

# HOPE for the Wretched

*by Ernest E. Neal*

*A Narrative Report of  
Technical Assistance Experiences*

*Agency for International Development*

*1972*

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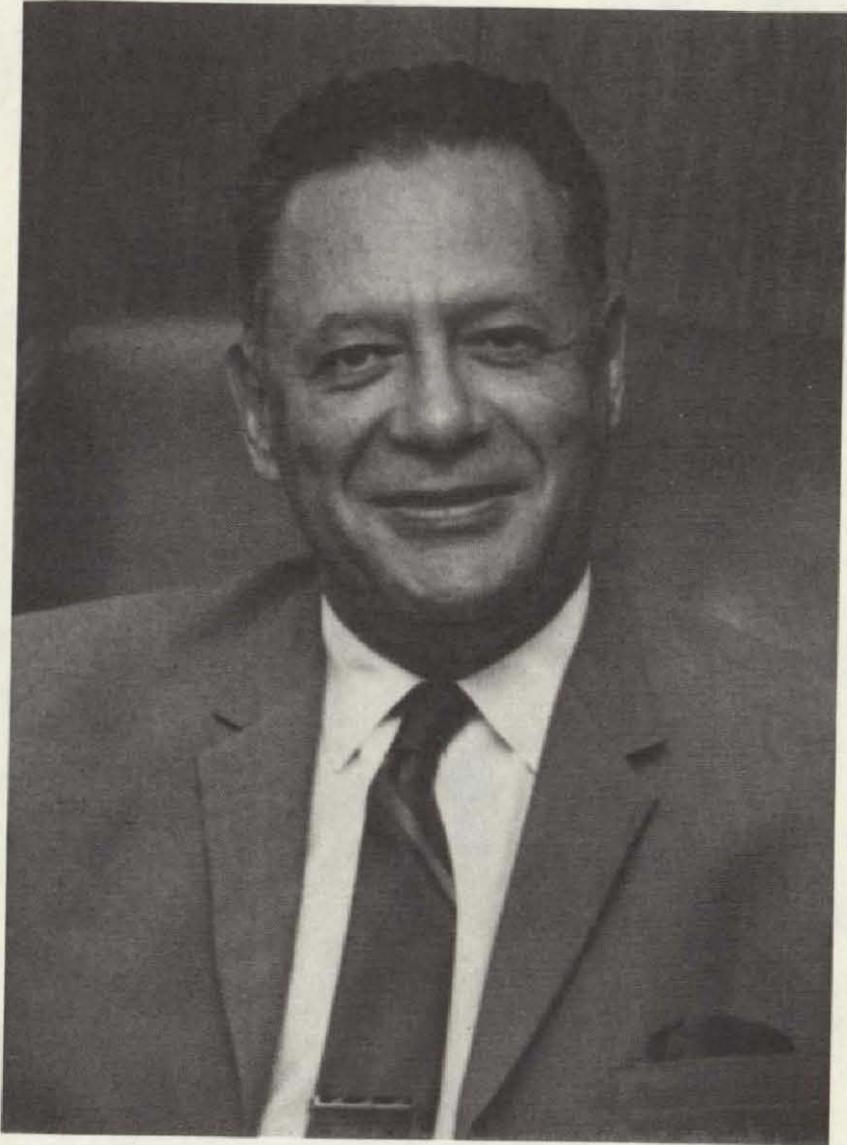
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Ernest E. Neal  
1911-1972

## FOREWORD

When Dr. Ernest Neal knew his time for living was short, he chose to use that time to document some reflections from his long experience in U. S. foreign assistance programs in Asia and Africa. Obviously, throughout his career he found excitement in working with people and helping them seek to solve their social and economic ills. This excitement is recorded in this book, which is being published by the Agency for International Development as a testimonial to a man of skill and compassion, and as a text for the practitioners of technical assistance.

*Hope for the Wretched* adds to our knowledge of human experience, for it makes more intelligible the hopes of poor peoples in the developing world. It also makes more understandable the dedication and personal involvement of those employes of AID who have given their lives to improving the well-being of their fellows at home and in the developing countries.

By writing about lessons he deemed to be most valuable from his long experience, Dr. Neal gave added truth to Carlyle's statement that "No act of a man, nothing (how much less the man himself!) is extinguished when it disappears: through considerable time it still visibly works, though done and vanished." Dr. Neal's account can, as he hoped, provide insights for those with whom he could no longer personally collaborate.

He saw importance in AID officers writing about their experiences. He urged, "Keep the writing alive. Imagine you are telling your experiences to a small group of colleagues in your living room . . . Select those experiences that you can recall without the benefit of notes, that you feel something of value was learned for yourself and that you believe has value for other technicians."

His search was not for "scholarly reports documented by footnotes." Instead, he said, "there is a need to accumulate a short, readable narrative of experiences from technicians and administrators who have demonstrated unusual talent in performing technical assistance services in a variety of situations, determining what principles have been developed and the degree of universality of these principles." The emphasis was on the writer "searching" his overseas experiences for "expertise" that might have Agency-wide utility. I find fascination in his idea that one may make a laboratory of one's experiences.

The era of U. S. foreign assistance to which Ernie Neal belonged is not repeatable. Foreign assistance has changed since the time of his first involvement, and is changing more. Perhaps even more dramatic are the changes which have occurred in the United States since Dr. Neal left his work in the rural South to serve as a community development advisor in the Philippines. The world around Tuskegee Institute today hardly suggests the heritage he left — the old Plantation South and its dependence upon a cotton culture. One can drive from Montgomery to Tuskegee now and see nothing of the mules and men of yesterday.

One must recognize how recent these changes have been in order to understand Dr. Neal's use of the concept of "traditional society" in reference to African or Asian worlds, or indeed to worlds within the United States or Latin America. His application of the concept to current rather than historical situations was rooted in his perception of individuals whose worlds are in transition. This is particularly true of rural society as it moves in stages toward the technical "civilization" of the city. When Charles S. Johnson wrote of the Black communities of the rural South living under the *Shadow of the Plantation*, he described worlds on the margin of 20th Century "civilization", and thus a "traditional society".

Dr. Neal studied at Fisk University, where he benefitted from the philosophy being created by the Department of Social

Sciences under Dr. Johnson in the study of rural life and of peoples in transition. Johnson's interest in problems of economic development at home as well as abroad provided encouragement and insight for innovative contributions in careers such as Dr. Neal's.

Dr. Neal was among the first Black Americans to become involved in U. S. foreign assistance programs. This record of his experiences thus contains added meaning for today's Black Americans and for people in transition everywhere. When Dr. Neal began his work overseas the Negro had yet to demonstrate the contribution he might make to the very complex, increasingly important new dimension of U. S. diplomatic relations with the newly independent countries of the emerging Third World. There is no question today of Ernest Neal's contribution. He and other dedicated resourceful Americans of all races have, through their work in the U. S. foreign assistance programs, indeed left a legacy of hope for the wretched.



Samuel C. Adams, Jr.  
Assistant Administrator for Africa  
Agency for International Development

## PREFACE

When President Truman initiated the Point IV program, we had high hopes that at long last the people living in tradition-bound societies would be able to enter the 20th Century. The United States, other industrialized countries and the United Nations have sent thousands of technicians and spent millions of dollars to "open the door of the 20th Century" to the millions of people in the villages of the developing nations. With few exceptions, programs of technical assistance have made no significant impact on the people living in traditional societies. Most of the Indian villagers still plow their rice fields with bullocks and the wooden plow. The Philippine rice farmers still cut rice by hand with a blade in a curved stick, and Africans on the West Coast still follow slash-and-burn agriculture.

The underlying assumption of technical assistance to developing countries has been that by improving the capabilities of the development ministries of the central government they, in turn, would extend the benefits of modern technology to the traditional sector. That assumption is dependent on a unified political community, an adequate economic and social infrastructure and tax base. For most of the developing nations, these conditions do not exist.

After more than two decades of technical assistance, it is becoming more evident that most of the people living in traditional societies have little hope for becoming commercial farmers or finding jobs in the great rural migration to urban centers during this century. The traditional societies continue to remain an anomaly in the midst of modern science and technology. The people who inhabit these societies have suffered grinding poverty for centuries on top of centuries. Half of the babies born die before they reach the age of five. Far too many

people feel the pangs of hunger from the time they are weaned until they die. Death from preventable diseases shortens the life span. The houses do not protect them from the weather. They do not have adequate clothing to protect the body. Magic and the supernatural are called upon to explain natural phenomena. Deprivation and squalor have been passed from generation to generation until it has become permanently repetitive. The accumulating knowledge indicates that not only is poverty passed from one generation to the next, but protein deficiency during the years from two to five damages the brain and the damage is permanent. Truly, these are the wretched people of the earth.

The anecdotes of my technical assistance experiences covering a period of 32 years were written with the hope that they would stimulate those engaged in technical assistance work to search more seriously for a relevant technology that could bring some hope for the wretched who have been by-passed by modern technology and who make up over half the population in the developing world.

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*ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:* I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance that helped make this report possible.

When Dr. Samuel C. Adams, Jr., Assistant Administrator for the Africa Bureau, Agency for International Development and friend of many years, learned of my illness, he suggested that I use my enforced sedentary assignment to write up my years of technical assistance experiences and draw from those experiences some guidelines and suggestions for AID's on-going programs. Without Sam's personal concern and support, there would not have been the opportunity to devote the time and thought that has gone into this report..

