restaurant or even the average home? The day is not far off when the school and the training institute will become a fully equipped, intellectually alive and spiritually bustling home for all men and women who will all have to learn all the time.

I at least visualize the school of the future as an attractive place equipped with teaching machines, electronic language laboratories, trainers and automatic testers, information storage machines, computers, closed circuit radio and television with instructional films and transparencies, tape recordings, video tapes, earphones and optophonic apparatus and xenographs. It will be a multiple internal information and communication system linked up with monster computer and central television centres outside, relieving the teacher of monotonous and routine tasks and enabling him and the students to use individual and differentiated approaches, which will call "all the human senses and sensibilities into play".

### **The Indian Demand**

As I conclude, I must confess that it is one thing—a rather facile thing—to sketch out the implications of a revolutionary idea—the idea of life-long education. It is quite another to turn into a practical programme. The development of such a programme requires long and sustained interdisciplinary research and collaboration of pedagogues, economists, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, administrators, scientists, engineers, architects, communication and management specialists. Such a task faces the inertia of society and the legacy of seemingly coherent culture. In the end, it depends on man's inventiveness and decision to save and serve man.

Is such a concept and the resulting long-drawn difficult programme of immediate and valid application to us in India today and more urgently and practically tomorrow? Here I want to call your attention to the growing literature in every country about the state of society in 1980 and 2000.<sup>41</sup> With

41. Czechoslovakia

*Civilization at the Cross Road*. R. Richta. Prague 1967.  
*Ekonomika, Zamy, Politika*. O. Sik. Prague 1962.

the single exception of the Report of the Education Commission, I note a singular absence in India of such perspective and imaginative reflections, which ought to be forthcoming from our universities and research institutes. This growing volume of forecasts of the future can be summed up in one memorable phrase : it is certain because it is impossible.

On the question as to the applicability of the concept of life-long education to our land, the ringing declaration of the Education Commission is a sufficient starting point.

Education does not end with schools but it is a life-long process. The adult has need of an understanding of the rapidly changing world and the growing complexities of society. Even those who have had the most sophisticated

#### Germany

*Der Weltlauf Zum Jahre 2000.* F. Baade. Oldenburg. Hamburg 1960.

*Deutschland 1975.* V. Cohmar. Bielefeld 1965.

#### France

*La grande metamorphose du XXe siecle.* J. Fourastie. Paris 1962.

*Vers une civilization du Loisir ?* J. Dumazedier. Paris 1962.

*Perspectives de l'homme.* R. Garandy. Paris 1959.

*Reflexions pour 1985.* Paris 1964.

*Le Defi American.* J. — J. Schreiber. Paris 1967.

#### United States

*The next 50 years in space.* D.M. Cole. Amhurst 1965.

*Prospects for America.* The Rockefeller Panel Reports. New York 1961.

*Resources in America's future 1960-2000.* Baltimore 1963.

*Commission on the year 2000.* D. Bell. Washington 1960.

*Campus 1980.* A. Eurich. New York 1968.

#### United Kingdom

*The world in 1984.* N. Calder. London 1964.

*Britain 1984.* London 1963.

*Man and his future.* London 1962.

#### USSR

*Sotsialno-ekonomicheskie problemys technicheskogo progressa.* Academy of Science. Moscow 1961.

*Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.*

Moscow 1961. Conference reports organized by the Academy of Sciences and Reflections by Millionschikov. Moscow 1965.

education must continue to learn. The alternative is obsolescence.<sup>42</sup>

The resolution *National Policy on Education* proposed by the government and adopted by Lok Sabha based on the historic report of the Education Commission translates into simple, clear, urgent and moving Indian terms the doctrine of life-long education.<sup>43</sup>

And you, the Indian Adult Education Association, in your February Round Table have carried forward this message and issued the call to action.<sup>44</sup>

While the orientation of education to make it a life-long and integrated process is of importance to Western societies with their affluence, their fast pace of life and their sense of spiritual vacuum, it is no less crucial to transitional societies like India. If our society remains indifferent to the call of life-long integrated education, more than one generation will be crippled and the process of nation building will receive a serious setback.

Is it not then time to begin ?

### **The Epicentre : Man**

The epicentre of this idea to which adult education gave birth is Man. And a Man's purpose is to advance the limitless horizons of his mind and soul, to move forward from Man the animal to Man the divine, then there can be no interregnum, no hiatus in this upward, onward march. That march, slow, steep and tortuous, leads ever so slowly but oh so surely to the spiritual and intellectual immortality which is his destiny. The importance of his life then is not measured by his successes and failures but by his constancy to truth which is the search, to compassion which is the source and to charity which is the secret. That secret of his life is not the adding of time to life but life to time, not in the pursuit of happiness but in the happiness of pursuit.

This pursuit was defined by Rene Maheu, the Director-General of Unesco, as he stood on 22nd September before the

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42. *Report of the Education Commission*. Ministry of Education.

43. *National Policy on Education*. Ministry of Education.

44. *Indian Journal of Adult Education*. No. 3. New Delhi, March 1968.

reconstituted Abu Simbel Temple in Upper Egypt and addressed the King, Ramses II :

We have come O King, to add our labours to yours in order that your quest for eternity may be preserved. In the depths of your sanctuaries thus laid bare we have discovered a truth that you never suspected, yet for which we are indebted to you since it was in serving you that we discovered it, and for which it is right, O King, that we should thank you before we leave this place. This is the truth that there is nothing lasting in the works of man except that which has meaning and value for all men. Only work done in the spirit of brotherhood can be called labour for eternity.

It is this truth, demonstrated by our presence here, that we now commit to your august keeping, O Lord of Upper and Lower Egypt, so that those who come after us to dream at your feet may meditate upon it. Tell these men, whom we shall not see, yet for whom in truth we have laboured, how Man, appearing for a moment in his universal aspect, came to this place when the waters threatened to submerge you, and how, cleaving the mountain as under, he seized your colossi and bore them to the summit of the cliff, replacing everything as you desired, so that you, the son of Ra, once the incarnation of power, its pride and its vanity, may henceforth be a symbol of brotherhood, its generosity and its splendour.<sup>45</sup>

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45. Address at the ceremony to mark the completion of the operations for saving the Temples of Abu Simbel. DG/68/14. Unesco. Paris 1968.

## SHRI JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

*23rd All India Adult Education Conference*

*30th October, 1969, Gauhati, Assam*

*(The full text of the Presidential Address for the 23rd conference is not available. However a brief summary of the address is given below :—)*

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan said that the ancient method of cultural diffusion should be revived to educate the people.

Referring to the problem of communalism in the country, Shri Narayan said that political parties having partisan approach to the problem of communalism could not face this "urgent task" of eradicating the evil. Only non-political associations like the Indian Adult Education Association, could attend to this problem.

The Sarvoday leader stressed the need to utilise extensively the mass media of education like the Television, Radio, Cinema and the Press to accelerate the work of adult education.

He laid great emphasis on education of voters and suggested that Association could ask the Election Commission and Sarva Seva Sangh to assist it in its programme.

## SHRI B. PATNAIK

*24th All India Adult Education Conference*

*15th October, 1970, Bhubaneswar, Orissa*

At the outset I must apologise on behalf of our Chief Minister who was to preside over the inaugural function. As he had to go to Delhi on another programme we had to change the programme. However, I hope, Chief Minister will be able to deliver the valedictory address.

The problem of adult education has assumed great importance after Independence. In our stride for freedom struggle under the leadership of Gandhiji, we never forget about this. Gandhiji attached great importance to the education. He has novel ideas on education which changed the entire concept of educational programme. His scheme of education was more known as 'Nai Talim' or Wardha scheme on basic education. He placed before his countrymen, particularly so before the congress workers a programme of constructive work. He laid stress on constructive programmes to prepare the country both for and after Independence. Mere achieving independence will be of no value if we cannot preserve it and raise up the Nation from the morass. He placed eighteen items of work before the country. Even after twenty two years of independence one can easily realise about his farsightedness and also its importance even today.

Of these eighteen removal of illiteracy, Adult Education, Education on Hygiene and Health and Basic Education were five items. So you can easily imagine his conception of post-independence India. Literacy training is necessary. One must know reading and writing. But it is not all. It is not an end but only a means. How does it matter if one has understanding but no knowledge of letters? Many great teachers and reformers of the world did not have a knowledge of letters. Christ and Mohammed did not have it. It was also same with the great and enlightened Ruler Akbar. Same is said of a

former Amir of Afghanistan. But they had each an almost unlimited power of understanding.

One might say that they are all extraordinary men. It is true. But it does prove that it is not impossible to do without the knowledge of letters. Even today quite a large part of world's population is illiterate, but it is not without the power of understanding. In fact, we depend for our living on that part of the world's population. Much work has been done among the villagers but the problem that really faces them is how to enable the adults to retain knowledge thus gained. The report says 'Nearly half the members who attended the class during the first session have approached the worker in charge to repeat the lessons. In fact, they had lapsed into illiteracy. The workers are racking their brains to devise means to prevent this lapse. The workers need not rack their brains at all. The lapse is bound to occur after the short courses that are given. The lapse can only be prevented by correlating the teaching to the villagers daily wants. The dry knowledge of three R's is not even new, it can never be permanent part of the villagers' life. They must have knowledge given to them which they must use daily. It must not be thrust on them. They should have the appetite for it. What they have today is something they neither want nor appreciate. Give the villagers or the workers arithmetic or geography for their use and the literacy knowledge that they must use daily i.e. reading and writing letters. They will treasure such knowledge and pass on to the other stage. They have no use for books which give them nothing of daily use.

We should provide some of the essentials of education to about tens of thousands or so of the villagers who have passed the generally accepted age for starting to learn to read and to write at school and who are living the life of house-holders while being engaged in different vocations for earnings their livelihood. We should place on this education a more liberal interpretation than is being done at present. The villagers are ignorant of many things of great practical value. They also suffer from various silly superstitions. We have to remove these superstitions and impart useful knowledge to our peasants through the medium of this. The condition in the villages from the point of view of health is deplorable. The absence of necessary and quite easily available knowledge of health is one of the potent reasons of our poverty. If the health of our people in the village could be improved thousands of rupees would be saved and to that extent an amelioration in the economic condition of our people brought about. It is evident that a peasant suffering from ill health cannot put in

as much work as one who is healthy. The death rate is higher in our country, though after the three successive plans it has been much reduced. But we have not been able to check the growth rate. In spite of all the efforts there seems to be population explosion. This has to be checked through proper and interesting education among the adults not by vulgarising the propaganda.

Our people have deep faith in religious teaching. The scriptures, Purans, Sastras and religious texts are very common among the illiterate folk. Even without reading they can quote lines of Bhagvat, stories of Ramayan and Mahabharat. Gradually a feeling has crept into our mind that all that is old is not good. We must hasten to remove that feeling and try to improve on the teachings of scriptures. The teachings of scriptures are permanent. They have been handed down from generation to generation even from the time when writing and printing was unknown. How have they been preserved ?

I would request you to examine this aspect and prepare interesting books on all aspects of life with reference to the stories of the scriptures. We have neglected our women folk. They constitute more than half the population. Though theoretically our constitution has bestowed equal rights on women due to ignorance they are unable to receive the benefits. There is no justification for men to deprive women of, or to deny to them the equal rights on the grounds of their illiteracy. But education is essential for enabling women to assert these natural rights, to exercise them wisely and to work for their expansion. Again the true knowledge of the self is unattainable by the millions who lack such education. Many a book is full of innocent pleasure and this will be denied to us without education. It is no exaggeration to say that a human being without education is not far removed from an animal. Education, therefore, is necessary for women as it is for men.

In the context of the present day planning men and women both have to play important role in shaping the society. It is no use suggesting the need or the importance. But the question lies in implementing.

What we need today the movement as started by Gandhiji. All political parties irrespective of their creed and difference must adapt this as one of their programmes, so that the very foundation of democracy may be strengthened and the purpose for which we struggled for independence can be achieved.

Government has to play its part. Money alone will not

solve the problem. It should be the part of our life programme. Men and women in whatever walks of life, if take to this vow and go back with the enthusiasm of Gandhian era, I think, we can in short time be able to eradicate illiteracy completely. It is a whole process not a part.

I congratulate the organisers of Indian Adult Education Association for their dedicated effort and I hope they should have branches in all over the country in each Taluka where young men and women should take up this challenge. Let all educated men and women take a vow to pay their debt to the society by devoting few hours in a week for this purpose.

## SHRI A. N. NAMJOSHI

*25th All India Adult Education Conference*

*30th October, 1972, Bombay*

I am extremely happy to be amongst you as a President of today's inaugural function. I must thank the Indian Adult Education Association for giving me an opportunity to meet the experts in the field of adult education in the country and from abroad. The Indian Adult Education Association has selected a very important subject for discussion during this Conference. I must also congratulate the Indian Adult Education Association for having rendered a useful service to the cause of adult education in this country in various ways. Organising conferences and seminars, according to me, is an important method of pulling together knowledge and experiences and sharing ideas and views. I can see before me and around me here many stalwarts in the field of education, and particularly adult education, who are going to guide the proceedings and discussions in the Conference.

You have just now heard the Chief Guest, Mr. Chaudhari. He has enlightened us all regarding the new concept of education, that is Life-long continuing education. The idea that man needs to educate himself, not only during his youth, but all through his life, and each age must be fully lived, pervades the philosophy of education. The terminal concept of education, that the bulk of knowledge and skill gained to solve problems in adulthood, can be imparted in childhood and youth, is exploded, and is being replaced by the concept of continuing or life-long education. The patterns of adult education have emerged out of experiences of teaching adults, in various fields. Most of these patterns, are characterised by the nature of their informality, in contrast to the formal methods, adopted in teaching children and youth, through classroom and teaching them pre-designed curricula. Most of the educators agree that for effective learning to take place, forms of organisation and methods, would be related, to the purpose of education, size of the group and the needs of the participa-

ting learners. In India, a variety of patterns of adult education, have been developed so far, each emphasising a different aspect of adult education, such as adult literacy, worker's education and continuing or life-long education. Most of the programmes worked out till today, have been some way or the other, based on, the traditional or conventional methods. But now the time has come, when we should seriously think and reconsider programme of education vis-a-vis, the challenges offered by the new age. It is no longer possible to conceive of education, which would satisfy, the needs of modern man, once for all. Education is regarded less and less preserve of educational establishment, but rather as an activity applicable to widely varying sectors of life. Wherever knowledge has to be gained, a new technique learnt, a new perspective opened up, a spiritual advancement achieved, or an intellectual communication secured, there comes in the role of education of a wider concept, oriented to the multiplicity of needs of a growing society.