Arthur L. Howard, Deputy Director, Office of Technical Cooperation in the Africa Bureau, gladly accepted me as a member

of his staff and provided the necessary working facilities. Far more important has been Art's personal interest in the project and his cooperation in the development of a strategy to translate some of the ideas developed in this report into the programming process of the Africa Bureau. Whatever practical application follows is due to Art's conviction that the ideas should be implemented and his expertise in gaining consensus for implementation within the bureaucracy of AID.

Dr. Robert L. Sutherland, Director of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, University of Texas, from the founding in 1940 until his retirement in 1970 has been a personal friend all these years and one of the main contributors to my professional growth. Bob has encouraged me to write up my experiences for more than a decade. He read the manuscript in draft and made excellent suggestions for using the report for seminars.

Dr. Arthur F. Raper and his wife Martha have been friends and colleagues for a quarter of a century. Without Arthur's help for security clearance during the era of Senator Joseph McCarthy, there would have been no foreign aid career for me. Arthur and Martha read the manuscript chapter by chapter during the writing and their helpful suggestions have been incorporated in the final text.

Dr. Harry L. Naylor, Associate Professor, School of Social and Community Services, Department of Regional and Community Affairs, University of Missouri - Columbia, worked with me in the Philippines, Liberia and Sierra Leone. We have spent hours discussing the ideas that generated the experiences reported. Harry read the manuscript during its preparation. He smoothed out the rough places, clarified some of the concepts and offered the encouragement needed to undertake and complete the writing.

Olga Grimm, Secretary in the Office of Technical Cooperation, in spite of heavy demands on her time by other officers, found the time to type the first draft. Her friendly disposition and

willingness to help provided the day-to-day stimulus to get the next chapter written.

Judy, my wife, provided the household climate necessary for creative thinking and writing. She understood my need for full involvement in something significant enough to take my mind off my illness. She encouraged the writing and typed the final manuscript.

*ERNEST E. NEAL.*

Washington, D.C.  
September 1971

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

I was born on a small farm near Chattanooga, Tenn. on June 21, 1911. As a child, I felt the pain of cold numb fingers in the rain, the shivering in the darkness before twilight when I had to rise and make fires and do the barn chores before going to school. Even today, when I see a small boy walking across a farm barefoot and soaking wet, the pains of my childhood return. I am also reminded of the hot summer heat that beamed down on my head as I followed a plow through the rows of corn when I walked with the peasants of Asia through the rice paddies. I feel a kinship with the sharecroppers of Alabama, the landless laborers in Asia and the African farmers cutting the bush to plant rice. I know about the heartaches of the peasant mother who sits and watches until the sick baby in her arms dies. She suffers in silence without shedding a tear. I have sat in village huts, dark and filthy, and looked on a man unconscious from burning malaria and heard the constant cough of a man dying from tuberculosis. I have been concerned about the suffering of the poor for more than 35 years. As a student in college, my extra reading was about sharecroppers in the South and the peasants of Europe and Asia. From the time I began my professional career as a college teacher in 1939, my concern for the wretched of the earth has deepened and expanded from the sand prairies of East Texas to the rice paddies of Asia and the self-sufficient villages of Africa.

I have been so involved in the action that I have not taken the time to organize my experiences nor to extract from them the things that I have learned. Now, however, in a more sedentary assignment, I have some time for reflection and analysis. One of the tragedies of the U.S. foreign aid program is that while very able

technicians and administrators have been sent abroad to join the army of socio-economic developers, and each learns something from every project with which he works, their reports are written and filed away, many times without a review and synthesis of these important source materials. It may be expecting too much of anyone in action programs to read all these reports and distill from them what was learned and what has value for dealing with similar problems; yet, if we are to benefit from experience, this record of human endeavor needs to be evaluated.

This report, then, is an effort to add to what others have done to develop a useful memory bank. My reflections are not biographical nor do I attempt to cover all activities of each of my assignments. I do not keep a diary, nor do I have pages of notes. I have tried to recall experiences from which I learned something of value. The narrative covers a period of 32 years of selected experiences. The United States experiences are included as part of the learning and preparation for overseas work.

Throughout the 32 years, there has been a constant search for ways to help the wretched help themselves and help their governments find ways to improve the quality of their lives within the available resources. I have tried to report my involvement in each experience as it happened and my understanding of the situation at that time. Not until the final chapter do I look back over these experiences from the vantage of years of experience and try to pull together the common threads and analyze them in terms of their relevance for AID programs.

## CHAPTER II

### TEXAS COLLEGE, 1939-1944

My college teaching career began in February 1939 at Texas College, a small black liberal arts and teacher training church-related college of the Methodist denomination, in Tyler, Texas. The enrollment was about 900. Every graduate was required to qualify for a teacher's certificate and almost 100 percent of the graduates became teachers.

I came to Texas College with a new M.A. in Sociology from Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn. I had studied under the famous sociologists Robert E. Park of the University of Chicago (retired) and Charles S. Johnson. As a new convert to the science of sociology, like St. Paul, I was determined to make converts out of all of my students.

At the end of the first month of teaching, I gave tests. The failure was 100 percent. I reviewed the tests and gave them over; failure — 95 percent. This was a major blow to my pride and ability as a teacher. Out of desperation, I went to the registrar and secured the location of the high schools from which my students graduated. Fortunately, about 85 percent graduated from high schools within 100 miles of the college. The office of the supervisor for black schools in the county was located at Texas College. I decided to accompany the supervisor on her visits to the county schools. The decision was the beginning of wisdom. I saw science teachers struggling to teach science without a single piece of equipment. A chemistry teacher in one school had to draw a test tube on the board to show the students what a test tube looked like! Rote teaching was the rule of the day. There were some oases in this desert of despair. I met one elementary teacher who had devised science exhibits in the corner of the classroom.

The blackboard was full of exciting materials, all from native materials or inexpensive materials that the teacher had purchased. I met another young woman teaching French in a small town high school. She was doing a very good job and her students read and spoke French well. There was another bright spot in the picture: the efforts being made by the Smith-Hughes vocational agricultural and home economics teachers. They received federal funds to build and equip farm shops and equip home economics teaching classrooms. They worked 12 months a year and also received funds for transportation. They alone had the necessary shop and classroom equipment for teaching. And in this case the boys and girls had farms and homes to carry out simple projects stemming from their classroom instruction.

After visiting many of the schools in the county and adjoining counties, I began to understand the problem of my students. Most of them had not acquired the reading skills to read the textbooks, much less understand the contents. I realized that the textbooks and my lectures were at a level beyond the preparation of the students. Nevertheless, I was convinced that I *could* teach the students sociology. I apologized to the students for the way I had been lecturing and the tests that I had given. I told them to forget the textbooks for awhile. I developed one detailed outline for a personal case history and another for a community study. I asked the students to use the outlines as guides and to write papers containing personal and community data as completely as possible. I used the best case histories and community write-ups (omitting the name of the student and community) for lecture material and to explain sociological concepts. From this point on the classes became alive and sociology took on meaning.

The next phase of my teaching was to use the city of Tyler as a sociological laboratory. Areas of the city were blocked off on maps. Students were assigned to different blocks to enumerate every family in the block. A variety of schedules were developed

for social surveys. From these surveys the students learned the use of simple statistics. In addition, certain community problems emerged from these studies. The black high school was old, overcrowded and needed better teaching equipment and materials; there was no public supported playground for blacks; most of the streets in the black communities were unpaved; there was a need for a paid black recreational supervisor and a black social worker. Copies of these surveys were sent to the Negro Chamber of Commerce, the Ministerial Alliance, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), to black school principals and other black organizations in the city. In time, I was invited by some of these organizations to discuss the surveys. Gradually, an overall community council emerged from these meetings. I became very much involved in the organization and activities of the council.

At first the council gave support to projects already under way by existing organizations. There was an inter-racial library board trying to develop a public library for the black community. The only public money available at the time was the salary for a part time librarian. A place had to be found to house the books, and the books would have to be donated. The council helped the library board find the basement of one of the churches, a campaign was organized to collect books, business organizations gave the lumber and paint for shelves, and members of the community gave their labor. Soon the library became a reality.

Street paving was the first independent project sponsored by the council. A small committee of the council called on the city manager to find out how to get the streets paved in the black communities. This was during the time that federal grants were available to assist cities with public work projects. The city manager informed the committee that the streets could be paved if all the property owners in a block agreed to the paving and a slight increase in taxes to pay the city's share of the grant. The council

accepted the challenge with enthusiasm. The council organized the most prestigious people in the black community to canvass the property owners with a petition to sign for the pavement and the slight increase in taxes. The President of Texas College, along with the President of the Negro Chamber of Commerce, members of the Ministerial Alliance, business and social leaders, walked the streets to get the petition signed. Assisting the prestigious leaders were students from my classes, and some of the solid citizens of the neighborhoods. The campaign was a success. Enough property owners in every block signed the petition to get the street paving project approved.

As the monthly meetings of the council continued, two types of problems emerged — those that the people could solve themselves and those that needed public assistance either from the city, county or state governments. One of the self-help projects taken on by the council was vegetable gardens and home beautification. The wife of the President of the College was the Chairman of the Home Economics Department of the College. Her department sponsored this project. Adult classes were organized which were taught by her advanced students. A cannery room and a sewing room were opened for the community people on the campus of the college. Two projects required government assistance — the new high school and a park. In this case we felt that we needed a better mechanism for carrying on “a dialogue with the power structure” of the city and county than the ad hoc committee we used for the street paving project. At one of the council meetings, the principal of the high school informed the council that the former Director of Home Economics for the State of Texas had been recently employed in the Office of the Superintendent of City Schools as Executive Secretary of a Coordinating Community Council. He arranged a meeting between the Executive Secretary and myself. We discussed the activities and plans of our respective organizations at this meeting. The Executive Secretary had been

looking for an organization to work within the black community. Our council had been looking for a way to carry on more effective talks with the "power structure". We worked out a plan whereby the Executive Secretary would attend the executive meeting of our council, and she worked out a plan whereby the individual, or individuals, who made decisions on city and county projects would also attend the meetings of the council and explain how his office could assist.

It was through such meetings that the council appointed a committee to select a site for the new high school and park. It was also through these meetings that the city recreational department employed a recreational supervisor for black children. The County Welfare Department agreed to the need for a black case worker, but had no funds in the current budget to pay the salary. We knew about the interest of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at the University of Texas in helping local communities in the broad area of mental health. The County Welfare Department submitted the project to the Hogg Foundation and received the salary for the worker for one year.

During my five years at Texas College, I always reminded myself that my primary responsibility was to the college and the classes that I taught. I kept the President fully informed of my activities and he gave his support. I knew that most of my students would become teachers in small towns and rural schools. They needed to learn how to involve the school in the improvement of the communities as well as becoming good teachers in the classroom. Selected students were sometimes taken to council meetings. Council members were invited to hold seminars with my students. I also realized that the *students needed a broader horizon than the college and the community*. I sought out resources that could provide consultants, speakers and special teachers for summer classes. The major support for this broader education was the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at the

University of Texas. Most of the lecturers brought to the state by the Foundation were scheduled to speak at Texas College. The Director and staff members of the Foundation were frequent visitors to Texas College. Each shared his interest and expertise with our students and faculty.

When I left Texas College in 1944, my better students were entering graduate schools and maintaining the high level of performance that they demonstrated at Texas College. The community council was well established. The organizations represented on the council had learned that each could accomplish more by working together than separately; a meaningful dialogue had been established between the council and the power structure, the new support that had been secured for the college continued, and I had learned how to teach.

### **This is What I Learned**

I must again remind the reader that this was my first experience as a college teacher. I was only 27 years old. It was natural for me to follow the lecture methods of my professors and use the textbooks with which I was familiar. I was so convinced that I was a good teacher that nothing less than a 100 percent failure of my first test could have shocked me into changing my course. To me, the following guidelines were what I learned in being a teacher:

1. The function of a teacher is to teach and not fail students.
2. It is primarily the teacher's responsibility to motivate his students. The more the teacher knows about his students and their background, the easier it is to motivate them to desire to learn.
3. Good teaching begins with helping the student understand himself and expanding his understanding to the community, the state, the nation and the world.

4. The teacher has the responsibility to become a participating citizen in the community where he works.
5. Effective dialogue between different racial, economic and cultural groups is enhanced by beginning discussions on common problems. Through such discussions, personal relations and better understanding have a good chance of becoming established.

## CHAPTER III

### BISHOP COLLEGE – 1946-47

I joined the faculty of Bishop College, Marshall, Texas in September of 1946. Bishop College is a small church-related liberal arts teacher training college of the Baptist denomination. I became well acquainted with the President of Bishop College when I was teaching at Texas College. I respected him for his modern and progressive educational views and for his attempt to implement these ideas in the educational program of Bishop College.

During the depression, the Farm Security Administration established a number of farm resettlement projects. The Sabine Farms near Bishop College was one of the settlements. In 1946, the U.S. Department of Agriculture liquidated resettlement projects. Bishop College purchased the 19-acre center of the Sabine Farms as a laboratory for applied education. I joined the faculty to head the project.

This was a new kind of assignment. In my previous jobs, I carried on a full time teaching load and did community development largely as a personal interest. At Bishop College, I had one class. The rest of my time was devoted to the project. Sabine Farms was a well-structured organization. It had a legal Board of Governors made up of representatives from the Sabine Farms Community and Bishop College. The articles of incorporation spelled out in detail the obligations and responsibilities of the college and Sabine Farm board members. The immediate problem facing the Board of Governors was what to do with the 19 acres including 10 buildings. The Farmers Home Administration had retained the Agriculture Supervisor to continue farm work. All other FHA employees had been transferred.

During the first few months after I arrived, the Board of Governors met weekly. These meetings were long and the discussions most enlightening. The members of the Board from Bishop College emphasized farmer cooperatives for production. The Sabine Farm Board members pushed very hard for a cooperative grocery store. Try as hard as we could, we could not get the Sabine Farm Board members to change their views. After several meetings, I got to know each one of the Sabine members quite well. One night I said,

"We have explained over and over the high mortality of cooperative grocery stores; why do you keep insisting on a grocery store rather than a purchasing and marketing cooperative?"

The Chairman of the Board looked me straight in the eyes and said, "Prof, you know that grocery store at the fork of the road on the way from Bishop College?"

I replied "Yes."

He said, "We have patronized that store for years. Most of the farmers in this area are colored. During the war scarce items like bacon, butter and coffee were rationed. We noticed every time we asked for those items, he was out of them. But as we sat on the store porch and talked, some white customers came and asked for the same items. We noticed the store owner would reach under the counter and sell the items to the white farmers."

"Another thing, Prof", he said, "the store owner don't show proper respect for our women folk. He never calls them 'Mrs.', it is always by their first name. We made a vow, if we ever had a chance to have a store of our own, we would never set foot in that store again."

All the Sabine Farms Board members supported him completely. We were then convinced that it would be a cooperative grocery store or nothing. Again I emphasized the hazards of cooperative grocery stores, but added, "If you are convinced, we will help, but on the condition that funds are raised

to pay cash for the first stock of supplies, and the salary for the manager for six months. We estimate that this will take about \$2,000. All Board members must become charter members of the co-op and buy \$100 worth of stock. (There were 10 board members.) The second \$1,000 will be raised from the membership at large." They agreed and a date was set for each board member to purchase \$100 of stock.

This meeting was scheduled for Bishop College rather than Sabine Farms. The Chairman opened the meeting, dispensed with matters on the agenda and asked for payment for shares. Every Board member from Sabine Farms came to the table and placed \$100 on it. Some of the bills were of the old large paper dollar vintage. I had not anticipated this but, fortunately, I had my checkbook with me. The other Bishop College Board members were caught flat and begged to be given a day's delay. They all paid up the next day. In less than a month the other \$1,000 was raised.

The next problem was finding a manager for the store. We interviewed college graduates, ex-school teachers and a few school principals. Not one was willing to take the job, even though the salary offered was competitive with teachers' salaries and there was six months of assured salary in the bank. Again, the men from Sabine came to the rescue. They found a young farm man in the area who had some high school education. The wife of the farm supervisor agreed to train him in bookkeeping and stock taking. The Board employed him. From that moment on there was feverish activity to get the place cleaned and the store stocked and ready for opening. In about six weeks, the gala day arrived. It was like a country fair. Patronage to the store by members was complete and many people passing by stopped for purchases and sightseeing. The store became a social center for the farmers at night and their families on weekends.

After the store became operational, it was easy to get the Board interested in economic activities. We worked out a contract with a

pickle factory to grow cucumbers. At first we had trouble getting the farmers to pick the small cucumbers every morning. We asked the buyer to bring his grader to the center. Each farmer was requested to bring his cucumbers and empty the bag into the grader. When the farmers saw that the small cucumbers brought the prime price and the largest brought the lowest price, we had no more trouble getting them to pick the small cucumbers every morning.

Other contracts were worked out with vegetable canneries. These contractors agreed to purchase all the produce at a fixed price when the contract was signed. Some of the farmers qualified for selling certified sweet potatoes. The certified potatoes brought about three times as much as the uncertified.

The farm-boy store manager developed into the key leader for the cooperative movement. He developed contacts with all the major cooperative wholesale supply firms and impressed on the farmers the benefits of buying farm supplies and equipment from the cooperatives. Most of his recommendations were approved by the Board. The cucumber project became so successful that different pickle factories started bidding for the contract. The highest bidder was a firm in Dallas. The store manager also got the contract for hauling the cucumbers to Dallas.

The real educational work took place in the monthly Board meetings and the informal sessions in the store. Education centered around real life problems and practical solutions to these problems. It was in these meetings that I learned at first hand the basic wisdom of farm peasants, how they perceived the world in which they lived and how they solved their problems primarily with their own resources. Their farms were their main source of income. They studied the market for farm products like a businessman studies the stock market. Before accepting the contract to grow cucumbers, they asked the farm supervisor all kinds of questions about growing, cultivating and gathering cucumbers. They arrived at the conclusion that each farmer could

only provide enough farm labor to cultivate a fourth of an acre of cucumbers. But the investment of this amount of land and labor in raising cucumbers was a lucrative venture. After making their farms more productive, they would improve their homes, sometimes by adding a room to the house, or by buying a refrigerator or some other appliance. Their whole lives were not centered on the farm and home, however. At community meetings, for example, they would ask for members of the Bishop College faculty to talk to them. Most of these talks were on health. At other times, the President of the college would speak at these meetings on what was happening in the political life of the county or state. Films were widely used, both for entertainment and education. The students from Bishop College were encouraged to assist with these community recreational and educational programs.

Within a year, the "peasants of Sabine Farms" had emerged as leaders in their own community and managers of all activities taking place at the center. This resettlement project was not 10 years old. Most of the purchasers had formerly been tenants in the county for years. They thus had been exposed to the leadership provided by the FHA staff before the project was liquidated. When I left in the fall of 1947, Bishop College and the resident farm supervisor were becoming resources rather than direct leaders and the farmers themselves were the decision and policy makers.