It is agreed by all expert educationists, that education must be acquired and not imposed, individual playing an active rather than a passive role in the process of education. Education, in this sense, becomes an element in life, and not only a preparatory stage. It is an essential factor for human condition, at the level of both individuals and the society. Life-long education is a fundamental philosophy, which, if understood and adhered to, can manifest itself in a learning society. Life-long education is more than a programme. The basic belief in the system of life-long education, adheres to the conviction, in the ability of the learners to identify his own learning goals, to plan his own learning activities and to evaluate his own learning. A number of adult education programmes, based on traditional concept, are more social service or welfare oriented, than education oriented. In order to strengthen the educational and learning component in the development programme in the State of Maharashtra, a comprehensive programme of Gram Shikshan Mohim was tried from 1960. The basic unit of operation for this programme was chosen to be the village. The entire village community was involved in the programme covering a variety of contents, around the core content of adult literacy. For the effective implementation of this programme, services of all the official and non-official agencies were enlisted. The main goal chosen was the all round development of the village through self-help. After giving a trial for about ten years to this programme, it was found that the campaign approach could successfully catch the imagination of the village community for self-development. The adult literacy campaign, supported by the other village development activities, speedily

spread over the entire State. This programme later attracted the attention of a number of experts in the field of adult education in India and abroad. The Gram Shikshan Mohim programme got higher prestige and honour when the then Union Minister for Education, Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao said, "Maharashtra shows the way." Thereafter, a number of foreign visitors and Unesco experts paid visits to the interior part of Maharashtra to see the Gram Shikshan Mohim in action and finally this campaign got international recognition and award this year, in the form of Mohammed Reza Pahalavi Prize instituted by Unesco. I think this is sufficient proof to show that the Gram Shikshan Mohim has been successful in fulfilling the purpose of creating in the people a strong desire for continuing education. Today, we can see in the State of Maharashtra, various programmes of continuing education, in the form of adult schools, a net-work of mobile circulating libraries, farmers' training and functional literacy centres, women's continuing education centres in the form of Mahila Vikas Shalas and several other programmes of continuing education, both for men and women. The Bombay City Social Education Committee is also following the same pattern of Adult Literacy and Continuing Education, in the urban environment. It has also to its credit the honourable mention of Unesco's Mohammed Reza Pahalavi Award for the year 1969. As in the case of the Gram Shikshan Mohim, the activities of Bombay City Social Education Committee are also highly appreciated by Experts in the country and abroad, particularly the Unesco delegates, who often visit this city. This Committee runs Literacy and Continuing Post-literacy classes, continuing education programmes and a variety of co-curricular and cultural activities. It runs a unique project of Poly-valent Adult Education Centre or Shramik Vidyapeeth under the patronage of Ministry of Education, Government of India. This project is adopted by Unesco, for technical guidance and help. I am happy that the Indian Adult Education Association has selected the Bombay City Social Education Committee to be the host organisation for the Conference. I am sure they will do their best to offer their humble services to all the delegates of the Conference under the guidance of President of the Committee, Barrister M.G. Mane. I once again thank the Indian Adult Education Association, particularly Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, its President, for giving me an opportunity to be amongst you this morning. I welcome you all friends, on behalf of State Government, to this city of Bombay and strongly wish that the deliberations of this Conference will come out with useful recommendations, which will guide the workers in the field of adult education. I wish the Conference all success. Thank you.

## SHRI BARKATULLAH KHAN

*26th All India Adult Education Conference*

*4th October, 1973, Jaipur*

Sometimes education given is worse than not given. I have found some highly ignorant educated people who have neither a sense of proportion nor sense of timing nor basic sympathy with the toiling masses of the country. There is something radically wrong with our entire educational system, and I feel that adult education is a part of this educational system. The system receives the guidance and support from the various highly developed, intellectually organised, educational institutions which have very little to do with the common masses.

### **The Extra Energy**

I highly commend the idea that every graduate should try to educate at least one person. Perhaps it will not be out of context to quote an example about one of the Scandinavian countries where the students went and burnt a part of their university. A Commission was appointed. It looked thoroughly into the entire structure of the educational system. Did the students have any grievance? They said no. Was there any facility missing? They said no. The conclusion of the Commission was that the extra energy of youth was not properly channelised and the going people felt at a loss and they felt that in some way they should use their extra energy; and one easy course open to them was to burn the university. The challenge to educate at least one person or a similar National Service programme can provide an outlet to the pouring energy of our youth.

### **Common Man**

Here I would like to say that we should not forget that the common ignorant man is the backbone of this country. We should also not forget that it is hard common sense which has

sustained this country during the centuries of foreign rule. Let us also not forget that he is aware that social changes are coming and he wants to be a part-and-parcel of it. In order to make him a part-and-parcel of the new developments you will have to give him certain opportunities. Educated parents are in a much better position to develop a child and develop the adulthood of their children.

If anybody did not have the benefit of education it was not his fault. He was either working as serf or he was working as a labourer with hardly any leisure to be educated. But this is also true that whenever the call was given by the country and the people of the country they were the first to offer themselves. Whether it was a question of fight for Independence, whether it was a question of a campaign for social change, he was always on the forefront. One person we conveniently go and take what we want from is the villager, whether he is an artisan, peasant or a small trader. Look at land revenue. However, small the holding of a cultivator, he has to pay land revenue. City dwellers are not expected to pay any income-tax if their income is less than about Rs. 500/- per month.

### **Organise the Rural Masses**

The rural masses are not organised, and people who are not organised are bound to suffer from many disadvantages, which in the organised society we take as a matter of course. Take for example, filtered water. We take this necessity as a matter of course. You go to the villages, you would not find filtered water. You will find the tank from where the cattle is drinking water, human beings are also drinking. We have to make the unorganized villager conscious that even these amenities which they are not provided can be obtained ; there are alternatives. I am sure, adult education can go a long way in preparing the countryside for socio-economic changes which are essential in the present times.

### **Identify Yourself with Masses.**

The chances are that today villager is much more aware because he knows where the shoe pinches, and when the shoe pinches he knows what is the remedy. So unless there is an identification of our cause with his cause we cannot succeed.

I would also say that the educator has to keep in mind the saying : do in Rome as the Romans do. In other words, if you are willing to live with them, perhaps occasionally get infected by not drinking the filtered water, then there will be a common language ; not a language of teaching but the language of

brotherhood, a fraternity where the adult education workers will be on the level with the learners. To be a superior to any one, or to claim to be superior to anyone, is the easiest thing to do and the moment we start on the assumption that the villager is ignorant, we are educated, then we are automatically creating a barrier and such a barrier is bound to create reservations on both sides.

### **Instruments of Change**

Another point I want to mention is related to creating a proper consciousness among the people connected with adult education programmes. It might not be out of place to mention that a malaise of our education has been that very little is known about the peoples' history in India. Generally the eras are interpreted in terms of emperors, rajas, navabs and viceroys. It is very rarely that you come across books and teachers where emphasis has been laid on educating the people about how people have lived; their manners, their habits, agrarian relationship and the various other factors that have been part-and-parcel of our life, and will perhaps remain so, howsoever educated and developed we may become. Here again, I would like to say in all humility that today we must be very clear in our mind that when we go to an adult education centre, what are we teaching. Are we talking about democracy, are we talking about secularism or are we indulging in the old fables which were created for the benefit of the countrymen and women of this country to be divided, further divided and sub-divided.