### **What I Learned at Sabine Farms**

I grew up in a small farm community. My parents, relatives and neighbors were very much like the people of Sabine Farms. I was at ease with men in overalls, with work shoes and calloused hands. When I visited their homes in the winter, I fitted right into the circle in front of the fireplace and was accustomed to the chill in the rest of the house. It was good to smell sweat of human labor and listen to the wisdom learned from fighting for a livelihood

against pests and the uncertainties of the weather. At Sabine Farms, I was viewing rural folk life as an adult who was there to help. This is what I learned:

1. As I listened to the men discuss their feelings about the storekeeper, it became clear that the deepest longing in the breast of a man is respect for the dignity of the human personality. This desire is much stronger than the desire for economic improvement.
2. Given the opportunity to enhance their dignity, men will gladly pay the price, e.g., the ease with which the men paid the money they had been hoarding for years for stock in the cooperative store.
3. The educated place a much higher value on long-term security than do the peasant farmers, as was brought out in the search for a store manager.
4. The educated person and small farmers can work together, if the educated person is at ease with the folk culture and demonstrates he is working for their interests.
5. Given the opportunity, small-hold farmers can manage their own affairs better than the paid experts.
6. There was an inner joy beyond practical considerations I felt when I found a way to help people with problems find a solution to their problems.

## CHAPTER IV

### TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, 1948-54

In the fall of 1947, I received a fellowship from the General Education Board (an autonomous unit within the Rockefeller Foundation) to pursue graduate study at the University of Michigan. I had every intention of returning to Bishop College. In the summer of 1948, I received a telegram from the President of Tuskegee Institute inviting me to meet him in Chicago to discuss problems of rural development for Tuskegee Institute. I accepted the invitation, but wondered what on earth I could contribute to the knowledge of the President of Tuskegee Institute on rural development. I had always considered Tuskegee Institute the capstone of rural development in the South. When I met with the President, he informed me that the General Education Board had given a grant to Tuskegee Institute to develop programs of economic development in the rural areas surrounding Tuskegee Institute and explore possibilities throughout the rural South. The President also informed me that the General Education Board officials suggested that he contact me about the project. During the interview, he offered me the position of Director of the Rural Life Council of Tuskegee Institute. The Council was composed of all the Deans and Directors of the various departments of the Institute. It would develop the policy for the project and I would implement the policy. I accepted the offer and arrived at Tuskegee Institute in August of 1948.

On arrival, I found Lewis W. Jones on the faculty. I knew Lewis at Fisk University. He was the best field researcher on problems of black farm families in the cotton South. I asked Lewis to join my staff as Director of Research. Our first task was to find out what had been done by Tuskegee Institute to improve living conditions

for black farmers in the rural areas surrounding Tuskegee Institute. Fortunately, all of the projects were well documented.

We discovered that efforts at improving the life of the farmers in Macon County, the county in which the Institute is located, began with the establishment of the Institute. Dr. Booker T. Washington, first President of the Institute, was able to secure funds from philanthropists to purchase plantations surrounding the campus and in black communities in other areas of the county. The plantations were divided into 40-acre units and sold to sharecroppers. Tuskegee established a bank to lend money for the purchase of farms, for construction of home and farm buildings, and for the purchase of farm animals and equipment. After the communities were established, loans were made available by the bank to establish community cotton gins and saw mills. In some of the communities, there were post offices, a general store and, in one, a railroad station.

After reviewing the available materials, we visited some of the projects to see what had happened during the intervening years.

### **Baldwin Farms**

The founder of the Baldwin Locomotive Company was a Trustee of Tuskegee Institute and gave Mr. Washington the grant to purchase Baldwin Farms. This land was purchased to assist the agricultural graduates of Tuskegee Institute to become successful farmers. A supply center was built as well as a railroad station. The young agricultural graduates selected for the project were given a loan for the purchase of land and other necessities to get started as farmers. Supervision and technical service were provided by Tuskegee.

On our inspection trip to Baldwin Farms, we drove up the dusty gullied road by the abandoned railroad station. A few decaying houses still remained. We finally found one occupied house. An elderly lady welcomed us on her porch. We told her that we had

read about Baldwin Farms and came out to see what had happened.

"So you have come to Booker T. Washington's graveyard," she said.

We looked perplexed. She smiled and began to tell us about Baldwin Farms.

As a young woman she and her husband, along with other graduates, moved to Baldwin Farms. The young men were not experienced farmers nor farm managers. Consequently, they did not make much money from farming. One by one they began moving away. Finally, she and her husband was the only family left. Her husband had died a few years prior to our visit and she had decided to remain on the farm the rest of her life. She was not bitter. She felt that after the Institute got them established on the farms, they were more or less forgotten. The young men of the community, she said, found easier jobs with more pay and left the farms.

### **New Rising Star.**

In 1910, Dr. Washington made a visit to Europe to study the peasant farmers there. The thing that impressed him most was the Danish Folk Schools. On his return, he built a school in the New Rising Star community on the model of the Danish Folk Schools. The school building included living quarters for the principal and his family. The idea was that the principal living in the school building would be a living example to the students and available for adult education and community improvement after school hours.

When we visited New Rising Star school, it had been years since a principal had lived at the school. The living quarters had long since been converted into classrooms. All the teachers drove out from the city of Tuskegee each morning, locked up the school and drove back to the city at the end of the school day. The teachers were not involved in community affairs.

## **Harris Barrett**

The community of Harris Barrett joins the farm property of Tuskegee Institute. Dr. Washington purchased this land so that students from that area would not have to pass through a plantation owned by a white landowner who was hostile to the education of black children. This land was offered for sale in 40-acre units to farmers. The Institute made loans available for the purchase of land and the construction of a home and farm buildings. The community prospered for a while. A gin and a sawmill were established.

When we visited the Harris Barrett community, the buildings for the sawmill and cotton gin had long ago rotted. The old rusty machinery was scattered about in a field of scrub brush and grass. Most of the houses were run down. Here and there was a remodeled or new house. These belonged to the people who had found jobs off their own land.

We made house-to-house surveys of the New Rising Star and Harris Barrett communities. The families consisted of old people and young children. Where the head of the family had an off-farm job, life was comfortable. Where the family depended on the farm for a livelihood, it was subsistence living. One interesting fact brought out in the survey concerning outmigration was revealed. The young adults who finished Tuskegee Institute were employed all over the United States in the kind of jobs for which they were trained. The young adults who did not go to college tended to migrate to Cleveland, Ohio, and join the unskilled labor force.

We began to search for the reasons for the failure of such well planned programs which had adequate financial resources to initiate the projects and why these programs had fallen so short of the goals set. In our search we found the man who was Dean of the School of Agriculture of Tuskegee Institute during the lifetime of Dr. Washington. He had played a major part in the development of these projects.

We asked him why the projects failed. He said that the explanation was simple: "We did not know enough."

He said that he studied agriculture at Connecticut State College. There he had observed prosperous apple farmers on small units of land. He felt that the same type of farming could be developed in Macon County, Ala.

"We just did not know enough," he repeated. "We did not know much about agronomy in those days. We did not know that by cutting away the pine trees for cotton that the thin top soil would be washed away, and the fertility of the land would decrease year after year."

We thought this man's explanation seemed to be the most honest and logical.

### **The Old Cotton Plantation.**

After observing some of the results of Tuskegee Institute's efforts to improve the small farm owner, we took a look at the major agricultural problem in the old South - the cotton plantation. The 2000-acre McLemore Plantation was 20 miles west of Tuskegee in Montgomery County. Colonel McLemore returned from World War II and took over the management of his father's plantation. At the time he assumed management, there were 200 sharecropper families on the farm. The Colonel convinced his father to mechanize. Cotton pickers and tractors were purchased to take the place of the mule, plow and hoe technology, and to replace the hand picking.

Mechanization was in full swing at the time of our visit. Only 20 of the 200 original sharecropper families were living on the plantation. These were paid workers trained to operate the tractors and cotton pickers. New concrete block houses had been constructed for them. The wages they received were adequate to provide a degree of comfort beyond the necessities.

During the time of our study of the McLemore Plantation, the Colonel changed from mechanized cotton to livestock. The number of families living on the plantation dropped from 20 to 5. In a period of five years, 195 families were displaced by mechanization and as a result of the owner shifting from crops to cattle. All of these uprooted families moved to the cities seeking employment but they carried with them no skills for available jobs in the cities.

We moved on to the plantations in the Mississippi Delta. In the Delta it was the same story: the tractor replaced the mules, airplanes were used for scattering fertilizer and poison to kill boll weevils, and the mechanical picker replaced hand pickers. All the old sharecropper's shanties had been torn down. The line village made its appearance—that is, new houses on the sides of the roads to get them out of the way of tractors and airplanes. We observed the plantation owners visiting the plantation workers' homes, telling the mothers to get the children out to the bus to go to school. If the mother complained that the children had no shoes or clothes, he told her to go to the plantation commissary and get them shoes and clothes. In mechanized agriculture, the children were a nuisance. He wanted them away from the farm and in the school.

Our field studies covered the period from 1948-1950. We discovered that the Agricultural Census of 1945 was taken during World War II and did not even begin to reflect the changes occurring in southern agriculture in 1948. Perhaps the most important socio-economic event of the 1950's for this nation was the displacement of sharecroppers by machines and cattle and the migration of these displaced, mostly unskilled, black people to the large cities. We realized that we had uncovered a problem that was too immense and complex to be handled by Tuskegee Institute or the General Education Board.