I feel sure that a very heavy responsibility is cast upon the voluntary agencies which deliberate and take part in such matters so that they may become pioneers in creating a sharp instrument for bringing about the changes for which the people of this country are clamouring for a long time.

### **Correct Perspective**

Similarly I would like to submit that a correct perspective has to be placed before the people who participate in your adult education programmes. Of course, it should not be party oriented; whether it is the Congress Party, the Communist Party, the Jana Sangh, or the Socialist Party. I do not want any political message to be communicated through adult education. But the message that has to be brought home is that this country is one and we remain with this country. Sink or swim with the country, that our progress is not to be confined to isolated pockets and or to show windows but it has to be the progress of the entire people of this country. So long as

poverty, ignorance and exploitation remain the people are bound to suffer, and there is always a point beyond which no human being will suffer and beyond that point there comes a sense of frustration and this frustration leads to rebellion and ultimately to revolt. And, therefore, it is here that your help is solicited not to misguide them but to paint correct picture of the country as it exists today. What are the efforts that the society as a whole is making; it is not a credit to any particular Government or to a particular party but it is the participation of the people of this country who are slogging hard to find a solution and reach a stage where the standards of living are reasonably consistent with those of many of us who are affluent but do not claim to be affluent.

We cannot minimise that results of our efforts so far. The development in this country need not be underestimated. I have been to many developing countries and I can very safely keep my head high that we have done much better than many other so called developing countries. But we should also make the people aware that no country can progress without hard work. No country can have a future without hard work. And no country can survive for a long time if it is basically parasitical.

# RESOLUTIONS

## CHANGING CONCEPT OF ADULT EDUCATION

The heventies is characterised by an accelerated rate of social Scange, breaking down of many traditional norms and barriers, explosion of knowledge, new expectations and highly advanced technology.

Alongside of these features, certain forces in the country are preventing the emergence of new values, even threatening to destroy some of the fundamental values cherished for ages by the society. The growth of indiscipline, fanaticism, intolerance, corruption, selfishness, inefficiency and disregard of duty in national life are examples of these adverse trends.

In this context adult education has a special and positive role to play in rescuing this generation from the situation described above and promoting and strengthening deeper human values. Adult education for social responsibility including its political and economic aspects is probably the most important task of the present decade.

This Conference, therefore, urges on the Indian Adult Education Association to organise a workshop to develop a suitable plan of action on the part of the various organisations in the adult education movement to meet this challenge. The workshop should discuss all aspects of the situation—the nature, scope and content of the programme as also the methods and techniques to be used for realising the objectives. It should also take up the production of suitable literature including A.V. aids for this purpose. ...1970

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The Conference is convinced that the terminal concept of education is untenable in the present social, economic and technological context.

The explosion of knowledge following discoveries, scientific inventions and refinements of technology further supports this view. Knowledge acquired at the institutions of formal education becomes out of date in a few years. Moreover, true

education should be a powerful force for the integration of the various facets of human personality.

The Conference feels that the concept of life-long education calls for a transformation in the field of formal education too. Moreover, the society needs vast expansion of adult education both for those, who have entered their professions and those in positions of leadership. It will require well-thought action in developing environmental, informal and community-based education. All aspects of education must be inter-related so as to become an on going integrated and evolutionary process.

Class-room technique is generally inadequate for the education of the adult men and women. Use of correspondence courses, group discussions, the radio, television and numerous other methods have to be employed to make the concept of life-long education a reality.

The Conference affirms that poverty, disease and ignorance are major evils, which affect the present day society in India. They cannot be eradicated without making people aware of their causes and how to conquer them. ...1972

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### PROGRAMMES AND METHODS OF ADULT EDUCATION

The Conference regards with great satisfaction the launching of the High Yielding Varieties Programme in fifty districts in the country in the first instance, as a scheme of great potentiality for future ; it is gratified to know that functional literacy of the farmers involved in the programme and their occupational education will be an integral component of the Programme. It calls upon the State Education Directorates to give their full support to the Programme by producing instructional material focussed on functional literacy of farmers and organising as large a number of groups of illiterate farmers as possible in which this material may be used with success. It also calls upon competent non-governmental agencies in the country to co-operate with the State Education Departments in the preparation of the needed instructional material for functional literacy. ...1967

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The Conference has noted with deep concern the recent

manifestations of communal views in certain parts of the country. In the opinion of the Conference it is in the minds of men that the poison of communalism develops and provides the inflammable material for the outbreak of riots and cruel acts. Therefore it is through the study of the thinking processes and the directing of those processes into right channels that the menace will have to be combated.

Being a non-partisan and non-political body the Indian Adult Education Association can and should organise a study and formulate programme howsoever, modest, in areas and town that have suffered from these dangerous trends or that have the potential for communal tension and activities. The Conference requests the State Governments as well as the Government of India to encourage a special education campaign against communalism through the assistance of non-political and non-partisan bodies. Such a campaign will have to concentrate effort at the grass-roots and should be based upon a careful analysis of the communal occurrences and their causes and should attack the problem in a systematic, planned and practical manner rather than as a diffused and general propaganda.

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Adult Education Conferences have in the past often referred to the tremendous impact of the cinema and other mass media on the attitudes, behaviour and knowledge of the adult, and commented upon their potential for adult education. The Conference notes that hitherto the consideration of these media has tended to be confined to such specialised forms as the documentary films which do not constitute the main stream of these media such as the commercial films and popular magazines. While recognising with sincere appreciation the pioneering work of a few noted film-directors and producers who have produced some truly remarkable films with marked accent on social and aesthetic values, the Conference cannot escape the feeling that commercial films have in general tended to be indifferent to the demands of social purpose and adult education in a broad sense. In fact sometimes their effect has been to obliterate whatever feeble impact the documentary can have.

In the opinion of the Conference the time has come to seek the involvement of the producers and controllers of these popular aspects of mass media in the endeavour of the nation towards adult education.

The Conference, therefore, invites the leaders of the

commercial film world, producers, directors, actors and financiers to discuss with the leaders and institutions in the field of adult education, the ways and means of promoting adult education through the medium of feature films. The Conference would further like to make it clear that any steps to introduce the element of adult education in the feature films should be taken consistent with aesthetic requirements and wider social purposes.

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This conference is convinced that adult education for promoting national integration is necessary not only for the literate or the relatively less educated but is essential for all the citizens of the country so that the nation as an integrated and unified force can work whole heartedly and harmoniously to achieve the goals set out in the constitution.

The Conference, therefore, recommends that in view of the importance of national integration in the life on the people, programmes for the promotion of national integration should form an integral part of all adult education activities.

In order to meet the requirements of adult education and functional literacy in a developing country like ours and to promote national integration, it is necessary to revise the present syllabus of adult literacy classes.

The Conference, therefore, requests the Indian Adult Education Association to organise Workshops to revise the syllabus content in the light of current needs and to prepare suitable text books based on the revised syllabus.

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This Conference is convinced that Adult Education and Social Welfare are allied fields of service and should work together hand-in-hand for promoting social development on effective lines in the country. The Voluntary Social Welfare organisations have adequate resources and facilities for lending themselves effectively for the promotion of adult education activities as a supportive programme.

For this purpose the technical guidance in adult education and the supply of supplementary reading materials and teaching aids will, however, have to be provided by Adult Education organisations.