Our dilemma was what to do. The Rockefeller grant was made to improve economic conditions in the rural communities. Our

studies showed that the small independent traditional farmer had sunk to the level of subsistence farming. There was little possibility for rebuilding the fertility of his land or securing large enough units for livestock or mechanization. The part-time farmer was supplementing his subsistence income with wages. The more ambitious and able were moving into scientific farming and were improving their standard of living. There might be only three such "progressive" farmers in a community of 40 or more subsistence farmers. The vast majority of black farmers were still employed as sharecroppers on plantations. Between 80 and 90 percent of these farmers were steadily being displaced by machinery and cattle. There appeared to be no hope for absorbing them either in the agricultural economy or the urban economy.

We were convinced that the migration of displaced farmers to the cities would continue and the rate increase. They had no other choice. We were equally sure that the old people and small children would remain on the subsistence farms and the able-bodied would join the urban-ward migration. In the light of these conditions we decided on two courses of action. They were:

1. Select a few small subsistence farm communities to find out how the resources of Tuskegee Institute could be utilized to help improve living conditions in these communities; and
2. Intensify and expand research to find out more about the agricultural revolution taking place and use the findings of the research for seminars and conferences to inform educational institutions, public service agencies and the general public about the changes.

### **Local Community Aided Self-Help Activities**

The President of the Institute had developed a simple concrete block that could be made in any backyard with very simple equipment and tools. Part of the grant funds to the Rural Life

Council were used to extend this service. A general construction supervisor was employed. He set up facilities at the Institute to bring in young teenage boys to teach them how to make and lay the blocks. The course took about a week. The boys returned to their homes and started making blocks. When enough blocks had been made, the supervisor visited the home, laid out the foundation and got the work started. He was able to teach about 10 boys at a time and to supervise about five houses under construction. The Rural Life Council gave technical assistance until the floor and walls were completed. At that point, we were convinced that the family was serious, and a loan was made to purchase material for the roof. Some of the communities wanted to use this method to build a church. Therefore, the Council purchased a truck, a concrete mixer and tools to provide community equipment for the construction of churches or other community buildings. Through the construction of community buildings, we were able to teach many of the people in the community how to make and lay blocks. We took representatives from the Farmers Home Administration to visit some of these projects. As a result, the FHA approved the Tuskegee self-help concrete block house as eligible for FHA financing.

In working with communities on aided self-help projects, I found that it was advantageous to have some kind of community council. In cooperation with the school principals, I organized a community council in two of the communities near Tuskegee Institute. In the community of Harris Barrett, the council was very useful in promoting the self-help concrete block houses. In the community of Cross Roads, the council was more interested in community improvement through better gardens, health clinics and a savings club. These councils met monthly. I tried to be present at every meeting. It was through these meetings that real community problems emerged and they presented a challenge to the Rural Life Council to find a way to help. To assist in helping

to solve the health problems in Cross Roads, we sent a cultural anthropologist to live in the community to delineate cultural practices that contributed to, or militated against, good health. We observed a correlation between levels of education and childbirth practices in that the girls who had some high school education attended the prenatal clinics and had their babies delivered in hospitals. These young mothers also attended "well-baby clinics". The older mothers used the midwife and their babies were delivered at home. We pushed year around gardens for better nutrition, and worked with the home economists and vocational agriculturists to help them become more involved with the needs of the home and farm. The local people were pleased to have Tuskegee Institute people attending their meetings and were even more pleased when I dropped in to visit them at home.

The community council was a good organization to improve the morale if not the economics of rural communities. We requested the Council of Churches to attach a minister trained in rural problems and the teaching of rural ministers to our staff. The request was granted. The Rural Life Council acquired the full time service of a community organizer to work with rural communities and it supported requests for assistance to the rural minister in the areas of agriculture, home improvement and training.

### **Research Seminars and Conferences**

The major emphasis of the Rural Life Council shifted gradually to research and the sponsoring of seminars and conferences. The first effort to secure resources to intensify and expand research to acquire pragmatic knowledge about the agricultural revolution was from the Tennessee Valley Authority. I made a visit to discuss this problem with some of the people I knew at TVA. The result was a seminar at Tuskegee Institute with the Rural Life Council and the people in TVA who made the decisions about spending money for social science research. Fortunately, the TVA officials had a

general knowledge of the agricultural revolution underway, but they were unaware of the impact of this revolution on black farmers. A grant was given to the Rural Life Council to initiate studies with the seven black land grant colleges in the TVA area. It was relatively easy to get the presidents of these colleges to assign a social scientist to study these problems in his state. I had developed a good working relationship with the rural sociologists at the white land grant colleges through the Rural Sociological Society. Because of this good working relationship, I was able to get them to collaborate with the researchers at the black colleges and use some of their federal grants to assist with the publication of research bulletins prepared at the black colleges.

By 1950, we had developed enough information through the Rural Life Council and the seven black land grant colleges to call a conference at Tuskegee Institute on the *Changing Status of the Negro Farmer in the Southern Region*. In addition to our material we invited scholars working on this problem from the USDA, HEW and the Department of Labor to present papers to the conference. Funds to sponsor the conference were provided by the General Education Board. Eighty people from Federal agencies, TVA, state agencies, educational institutions and newspapers attended the three-day conference. All those attending the conference became very much aware of the plight of the black farmer and the foreshadow of the social consequences which could be expected in the cities. The proceedings of the conference were published and given wide circulation. The conference succeeded in making the professionals and the newspaper reporters more aware of the problem.

We were beginning to get this vital information into the consciousness of civil servants, educators and into the news media. We urged the establishment of way stations to train the young black displaced farm workers for the jobs that were available in the cities before they arrived. We worked with black educators, professional agricultural workers, and health and social workers to

develop programs that would better prepare the migrants for urban living. I think we convinced the professional socially concerned. But anyone familiar with the 1950s knows that the *policy makers* did very little to solve the problem before the ghettos erupted.

As Director of the Rural Life Council, I followed a course that I thought would yield the best results. It seemed evident that some small subsistence family farms would remain. There was no firm evidence, however, that expenditures of funds to promote economic development now on these small units would be any more successful than previous efforts. The impersonal laws of agronomy and economics are stronger than the magic of the greatest charismatic leaders or well-intentioned reformers. We felt that we could make life a little better within the subsistence economy, but could not change it.

I thought the most useful function that the Rural Life Council could perform was the gathering of facts on the revolution taking place and to channel this information to the sources where it could do the best good. We were able to develop a series of publications for newspapers, social welfare and educational departments in the large cities. These dealt with migrant families from the rural South, but unfortunately urban policy makers had very little experience with, or knowledge of, rural black families.

Our real targets were the black state supervisors of education, agriculture, welfare and the presidents of black colleges, especially the land grant colleges. We felt that they, more than anyone, needed to know what was happening to the people they were serving and how they could help the displaced black farmers adjust to their new conditions. Some things were accomplished. The Farmers Home Administration employed more black professionals to help the farmers who remained on their farms. The TVA included more black rural communities in its service program. I was invited to appear before Senator Sparkman's

committee on the problems of small farmers in the South. This appearance provided the opportunity to present the problem before a committee of the U.S. Congress and to get the news coverage it deserved.

### **What I Learned from the Rural Life Council**

From my study of Tuskegee Institute's long history of trying to improve the conditions of small farmers surrounding the Institute, I learned my most important lesson — that is, *the absolute necessity to find out what has already been tried before initiating new programs to solve old problems.* The rusting parts of old cotton gins, saw mills and unused railroad stations we saw in our researches were grim reminders of sincere efforts that failed. A canon of research decrees that we must know the nature of the problem and the resources available to work towards the solution of the problem. Our research was convincing that for many small rural communities there is no alternative to subsistence farming. Therefore, external assistance, however well designed and financed, cannot ignore the basic laws of agronomy and economics.

I also learned that when one is dealing with fundamental problems it is equally important to study the dynamics of the present situation as well as past efforts before initiating new programs to solve old problems. Our study of the impact of tractors, mechanical cotton pickers and the shift from row cropping to livestock farming on the plantation economy was creating an agricultural revolution that left no place for the millions of people who were previously required to operate the plantation economy. We learned that the black farmers in the cotton South who had traditionally been required to operate the economy for centuries were being replaced by machines. Their problem of making a living was shifting from the cotton fields to the ghettos of the major cities, and there was nothing that Tuskegee Institute could do to solve a problem of this magnitude.

Yet, though we could not do anything to solve this overwhelming problem, we learned that we could help develop a public awareness of the problem. Having reached this conclusion, I was amazed to find out how many resources were available to assist in the broader endeavor. We received grants from the National Institute of Health and the Health Information Foundation to study the health and cultural practices of the rural people. The migrants to the big cities from the old cotton South were bringing to the big cities cultural and health practices that were new and alien to the urban culture of the cities. The Federal Housing Agency gave us a grant to improve and continue to simplify the self-help concrete block housing project. The TVA gave a grant to stimulate rural sociological research in the black land-grant colleges in the seven valley states. The General Education Board increased its grant so that the Rural Life Council could sponsor seminars and conferences.

At last we were getting the story over. Some of the nation's largest newspapers sent reporters to see what was happening. Some published a series of articles. Educators and professional workers attended the conferences and sought our help in introducing this information into classes and information programs. We were finally invited to present this problem to a sub-committee of the U.S. Congress. I learned that it was much easier, alas, to get assistance for developing an awareness about a problem than to get the support to do something significant to solve it.

## CHAPTER V

### INDIA – 1954-56

My career as a technician with the U.S. foreign aid program began in India, February 1954, as Chief of the Community Development Division in the U.S. Technical Cooperation Mission to India. This chapter is not a report on the Indian Community Development Program. It is an attempt to recall the experiences that contributed to my learning as an Advisor to the Community Projects Administration and in performing the functions of the Chief of the Community Development Division in the TCM.

The morning after my arrival, I accompanied the Director of the TCM to a meeting of the Indian Planning Commission to discuss TCM's assistance to the Indian Community Development Program. In this meeting, officials of the Planning Commission were discussing with the representatives from TCM commodities and technical assistance that involved a few millions of dollars. As I listened to the discussions about the level of funds needed for jeeps, agricultural equipment, teaching materials and supplies and equipment for health centers, I began to realize the magnitude of my responsibilities. My previous experiences had been with educational institutions. The largest budget I had worked with for one year was \$250,000. At the close of the meeting, I knew that I had to find out as much as possible about the Indian Community Development Program in the shortest time possible.

Over the next three months, I travelled all over the subcontinent of India. I attended Regional Community Development Conferences and seminars, visited village level workers training centers, block development officers training centers, social development workers training centers, offices of State Development commissioners, District Development

commissioners, block development officers and village level workers.

The Regional Community Development Conferences were an educational experience. They were always held at some historic place that was a monument to India's past greatness. The Administrator of the Community Projects Administration was a man of great personal charm, boundless energy and a gifted orator. He opened all the conferences with a keynote address. He recalled India's great past and charged his fellow workers to surpass the greatness of the past. He could and often did electrify his audience. The real work of these conferences took place in small groups and here the day-to-day administrative problems came out. The village-level workers had an opportunity to express their successes and problems before high government officials. These discussions were recorded in the small conferences and brought out in the general sessions. For me, the conferences provided the opportunity to meet the officials who were directing state and district programs and the village level workers who were doing the job. After attending each conference, I worked out visits to some of the most interesting projects.

Of all the village level training centers I visited, the one in West Bengal stands out most clearly. The U.S. Technical Cooperation Mission sent Jack Gray, an American, to the center as agricultural instructor and advisor to the principal. The center was located in a rural area. Most of the people there had never seen an American family. Jack's family consisted of his wife and a 12 year-old son. Realizing that they were something of a curiosity in the village, the family decided never to draw the window curtains. Fortunately, the bedrooms provided enough privacy without drawing the curtains.

To become better acquainted with the teaching needs of the area, Jack went on the same diet as a local Indian farmer and worked with the farmers in the field. He noted that his energy

decreased daily until his performance had dropped to that of the Indian farmers.

Having learned by experience the job requirements of the rice farmer, he began to design tools to increase production and make work lighter. He noted a good many farmers refused to use the tools. After investigation, he learned the tenants did not use the tools because they did not share in the increased production. On the other hand, the small land owners gladly adopted the new tools.

Jack Gray's pragmatic approach came to the attention of the Development Commissioner for the State of West Bengal. He brought Jack into his office as advisor to the Development Commissioner and to work with the Training Officer. When I visited Jack's home, he had very few books on agriculture. His bookshelves were filled with social science books. To him, agricultural technology was rather simple to teach. Getting farmers to adopt modern practices was his problem.

All the American advisors I met working with the village level training centers were doing a good job. John Bulls in the State of Pepsu and his wife had achieved an unusual degree of acceptance among the people of the capital city of the state. Upon inquiry, I learned that during the last flood of the river, John went down to work with the people putting sand bags on the river banks. The flood was worse than usual. John soon found himself as the leader. He stripped to his waist and worked all night with the village and townspeople. His wife set up a kitchen on the river bank and served coffee and sweets all during the night. The people adopted them as members of the community. This acceptance of the Bulls made his teaching much more acceptable.

Whenever I visited the office of a State Development Commissioner, I got a first class briefing. The walls of his office were lined with maps, charts, graphs and tables. Every project in the state was pinpointed on the map. The goals were marked and

the graph showed whether work was behind, on, or ahead of schedule. There was always a good explanation for being behind schedule. After the briefing, I was asked about the slow arrival of U.S. and Central Government assistance and especially the slow release of funds. I made notes on each request. If I knew the answer, it was provided. On my return to the office I checked the status of commodities provided by the United States. After this, I called on my counterpart, the Permanent Secretary of the Community Projects Administration. In addition to the problems, I gave him a report on my observations. He liked this kind of reporting. From these meetings a real friendship developed.

One of the problems we discovered was that Indian procurement officials were familiar with British specifications and not with American specifications. That was the main reason for the long delay for the requested commodities. We agreed to assign a person from my office to work with the Indian procurement officials on specifications and procedures for ordering American commodities. This resulted in some streamlining of procurement procedures, not only for U.S. commodities, but for local purchases.

All the training centers I visited were well staffed, with adequate teaching facilities and accommodations for staff and students. The offices of the State and District Development Commissioners were on a par with the regular administrative offices. But problems began to appear at the block level. This was a new administrative unit. It could not be attached to some on-going office. The office space was usually inadequate; there were not enough transportation facilities; and seldom was the complement of technical specialists completed. This was the key administrative unit for the backstopping and logistical support to the village level workers. I reported these problems to the Permanent Secretary of the Community Projects Administration. He was sympathetic. The problem was the community

development program had expanded faster than personnel could be trained and facilities could be acquired for the operation of the block offices.

I visited so many villages to observe community projects that I finally lost count. The real hero of the Indian Community Development Program was the multipurpose village-level worker. He had less than a high school education. His training period was about 18 months. In that short period, he was taught agriculture, village organization, elementary health, local government and to be the extension agent for all development ministries providing service to the villages. The regular extension agents for the development ministries were college graduates with specialized training.

The village-level worker was younger, not nearly as well trained, yet he was expected to provide acceptable technical service in several areas to the village people. By and large, he did an acceptable job. The reason he was successful devolved from the method of selection and training in use. He was selected not only for his grade on a written test, but also on his attitude towards dirty hand work, his physical stamina and attitudes towards living in a village and working with village people. He thus represented a departure from the traditional Indian civil servant selection criteria. He went to the people to help them and find out from them what they wanted to do. He helped them do what they felt needed to be done. On this basis he would have been accepted by the village people if his technical competence had been even less. And, in turn, the acceptance of the village worker by the people made him feel that he and his job were important. When we saw village people doing all sorts of things like building roads, schools, improving wells, and cleaning out drainage ditches, we asked them if they had ever done such things on a community-wide basis before the village-level worker came to their village. The answer was invariably "No."

One villager supplied the reason. "We were blind," he said. "The village worker opened our eyes."

The village worker's faith in people was far more important than his technical competency.

At the end of the three months of intensive traveling over much of the subcontinent of India I had a much better understanding of the Community Development program and the function of my office. The job at hand, as I saw it, was to make the organization work better for the improvement of the level of living of the Indian village people. Making the organization work better depended to a large degree on U.S. Government assistance. The United States, therefore, provided funds to purchase jeeps, for teaching materials, demonstration materials, and equipment and supplies for health centers. In addition, the United States provided commodities for sale to India to generate rupees to help pay the added costs of the community development program.

It was absolutely essential to have the full support and cooperation of the U.S. Technical Cooperation Mission to help prepare the documents needed to provide the variety of assistance given. The Director of the U.S. Mission understood this very well and used the influence of his office to move the Mission in this direction. The day-to-day cooperation had to be carried out from my office. I had seen enough of the commodities in the field to know that expert technical knowledge was required to determine the commodities that were best suited for Indian conditions and I needed a review and evaluation of each request. Our primary objective was to get the commodities delivered in India as soon as possible. I encouraged advisors in other technical divisions to make field trips with me and to attend Regional Community Development conferences. The more they became involved the better they understood the program and the support needed. Also, I urged the Permanent Secretary of the Community Projects Administration to support the effort of the procurement advisor

from my office to speed up the requests and the specifications of the commodities needed for the program. As mentioned, I had developed the kind of personal and working relations with the Permanent Secretary that made it possible to work on this problem with the Government of India. In fact, I had learned that nothing moved through the machinery of the Government of India except on a personal basis.

On my visits to the training centers, I found a real need for lecturers and training materials. I arranged for U.S. Mission technicians to deliver lectures. I had a cultural anthropologist on my staff, Grace Langley, who had lived in Indian villages and carried out anthropological research. She developed training material, gave lectures to the training centers and made on-the-spot evaluations of the program.

During my three months of intensive traveling, I noticed a tendency on the part of high level officials to spend most of their time visiting officials, leaving little time to visit villages. I decided to spend as little time as possible at the official headquarters and get to as many villages as possible. I discovered this was a great boost to the morale of the isolated village worker and provided the village officials an opportunity to show the visitor what they had done. More important, I got close to the real problems of the people and the village worker. The village workers were not getting the technical backstopping they needed. The village people were working more on schools, health centers and community discussion groups than on hard economic problems. Non-ownership of land was one of the key reasons why villagers did not adopt modern agricultural practices. For the most part the untouchables were not included in community-wide projects. They lived on a separate part of the village, had their own well, and performed the tasks traditionally carried out by untouchable outcastes.