The Conference, therefore, calls upon the Indian Adult

Education Association to work out a system of cooperation jointly with the Central Social Welfare Board and other voluntary organisations for the promotion of the programmes of adult education by the social welfare organisations in the country. ...1969

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This Conference is of the opinion that any attempt to educate the adults in the country must also include about the ways of ensuring a small family for a better family, a better community and a better nation. Adult Education should also create in the people a desire for a better standard of living and for the attainment of higher economic objectives.

Before integrating family planning in the programme of adult education, however, it would be desirable to organise training programmes for the adult educators engaged in this programme.

The Conference urges upon the Indian Adult Education Association to work out a programme of integrated approach in association with the family planning organisation so that while on the one hand, the adults are provided education, they are at the same time, enabled to learn about regularisation of personal behaviour and its social implications. ...1969

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Considering that the Government is itself a big employer, the Conference expects the States to take special interest in making its illiterate workers and employees functionally literate and in organising progressive schemes of continuing education for its employees.

In this connection the Conference deeply appreciates the educational arrangements organised by the Defence Ministry for all ranks of its personnel. This is an example for other Ministries, industrial enterprises and departments of the States to emulate. ...1969

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The theory and practice of cooperation should be an integral part of the programme of adult education. This Conference therefore urges upon the cooperative movement to conduct adult education programmes as its function to promote social awareness among its members and the people in general. ...1969

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This Conference repeats its view that there is need for close cooperation between the Adult Education and the Trade Union movement. The Conference believes that such cooperation will permit the Adult Education movement to use an important institution of democratic society for effective educational work, for general progress and for the furtherance of its aims and ideas. This would at the same time, be a great support to the Trade Union movement for achieving greater strength and better functioning. ...1969

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Our country is faced with the problem of extensive population growth. It is a complex and controversial subject and yet too urgent and important to be overlooked or postponed. Because of the very high birth rate, the gap between the rich and the poor, the haves and have nots is widening with the result that all economic and social development gets nullified.

It is essential that the common man is helped to recognise the urgency and importance of population control as such a programme of family and health education is urgently called for. A skillfully planned and intelligently implemented programme of family and health education including population control, both through the spoken and written word is necessary. Audio-visual aids particularly documentaries are very effective for married couples and others approaching that position.

This Conference resolves that the Indian Adult Education Association should draw up a syllabus of the reading material for the illiterate and the neo-literate adults for producing in them an understanding of the problem and developing an attitude of acceptance and application of the various ways of population control. The Association should, in consultation and with the help of subject matter experts hold a workshop to achieve this purpose. The workshop could also plan programmes of production of audio-visual aids and other printed materials for bringing about a change in the attitude of the adult and promoting action in this respect. ...1970

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The significance and importance of intensive adult education programme is the call of the seventies. The adult men and women who are to play their important and vital role in shaping the future of this democratic society have to be prepared to discharge this responsibility in the social, economic and cultural development of the nation.

This 24th All India Adult Education Conference recommends that all enlightened citizens in general and educational institutes in particular as also social organisations, trade unions, government and quasi-government institutes should give top priority to Adult Education programmes in the national educational system. ...1970

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The 24th All India Adult Education Conference recommends to the voluntary agencies in the field of Adult Education in particular and the State departments of education in general to open high and higher secondary schools for further education of the working adults and for their all round development.

It further recommends that such schools should be duly recognised for grant-in-aid by State Governments like schools for children.

In this age of rapidly developing technology and fast changing methods of production, the workers have to play an important role in the industrial development of the country. This is, however, possible only when the industrial worker is provided with on-the-job facilities for developing his knowledge and skills to enable him to adopt with competence the new methods and techniques required for accelerating production.

The learning of new skills and development of professional competency requires sincere and devoted efforts on the part of the workers who in turn expect greater returns from the employers by way of improved living and working conditions and proportionate increase in emoluments.

This 24th All India Adult Education Conference urges upon the industrialists and other employers of skilled and unskilled labour to accept the provision of education and training facilities to the employees as an integral part of their organisation and as an incentive for such participation, frame rules for the due appreciation and recognition of the labour of those who develop their general and technical abilities and professional competence. ...1970

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This Conference notes with great concern the steady increase in the number of illiterates in the most productive age group (15 to 45 years) of the adult population. It is estimated to be in the order of 15 crores.

Before Independence the campaigns for the removal of illiteracy among adults were enthusiastically supported as essential programme for national progress. In recent years this feeling has declined, indeed there appears to be an attitude of resignation on the part of the leadership. It is even seriously argued that universal primary education would produce a new generation of literates and until then no serious harm would be done.

The Conference strongly believes that adult literacy is essential at the present stage of our economic development. Both in economic and political life the literate minority today enjoys a distinct advantage over the large mass of small farmers and labourers. Plans for removal of poverty must cover the obligation to provide to the people means of production on a footing of equality. So long as they remain illiterate they will be handicapped.

The Conference earnestly urges the Government and political and economic leadership of the country not to deny to the mass of 150 million people the skill of literacy which is a powerful factor in bringing about equality of opportunity and social justice.

For this purpose, it is the opinion of the Conference that a nation wide programme of literacy be launched in order to liquidate illiteracy within a period of 10 to 15 years, including functional illiteracy for primary producers. Active support and cooperation of non-governmental agencies should be enlisted to make the campaign effective. ...1972

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The Conference believes that self-education of the people is very important under the over-all concept of life-long education. Mass media play an important role in the self-education of the people. Film, television, radio and other audio-visual aids have a great role in the continuing education of the masses.

The production of suitable educational programmes by various mass media by itself will be insufficient for the learning process. For the proper utilization of this material, listening and viewing groups will have to be organised and motivated so that comprehension and expression are promoted through participation in such groups by the learners. The training programmes through the various media will need to be properly coordinated in order to produce the optimum results. ...1972

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## UNIVERSITY ADULT EDUCATION

The Conference welcomes the formation of the University Adult Education Association and regards the event as an important landmark in the educational progress of the country ; it also feels hopeful and gratified with the assurance given by Dr. Triguna Sen, the Union Education Minister, in his speech at the Vice-Chancellors' Conference held on September 11-13 at New Delhi that the needed funds for promoting University Adult Education would be forthcoming. The Conference calls upon the Universities and colleges affiliated to various Universities to join in strengthening the Association by becoming its active members and promoting the programmes of adult education in the areas in which they function.

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This conference repeats its feelings of surprise and concern that so far the Universities in India have made very little contribution in providing adult education. This is unfortunate.

The University is most suitable agency to render this service to the community in all fields of knowledge (including liberal education) particularly to out of school/college youth and also in the areas of highly specialised learning.

The Universities should not only organise courses for the people who are engaged in their professions, but should also extend the scope of their formal curriculum so as to include the subject of adult education as a discipline. This will have the advantage of providing qualified adult education to teach the subject.

The Universities should also conduct research in the methods and techniques of literacy work.

This conference welcomes the establishment of the University Association of Continuing Education and offers its full support, in furthering its programmes.

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This Conference repeats its feelings of concern that so far the universities in India have made so little contribution in promoting adult education. Some Universities have initiated action in this direction, but so far for a country of the size of

India with its history and heritage in arts and culture, this is a meagre performance.

The University is the most suitable agency of rendering this service to the community in all fields of knowledge (including liberal education) particularly to out-of-school/college youth and also in the areas of highly specialised learning.

The Universities should not only organise courses for the adult people who are engaged in their professions, but should also extend the scope of their studies so as to include the subject of adult education as a discipline. This will have the advantage of providing qualified adult educators to work for the universities and elsewhere.

The Universities should also conduct research in the methods and techniques of literacy work.

The Conference welcomes the establishment of the Indian University Association for Continuing Education and offers its full supports in furthering its programmes. ...1972

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## TRAINING

This conference is convinced that the people in the lowest income-group *i.e.* small farmers, landless agricultural labourers, industrial workers, craftsmen and various other kinds of workers, should participate in the process of economic development in order not only to raise their income but also to improve their standards of living.

Appreciates the commitment of the Government to this objective in providing credit facilities to small farmers and agricultural labourers and in helping other handicapped people in other areas of life.

Welcome the declared intention of the Planning Commission to provide in the Fifth Five Year Plan substantial outlays for scheme for raising the capacity of the poor, backward and handicapped sections of society for gainful employment.

Wishes to bring to the notice of the policy-makers and planners in the country that in very few of the schemes already accepted and the programmes now proposed, has any provision been made for the "built-in" training and education of the small but numerous participants and beneficiaries from the

schemes. In the opinion of the Conference, this omission is bound to defeat the accepted objectives of the schemes themselves. It is evident that unless the skills required for new technology of agriculture and industry are known to the farmers and workers, optimum results from their efforts would not be forthcoming.

Secondly, so long as the small worker and farmer is untrained and illiterate, he would have to depend upon some intermediaries for obtaining credit, for keeping accounts, preparing farm-plans etc. and would have to acquire the necessary self-confidence and

Thirdly, without training (including literacy) becoming an integral part (both financially and organisationally) of every scheme of development, its impact would be only marginal.

The conference, therefore, requests Government and the Planning Commission that for achievement of the objectives of social justice and removal of poverty, they should earmark within the outlay for these schemes for the lowest sections of the society, a small percentage, say five percent for the simultaneous and "built in" training of the participants and of beneficiaries of the schemes.

The responsibility for the implementation of the training element should be squarely placed upon those responsible for the schemes as a whole. However, for the preparation of the training element, joint teams of the subject matter departments or organisation and concerned officers or institutions of Education Ministry and its concerned organisation both at the Central and State level should be associated with the training of instructors and other personnel.

The Conference is of the opinion that for the implementation of effective and adequate programmes of adult education, under the broader concept of life-long education, the training of adult educators should receive a high priority. All available methods and medias should be utilised for the training of adult education personnel.

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### ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This Conference, while welcoming the proposed expansion of credit facilities to small farmers, craftsmen and entrepreneurs in the recently announced government policy of economic

development and bank-nationalisation, wishes to invite the attention of policy-makers to the urgent need of promoting adult education and training in the skills necessary for the beneficiaries to enable them properly to utilize the funds that would thus become available to them.

Adult Education Conferences in the past also have been emphasising the role of adult education in economic development. But the proposed release of substantially larger finances into the rural sector than ever before, make it incumbent upon governments, financing institutions and educational organisations to ensure that in all schemes for the supply of credit to farmers, craftsmen and small entrepreneurs, distinct and adequate provision is made for the training and education of the recipients of credit. This training while seeking to improve the professional skills of the beneficiaries, should not ignore the important aspects of training in citizenship and national integration.

The Conference expresses the hope that adult education organisation all over the country would be given opportunity and facilities for making a useful contribution to the building up of a broad-based structure of economic development specially in the rural areas.

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This Conference recognizes the revolutionary and far-reaching significance of the agricultural transformation currently taking place in some parts of the India as a result of the encouraging response of the farmer to new technology and his willingness to regard agriculture as productive investment.

The Conference welcomes the measures being taken by Government with the cooperation of some international agencies to organise training programmes for farmers engaged in the cultivation of high yielding variety crops. However, it is of the view that apart from the Government, the non-Government sector and voluntary organisations are also interested and involved in the success of the farmers efforts particularly agro-industries, food trade, banks and credit institutions, storage and marketing agencies etc. Likewise several non-governmental organisations in the field of adult education have special responsibility in providing education for agricultural development.

It maintains that adult education is a critical factor in promoting, stabilising and extending the process of agricultural transformation in India. Adult Education in this context

includes not only the training of farmers and other primary producers but also the understanding of agricultural problems and programmes by the intelligentsia whether directly concerned with agricultural matters or indirectly.

Moreover, even for farmers, adult education is not to be confined to the learning of skills, to apply new technology and future literacy but should also extend to wider human values and suitable uses of leisure and should enable farmers to have their own institutions at the field level for continuing education and professional needs.

The Conference, therefore, calls upon industrialists and businessmen, banks and credit institutions federations and associations of marketing trade and industries and others to consider the example of several industrial and business concerns in the west and come forward to finance specific projects undertaken by non-governmental organisations for training and education for the development and modernisation of agriculture.

The Conference further suggests to non-governmental organisations and institutions in the field of adult education to organise adult education projects as part of specific production programmes. In particular, it would be desirable for such non-governmental organisations to concentrate on three kinds of projects namely :—

- (a) production-cum-training projects for farmers and other primary producers in small compact areas,
- (b) training in agricultural matters of personnel concerned with supply of credit, inputs, marketing, processing and transport etc. and the training of extension personnel in commemoration and instructional techniques and educational methods,
- (c) education of the urban people particularly the intelligentsia on the problems and programmes of agricultural development.

The Conference requests the Indian Adult Education Association to set up a small working group of experts to draft a few model projects suitable for different situations and agencies. The contents and methods of adult education will vary according to the needs of specific production programmes and participants.

The Association should further arrange to bring together such institutes and potential financiers who could cooperate in taking up projects suggested above. ...1970

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The Conference feels strongly that the meagre resources provided for adult education have to be increased manifold for the proper economic development of the society and for stabilising its democratic process. ...1972

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The 26th All India Adult Education Conference views with concern the present situation in the country and shares the anxiety and desire of all right thinking persons to bring about a social, economic and educational change.

The Conference feels that the need for adult education is greatest in times of crises. It is fully conscious that there ought to be correlation between adult education and economic or national development. Effective efforts will have to be made for realising this purpose. If adult education is prescriptive, adaptive, irrelevant and conventional, it can even deepen the crisis instead of resolving it. To enable adult education to play a generative and transformational role it will have to be forged, chiselled and shaped appropriately. It should not merely be informative but should also help the learners to effect structural and institutional changes in society all round wherever necessary.

The Conference affirms that commitment to adult education means commitment to the interest and aspiration of the common people and to their general progress and development. Such progress can be achieved only through the active participation and involvement of the people. It is in this way, the Conference hopes, that the revolutionary potentiality and the real value of adult education at this critical juncture can be realised. ...1973

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The 26th All India Adult Education Conference feels that although there has been a tremendous investment, both in the public and the private sectors, for bringing about economic development, the results have not been commensurate with the amount used, in that the fruits of development have not reached the common man.

The Conference is convinced that lack of proper education and training of those people who are involved in the implementation of developmental plans and their beneficiaries is largely responsible for this imbalance in development.

The Conference further emphasises the need for organisation of wide ranging programmes of adult education aimed at;

- (1) improving the technical and managerial abilities of persons entrusted with the responsibility of implementation, and
- (2) involving the beneficiaries in properly understanding the various implications of the development programmes concerned.