I began to see some similarities between the Indian Community Development Program and the early days of rural development at

Tuskegee Institute. It appeared to me, based on this former experience, that a charismatic leader could get people involved in a lot of activities. However, problems of social change in a traditional society and the basic economic problems would still remain unsolved. And so it was. Community projects tended to be projects that did not upset traditional ways but were concentrated on building schools, community centers, community wells. The problems posed by the money lender, tenancy, marketing, and agricultural productivity, resisted the efforts of community development. These were national problems which could not be solved by village-level workers.

From dialogues with officials of the Community Projects Administration, discussions in the training centers, visits to the offices of state, district and block development officers and extensive visits with village level workers and village officials, the functions of my office became clear. To summarize, they were:

1. Synchronizing the delivery of jeeps with the government's plan to open new community development blocks since the increase in the number of blocks depended more on transportation than any other single item;
2. Keeping the lines of communication open to speed up requests for assistance and to explain the lead time required for the delivery of commodities and the recruitment of technicians;
3. Serving as an additional staff member to the Secretary of the Community Projects Administration to make field visits, identify problems, report findings and make suggestions for improving the operation of the program;
4. Giving lectures and securing lecturers and materials for the training centers;
5. Keeping the Director and senior staff of the U.S. Technical Mission to India fully informed on the activities of the Community Projects Administration;

6. Visiting the more isolated training centers, block offices, and village-level workers to boost their morale and make certain that their problems were brought to the attention of the administrators;
7. Training my staff to become senior officers in the world-wide expanding community development program.

### **What I Learned in India**

India is not an easy country in which to begin an overseas career as a technical advisor. The elite of the Indian Civil Service are equal to the elite of the civil service in the most advanced countries. My counterpart, U. L. Goswami, Permanent Secretary of the Community Projects Administration, was a member of the Indian Civil Service (ICS), which meant that he was trained in England before independence. He had to compete against the best in the British civil service. He was perfectly competent to administer the assistance from the U.S. and other foreign donors. He and other equally well-qualified civil servants were not enthusiastic about foreign technical advisors. Intuitively, I learned in my first conference with him that if I were to escape benign neglect, I would have to demonstrate that I had something of significance to offer. This required finding out what information he needed, but was not getting, and what assistance he needed that I could help provide.

In searching for the information needed, I learned that the direct approach did not work. There were many times when I was in Mr. Goswami's office that he would carry on a telephone conversation with one of his fellow civil servants in another Ministry. The conversation always began on a social or family note. Just when I thought the conversation was over he would say, "Oh, by the way" and introduce the subject that he was really calling about. Sometimes he would be opening the door for me to see the official in question. I soon learned that this was the established etiquette for getting things done.

The senior civil servants were erudite. They spoke and wrote with clarity. Their knowledge was encyclopedic. I learned that personal acceptance had to be achieved before technical assistance was acceptable.

The officials of the Indian Government were sensitive about their colonial history. Therefore, they vigorously opposed the slightest appearance of infringement on their sovereignty. The language of all project agreements had to be very clear in specifying the Indian officials full authority over the use of external aid. This made it very difficult to use U.S.-owned currency acquired through the sale of commodities to generate Indian rupees. I saw many good uses for these funds on my various trips. I learned that these funds were considered the same as funds collected through taxes and were dispensed by the government in the same manner. To avoid this sensitive subject, I discussed the needs of the projects I had studied and usually the officials found a way to improve the financing of these projects.

My career before joining the foreign aid program was dedicated to active involvement in getting things done. I learned that this was not an acceptable approach in India. The spotlight and the credit must always go to the Indian and this is how it should be. The technique I developed was to write down ideas on plain unsigned paper. I would discuss the ideas with officials who could do something about them and leave the paper with the official. Most of my ideas originated from discussions with people working on projects and observations from field trips. Because I presented ideas concerned with actual problems and tried to offer pragmatic suggestions, I usually got sympathetic consideration and sometimes the ideas were modified to fit operational procedures. This technique was most acceptable with the faculty of training centers. As an example, I worked out with the faculty of some training centers a method for studying villages. The method was built around the calendar of the day and the calendar of the year.

We worked out what the villagers did each hour of the day so we could determine the best hour to visit the village for educational purposes. The calendar of the year pointed out what activities were carried out each month; this helped in the preparation of the educational activity for each month.

For me, India was the right first assignment. I learned how to work with government officials grappling with most difficult problems. They were trying to induce change in the most traditional segment of the population - the villagers - and they were trying to transform an authoritarian government that had been concerned mainly with maintaining law and order and the collection of taxes to one that was concerned with human welfare. It was exciting to be associated with people working on these problems, and provided for me a graduate course for working on problems of development with foreign governments.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PHILIPPINES — 1956-58

As Secretary of Defense, Ramon Magsaysay defeated the uprising of the local peasant communists. When he became President, he used the resources of the government to try to improve the wretched life of the peasants. In addition to other government efforts, President Magsaysay established in 1956 the Office of Presidential Assistant on Community Development. He appointed a bright young lawyer, Ramon Binamira, to head this office. Binamira had headed the Youth for Magsaysay in the Presidential campaign and had attracted the attention of the President. The United States Operations Mission to the Philippines (USOM) had made available a few millions of dollars to support the President's new office for community development. Due to my experience with the Indian Community Development Program, I was invited to serve as Advisor to the Presidential Assistant on Community Development (PACD), and Special Assistant for Rural Development to the Director of USOM. I arrived in the Philippines in August 1956.

On arrival, I found that the office of the PACD consisted of Binamira and six other bright young lawyers. They had drafted the Executive Order establishing PACD. The task before us was to develop the organization and a program to implement community development.

To provide the PACD the support required to get the community development program operating, a community development division was established within the USOM. Charles J. Nelson, a young and able public administration advisor in the USOM, joined the staff as Deputy. While I was working in India, I met Dr. Harry L. Naylor, a pragmatic, sensitive and competent

anthropologist in the USOM of Iran. Harry's research work with peasant tenants who had become landowners under the Shah's land reform program impressed me very much. Harry joined the staff to promote research and evaluation. Dr. Bonard Wilson, a group dynamics expert, joined the staff as training advisor.

Before plunging into organization and program development, I suggested that the Director of PACD, Ramon Binimira, the Director of Philippine Agricultural Extension, C. Pineda, and my Deputy, Charles Nelson, visit India and Denmark. The India visit was suggested to study a community development program in operation and the Denmark visit to observe a country that had built a prosperous economy through farmer cooperatives. When this visit was discussed with President Magsaysay, he added two Governors, a Senator and a Congressman. He said that community development needed the support of political leaders and they should be added. Later events proved the wisdom of the President's additions.

When Binimira returned from the visit, he was charged for action and had won the full support of the team that accompanied him. We worked feverishly over the next three months to develop the organization, staffing pattern, training program, budget and program required to get community development going. Binimira had excellent relations with the President and saw him almost daily during the organizational period. Binimira's staff and my staff developed into a harmonious and productive team. The two staffs met frequently in informal discussion groups. In these informal discussions, Binimira spelled out the President's concern for the underprivileged. We discussed policy guidelines and program plans to achieve the President's objectives. After these informal discussions, my staff would go into "bull sessions". Out of these sessions, one staff member would end up writing a draft paper. The value of the draft paper was to transform the informal discussions into writing. Each staff member would work on the

draft paper, sometimes a staff member would rewrite it completely. We would discuss the draft until a consensus was reached, then a final draft would be written on plain unsigned paper and given to Binimira. If major revisions were required after it was reviewed by the PACD staff, we continued working on the paper until it was approved.

Since training was so essential for the initial stage of the program, emphasis was concentrated on training. A special civil service examination was prepared jointly by PACD and the Civil Service Bureau to select trainees. The examination was administered and graded by the Civil Service Bureau. Those who passed the examination were interviewed by officials of PACD and they were also given a physical stamina test. Less than five percent of those who passed the tests were selected. The training period lasted six months, then the graduates worked on a six months probationary period. The workers selected from the probationary period became permanent civil service employees which removed the job from political patronage.

The curriculum was the joint effort of PACD, my staff, the University of the Philippines College of Agriculture, United Nations advisors and training officers in agricultural extension, rural health, rural education and local government. All the people working on the training program agreed that the center should be located on the campus of the College of Agriculture. The College made provisions for training and housing 50 trainees. We could not train more at the College until PACD could construct the community development training center.

Before the first 50 trainees graduated, the pressure for community development workers had built up from so many provinces and municipalities that a way had to be found to train more workers before the training center was completed. It was agreed that the Chief of the Training Division of PACD and I would visit provincial vocational agricultural high schools to

explore the feasibility of operating temporary training centers at some of these vocational agricultural high schools. Our main criteria was the enthusiasm of the principal and his faculty for taking on the job. Out of 20 schools visited, we recommended nine. Our recommendations were accepted. On this project as on others, Binimira again demonstrated his keen insight into the Filipino personality. He designated the vocational school principal as principal of the PACD training center and used the home economics and agriculture teachers to teach the PACD trainees. He gave the school principal an honorarium of 100 pesos per month and the home economics and agricultural teachers an honorarium of 50 pesos per month. The PACD Deputy Principal and two other teachers were recruited from the 50 graduates of the training center at the College of Agriculture. For these small honorariums, the vocational school principal and teachers made the best facilities available to the PACD trainees. Within a year's time 1,000 PACD workers had been trained and the temporary training centers closed.

During the period of training, we hammered out the organizational structure, staffing pattern, budget and program needed to cover the 30 provinces, 1,500 municipalities and 30,000 barrios, an independent research and evaluation program, and a grant-in-aids program.