Now that the Fifth Five Year Plan is in the final stages of formulation, this Conference strongly urges the Planners to earmark for adult education programmes including training and extension to the extent of at least 2% of the outlay provided for each sector of developmental activity for the successful and fruitful implementation of which development of human resource is a pre-requisite.

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## PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

The Conference has noted with satisfaction the inclusion of Adult Education as an item of importance in the priority list of educational tasks of the country by the Committee on Education of the Members of Parliament, and reiterates and re-affirms its resolution of last year on the Report of the Education Commission in so far as it concerns Adult Education and expresses its emphatic view that no time should now be lost by Government and other bodies in taking practical action in promoting at least the more important aspects of adult education.

The Conference notes with regret that the oft-repeated hope of the leaders of Adult Education movement in the country during the last thirty years that the Indian Adult Education Association would had a net work of Adult Education Associations in the States has so far proved elusive. It draws the attention of adult education workers in the country to the harm done to the movement at this crucial time in its history by this vacuum in the institutional set up of Adult Education in the country. Without State Associations and its effective branches in the Districts, the Indian Adult Education Associa-

tion is unable to realize its cherished objective. It, therefore, calls upon the Indian Adult Education Association and the adult education workers in the country to exert to their utmost capacity to fill this gap by organising State and, if possible, District Adult Education Associations all over the country and help them to become effective both for urban and rural areas.

This Conference notes with deep concern and disappointment that in the Five Year Plans extremely inadequate provision is made for Adult Education. What is even more distressing is that even the meagre funds which are provided are, in large parts, diverted to other purposes ; and when economies are made, the item which is almost the first to be axed is Adult Education. The Conference regards this as deplorable and against public interest.

In the light of the experience of the last few years, the Conference feels obliged to recommend strongly that the Planning Commission should put suitable amounts of money for some aspects of Adult Education and treat them as centrally sponsored schemes, and further that those amounts are clearly and definitely earmarked for that purpose so that they are not used for other purposes.

The Conference further appeals to the public and leaders in the States to urge the State Governments to make substantial provision in the State budgets for promoting Adult Education, including the endeavour to eradicate adult illiteracy.

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This Conference is gratified to learn that an important recommendation of the All India Adult Education Conference adopted more than five years ago has now been accepted by the Government of India. The Ministry of Education and Youth Services has set up a National Board of Adult Education with a wide range of functions for the promotion of adult education in the country.

This Conference welcomes this decision and congratulates the Ministry of Education for this step which will meet an important need of society. Further, it calls upon all members of the Association and other Adult Educators in the country to extend their full cooperation to the proposed Board in achieving its objectives.

The Conference feels deeply concerned to see that while

the need, value and importance of Adult Education are being widely recognised for the development programmes of the country by political leaders, legislators, administrators, scholars and educationists, some State Governments are showing increasing indifference to this subject. Not only wholly inadequate provision is being made in their budgets for the multi-lateral programmes of adult education, but some of them are also even considering the winding up of the machinery already existing for this purpose in their States. This is indeed disappointing.

This Conference, therefore, urges upon the Central and State Governments to judge the important role that the programmes of adult education and of functional literacy, will have for promoting national integration, for economic development, for social welfare, for population control, citizenship training, and for proper participation of the people in the country's affairs. They will provide the necessary human resources for the moral and material progress and prosperity of the country. Thus all effective organisations for implementation of the scheme of adult education should receive high priority in their areas.

This Conference feels surprised and disappointed that so far no effective and national plan has been formulated for eradicating mass illiteracy in the country. With the rapid growth of population the number of illiterate people is much larger than it was ten years ago. This is an alarming state and is a drag on the progress of the country and its development.

The liquidation of illiteracy in the country within a specified period of time, should receive a high priority in the plans of development.

Such a programme should be supported by the country as a whole and on a basis of national urgency.

The standard to be aimed at should be that of 'functional literacy' and not merely the knowledge of the three R's. ... 1969

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The 26th All India Adult Education Conference,

Noting with satisfaction the growing number of loyal and devoted members of the Association engaged in different parts of the country with increasing expertise and sacrificial service in the cause of Adult Education,

**Finding** an impressive consensus among the members on the nature and scope of adult education and its relation to the major problems and needs of our time,

**Feeling** that the annual Conference can move to a further stage to benefit the Association and its constituent institutional members with the valuable experience and technical expertise that the Conference can provide,

**Requests** the Executive Committee, in relation to the future Conferences, to arrange for :

- (1) A discussion on one technical subject of common interest arising from field work;
- (2) A review of the work of the Association in the preceding year;
- (3) Submission to the Conference by the Association and representatives of those affiliated agencies which are willing to do so, the programmes for the following year for review and comment. ...1973

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## ADULT EDUCATION AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

This Conference notes with satisfaction that in the Fourth Five Year Plan financial provision has been made for assistance to voluntary organisations working in the field of adult education and that there is a new and better approach with a view to enabling voluntary organisations to play a more significant role in promoting adult education.

The Conference expresses its sense of appreciation and gratitude to the Ministry of Education and Youth Services for their progressive attitude and calls upon voluntary organisations in the country working for the furtherance of the cause of adult education to take advantage of this scheme so that they make substantial contribution to the rapid development of adult education in the context of the urgent needs of modern India.

The conference hopes that the allocation provided for this purpose is not diverted or appropriated for other purposes.

This Conference repeats its feeling that it is necessary to involve voluntary agencies also in the literacy programme for farmers so that it could be made more effective and be sustain-

ed on a long term basis. It is, therefore, recommended that agencies such as adult education associations, cooperative union, and trade unions, already engaged in adult education work, should be involved in all functional literacy projects and life-long education programmes with necessary financial assistance. ...1969

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This Conference reiterates its opinion that voluntary agencies have an important role in any scheme of adult education. Adult education activities by their very nature will serve diverse needs and varied interests. No single type of organization can probably satisfy all such interests. People should be enabled to start projects for their own education. The advantage of co-operative self-directed endeavour in any kind of educational work is too obvious to need emphasis. Such efforts awaken faith among the people in themselves and help recover a sense of personal and social significance.

Non-governmental agencies are more free to use their resources with a minimum of restrictions and to select suitable personnel with greater freedom. Such agencies, however, cannot flourish without the liberal and generous support of the State. By giving aid to such agencies, Governments will secure much greater results from their funds than would otherwise be the case.

The Conference notes with satisfaction that some State Governments have taken action in associating non-official agencies in their plans for adult education work. It urges upon other States to enlist non-official enthusiasm and experience in an effective manner to build up systematic organisation of adult (continuing) education schemes in their areas.

This Conference is of the view that the Indian Adult Education Association should take the initiative in organising meetings and Conferences in each State and Union Territory of the principal office-bearers of the various organisations engaged in social and educational work.

Not only should these organisations know of one another's activities and progress, but they should regularly meet to exchange ideas, experiences and strategy of work. Thus, the comprehensive programme of Adult Education as a powerful means for social and economic development would be greatly strengthened. ...1972

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## EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORT ANALYSIS

Having considered the report of the Education Commission (1964-66) so far as it relates to adult education, the 20th All India Adult Education Conference expresses its sense of gratification over the keen awareness of the importance of adult education in national life reflected in the report. In particular, the conference has noted the emphasis which the report has placed for a massive and direct attack on mass literacy. Equally welcome is the unambiguous recommendation of the Commission calling upon the Government of India to set up a National Board on adult education; the Conference sees in this recommendation the fulfilment of an objective which the 9th Conference of the Indian Adult Education Association had formulated as early as in 1952 and which had been repeated from time to time. The Conference also endorses the declaration in the report that adult education owing to its wide and varied range cannot be regarded as the sole concern of a single Department of Government, and that all nation-building and production oriented programmes should be involved in the task of adult education so that all the administrative Departments may receive the optimum value from the human input.

The Conference appreciates that in a survey of such dimensions as was undertaken by the Education Commission, some omissions would be inevitable. Without going into minor details which would no doubt receive the attention of the Ministry of Education, this Conference would like to invite the attention of the Government of India to certain important aspects of adult education which seem to have escaped the attention of the commission and which, in the opinion of the Conference, are crucial for any programme of the implementation of the recommendations of the report.

In the first place, the few references in the report to adult education in rural areas and to rural institutes such as vidya-peeths are too meagre to reflect the urgency of Farmers Education and Training at a time when in India improved agricultural production is regarded as critical to the economy and health of the nation. The experience of the last 18 years has shown that agricultural production cannot make much impact without the use of modern technology and that for the adoption of such technology, wide-spread and well-planned education of the farmers is a basic necessity. The report has rightly devoted one Section to the education of industrial workers; the Conference is therefore all the more surprised over the absence of analysis and of well-considered recommendation on

farmers education and training, and therefore urges upon the Government of India to give prompt attention to this important aspect of adult education.

While the recommendations for the future organisation of workers' education are valuable, the over-all picture of workers education would have been better understood if the report had included in its survey the existing structure for the education of workers and examined how it could be developed further particularly in the field of technical and general education for the adult. The Conference hopes that this aspect would be considered at the stage of implementation.

The Conference finds the recommendations of the Commission on the training of adult education workers to be somewhat inadequate. Problems such as recruitment, training and placing of workers in the various fields of adult education have not been clearly identified nor is there any indication of the solutions to such problems.

The Conference had expected that the report would give not only the quantum of resources that would be required for the implementation of the programmes but also the financial procedure and the financial responsibilities of the various programmes, many State Governments tend to relegate adult education to a low category. That is one reason that in spite of elaborate targets, the actual progress in adult education is marred by sharp shortfalls. The Conference is therefore disappointed that the Committee has not expressed any view about the necessity of the Centre taking the initiative in organising adult education programmes and bearing a major share of the financial responsibility. This Conference would therefore, recommend that in the Fourth Five Year Plan, adult education should be treated as a Centrally sponsored Scheme so that the necessary resources are made available by the Government of India over and above the State Plans.

The Conference has noted with regret that the reference to the role of the voluntary agencies in adult education in the report is meagre and inadequate and seems to overlook the contribution which voluntary agencies have played both as pioneers and as sustainers of programmes of adult education. The Conference would have expected in the report an analysis of the problems that confront voluntary agencies, of the need for practical and dignified relationship between such agencies and Government, and the facilities and assistance that the agencies deserve in properly discharging their role. It is to be

hoped that the Government of India would get these aspects examined with the cooperation of the voluntary agencies.

While the Commission has examined the role of the mass media of communications the references to these media have been placed in the section concerning literacy. But the main contribution of these media lies, in the opinion of the Conference, in the field of continuing professional and liberal education for adults, and it is to be hoped that this emphasis would be borne in mind at the appropriate stage.

The Commission has made broad recommendations and in so doing repeated and underlined several noteworthy principles in the field of adult education. The application of these principles often calls for clear-cut and precise operational indications to field workers and to the administration. The Conference expresses the hope that the working out of these precise administrative measures that have escaped the attention of the commission would be treated as a major and urgent undertaking by the Government of India and the State Government.

In inviting the attention of the Government of India to the above mentioned omissions, the Conference does not mean to minimise the value and significance of the able and comprehensive analysis of adult education problems that is embodied in the report of the Education Commission. The Conference recognises that it is for the first time since independence came to India that a major Enquiry Commission of adult education has found it possible to survey the field of adult education and to declare it as an integral element in the country's educational structure. The Conference is confident that the same spirit would inspire the agencies responsible for the implementation of these recommendations. ...1966

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### CONDOLENCES

The Conference places on record its deep sense of sorrow on the very sad and untimely demise of Dr. Zakir Husain, the late President of India and formerly a Vice-President of this Association which took place on May 3, 1969 at New Delhi. In his passing away, the country has lost an eminent educationist, an able statesman and a great scholar. In his death the Adult Education movement has been deprived of a practical leader and an enthusiastic exponent. The country was the poorer by losing a patriot of noble character and moral cour-

age. The Conference deeply mourns this loss and conveys its heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family. ...1969

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The Conference expresses its sense of grief on the sudden and untimely death of Shri Maganbhai Desai, Vice-President of Indian Adult Education Association. He passed away on February 1, 1969 at Ahmedabad. In his demise the country has lost an ardent and devoted fighter for freedom and the adult education movement a far sighted and practical leader. The Conference deeply mourns this loss and conveys its heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family. ...1969

# Appendices

## OFFICE-BEARERS

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*Vice-Presidents*

Dr.M.S. Mehta  
Smt. Sulochana Modi  
Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh  
Shri R.R.' Diwakar  
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Shri A.R. Deshpande  
Shri R.M. Chetsingh  
Prof. M. Mujeeb

*Treasurer*

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Shri S.C. Dutta

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Shri H. Lingamma  
Shri J.P. Naik  
Shri Sohan Singh  
Shri N.R. Gupta  
Dr. Amrik Singh  
Shri A.V. Naik  
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Miss Usha Sundri Wali  
Shri B.R. Vyas  
Shri N.C. Bose  
Shri K.M. Jaisani  
Shri Anil Bordia  
Dr. Amrik Singh

### NATIONAL SEMINARS

- 1966 *21st to 24th August* Adult Education and Economic Development, New Delhi.  
Director : Shri Annasaheb Shasrabudhe  
Associate-Director : Shri Gore Lal Shukla  
General-Secretary : Shri B. R. Vyas
- 1967 *15th to 18th October* Utilization of Schools for the Promotion of Adult Education, Mysore.  
Director : Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta  
Associate-Director : Shri T. V. Thimme Gowda  
General-Secretary : Shri B.V.Satyanarayana
- 1968 *26th to 29th December* Adult Education for Parliamentary Democracy, Pondicherry  
Director : Dr. L. M. Singhvi  
General-Secretary : Shri J. A. Ryan
- 1969 *26th to 28th October* Adult Education and National Integration, Gauhati, Assam  
Director : Prof. M.M. Begg  
General-Secretary : Shri D. Sarma

### ROUND TABLES

- 1968 *25th to 27th February* Life-Long Integrated Education, New Delhi.  
Director : Dr. P.D. Shukla
- 1969 *July 19 & 20* Adult Education for Parliamentary Democracy, New Delhi  
Director : Dr. L.M. Singhvi

### CONFERENCES IN COLLABORATION

- 1966 *24th to 27th  
October* Educational Institutions and Adult Literacy, New Delhi.  
Under the joint auspices of the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education and Indian Adult Education Association.
- 1971 *4th to 8th  
January* Promoting Adult Education Programmes through Peoples Participation, under the joint auspices of the Indian Adult Education Association and Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Cooperation, New Delhi.
- 1972 *5th to 13th  
March* Training of Adult Educators under the joint auspices of the Indian Adult Education Association and the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, New Delhi.