The central office of PACD was organized into three divisions: administration, field operations and training. In order to have the support of the major departments of the central government, a coordinating community development council was established. The Executive Secretary of the President served as Chairman and Binimira as Executive Secretary of the coordinating council. This body established policy and helped develop a favorable climate in the Cabinet and in the Congress for the community development program. The field operations division organized, supervised and provided financial and logistical support to the PACD offices at

the provincial, municipal and barrio levels. At each level there was a community development council. At the provincial level, the governor served as chairman and the chief of the PACD provincial office as secretary; the same pattern followed at the municipal level with the mayor as chairman. The established barrio council was used to coordinate the work at the barrio level.

Grants-in-Aid were used to stimulate self-help projects. The self-help projects were concentrated at the barrio level, but projects were supported at the municipal and provincial levels. Each project had to be approved by the technical specialists, the PACD supervisor and the community development council. Projects below a fixed financial level were approved at the municipal and provincial levels. Funds were placed in local banks into a PACD account and were withdrawn over the signature of the municipal treasurer and PACD supervisor at the municipal level and the PACD supervisor and provincial treasurer at the provincial level. All treasurers were bonded and under the supervision of the Department of Finance. Projects above the fixed financial level had to be approved by PACD-Manila. Grants-in-Aid were never cash. They were used to purchase equipment, materials and supplies for self-help projects. The grant was used to persuade barrios to engage in projects that contributed to economic improvement.

After working out the organizational structure and program content, Binimira and I visited provincial governors, mayors and barrio leaders to explain how PACD would operate and to get their suggestions. The response was very encouraging. On the basis of our visits, PACD set up regional seminars for governors to get suggestions from them and to prepare the way for the PACD workers who would be assigned to the provinces and municipalities. Every governor and mayor selected made office space available, organized the councils and became a strong supporter of the PACD workers and the projects in his area.

During my tour of duty in India, I observed the difficulty of getting a competent teaching staff to serve long periods at the isolated village-level worker training centers. That was the reason I encouraged PACD to establish the permanent training center on the campus of the College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines. Not only was it easier to get a good PACD training staff, but the resources of the College were always available to continue the up-grading of the training program. I also questioned the objectivity of the Indian evaluation unit since it was a part of the organization being evaluated. Harry Naylor and I believed that research and evaluation should be independent of PACD. We discussed this with Binimira and suggested that we explore the possibility of making a grant to the University of the Philippines to establish a community development research and evaluation council. The grant would be administered independently by the University. The council would receive research proposals from scholars at any university and encourage graduate students to submit research proposals. The council would consider requests from PACD to evaluate on-going projects and do specific research projects. More important, this would involve the top university in the Philippines in the problems of rural people. As usual, we left the paper explaining the proposal. In a few days, Binimira arranged a conference with the President of the University of the Philippines. The President was delighted with the proposal. In record time the grant was made and the council became operational.

One example is given of some of the work of the council. PACD was promoting a chain swine project. A farmer was given a pregnant sow. He agreed to feed her properly, follow the instructions of the animal husbandry expert, and return one female pig to PACD. A young woman graduate student submitted a research project to study PACD-supported projects in selected barrios. The project was approved. The young woman received

several complaints about the high mortality rate of the swine from the barrio people. She decided to look into the project. She discovered that the supervisor had instructed the barrio farmers to house the sows in well-built pens with concrete floors and tin roofs. It turned out that the project supervisor had studied swine raising at a midwestern U.S. college of agriculture. He was instructing the barrio farmers to provide the same care in the tropical climate of the Philippines that was used in the cold winters of the midwest; the swine were dying from too much heat. On the basis of the young woman's finding, the correction was made. Local-type houses were constructed and the mortality rate declined.

There were many sophisticated studies conducted by the research and evaluation council of the University of the Philippines. The one above shows that the council did get into the gut problems of PACD.

By March of 1957, the training center at the College of Agriculture was under construction. The 1,000 graduates were all working. About 15 provinces had PACD offices and about 200 municipalities had PACD offices. Barrio workers had been assigned to about 3,000 barrios. The central office had expanded from seven to over 50 and moved into a new building with adequate space. The response of the barrio people exceeded our expectations and good support was coming from the governors and mayors. We felt we could let up on the pressure and move at a less hectic pace.

As we were feeling some sense of accomplishment, the radio announced early one Sunday morning in March that the President's plane enroute from Cebu to Manila was missing. Later in the day it was confirmed that the plane crashed on a mountain side taking off from Cebu, a provincial capitol. The President and all passengers except one were killed. Despite some opposition, PACD continued to operate under the new President Garcia.

The financial agreement between PACD and USOM was that the United States would provide assistance for five years. At the beginning of the fourth year, PACD would assume one-third of the total cost, the fifth year two-thirds and the sixth year, all. In order not to train workers who would not be employed, the agreement was for USOM to pay all training costs and salary during the probationary period. At the end of the six-months probationary period, the worker was covered by civil service and became a permanent employee of the Philippine Government. When budget hearings came up for 1958, we discovered that the President and the Budget Commissioner did not provide additional funds for the additional workers planned for 1958. In short, PACD received no budget increase over 1957.

President Garcia's failure to support PACD's request for additional funds to increase the number of barrio workers forced something to the forefront of my mind that I had pushed into the background over the past three years. Community Development had become an *article of faith*. The United Nations and United States looked upon it as the prime mover for pushing the traditional villagers into the 20th century. The Indian program was the model. Some of the best brains and most concerned people with development problems were the architects of the India model. Prime Minister Nehru and other heads of State supporting community development looked upon it as a program that could, within a reasonable time, be financed by local resources. They also viewed it as the most visible means of showing the government's concern for the village people and the way to bring development to the countryside in partnership with the village people.

The *article of faith* was so strong that governments were willing to establish a new bureaucracy to administer community development and train a new group of public servants to work directly with the village people to bring about the peaceful revolution. The developing nations that established programs of

community development received generous support from the US during the early '50s.

In the beginning, I accepted the *article of faith* without question. But try as hard as I could, I could not push entirely out of my mind the rural school teachers I knew in Texas and Alabama who were doing the same kind of work that the multi-purpose paid village worker was doing. I also knew rural public health nurses, agricultural extension workers, home economists, rural ministers and volunteer community leaders in the southern states who were doing work similar to that of the multi-purpose workers. The seeds of doubt about the necessity of establishing a new agency of government with personnel extending to the village level began to sprout when President Garcia failed to increase the budget of PACD.

I discussed with my staff the idea of pulling all the barrio workers out of the barrios and placing one in each of the 30 provinces and 1,500 municipalities as a community development aide to the governors and mayors and as a training officer for public servants and elected officials working with barrio people. The grants-in-aid could be channeled through the PACD workers to help barrio self-help projects. I doubted that the Philippine Government would ever provide enough funds to employ all the barrio workers needed to cover the 30,000 barrios; therefore, we should not waste our energies on a losing battle. We should take the President's decision as a challenge to cover the whole country with the existing personnel. We developed a "think paper" along these lines and cleared it with the Mission Director and the Ambassador. I discussed the contents of the paper with Binimira and left it with him for further discussions.

Instead of discussing the paper, Binimira wrote a strong rebuttal to the Ambassador. When I did discuss the paper with him, it was beyond his conception that I, one of the foremost proponents of the India model of community development in the U.S. foreign

aid service, could have written such a paper. He believed that the agricultural extension forces who had opposed U.S. support to community development had gained the upper hand in the USOM and Embassy and I was directed to write the paper. I assured Binimira that I was the author and was only trying to help find a way to expand community development services in spite of the President's cut in funds. Binimira had no intention of taking the budget cut lying down. I assured him that we all supported his leadership and were not trying to force a course of action on him. The idea of pulling trained PACD workers out of the barrios to work as aides to mayors and using other workers such as school teachers, nurses and barrio officials to carry out projects was dropped.

By mid-1958, PACD had become a well-established function in the Office of the President. The staff had stabilized around 1,500 employees, due to a stabilized budget. No new municipalities or barrios were added. For the provinces and municipalities covered by PACD, logistic support and line supervision was working smoothly. The training center had become a semi-autonomous unit on the campus of the College of Agriculture. Training had expanded to include elected officials, volunteer leaders and participants from foreign countries. The PACD workers had emerged as one of the most dedicated and competent group of civil service workers. Morale was high. Loyalty to Binimira's leaders was unquestionable. We were confident that within two years PACD could operate without U.S. technical or financial assistance.

Also, by mid-1958, enough information had been assembled on aided self-help projects to show that they followed a pattern similar to the Indian projects. Barrio roads led the list, new techniques of cultivating rice had been adopted in many villages, playgrounds, and barrio centers led the construction projects. Community drinking water and rain-fed irrigation were common.

The basic economic problems of agricultural productivity such as credit, marketing, land tenure were not covered in community development projects.

After four years of involvement in programs of community development in two countries, some things stood out clear, such as:

1. There was a noticeable high degree of dedication among community development workers;
2. There was an awareness among community development workers about the conditions of village people and an expressed desire to improve the quality of life in the villages;
3. There was an overt effort from the central office to the village level to get the village people involved in the political affairs of the nation;
4. There was a blind faith among the adherents that community development was a bargain basement to economic, social and political development;
5. Village people participated in community projects as much for the attention received as for the value of the project;
6. Village people enjoyed the attention that focused on their village from the assignment of a village-level worker;
7. The role of community development programs to gain the loyalty and support of village people to new independent governments was so great that its value cannot be estimated;
8. The restoration of local government was the most significant achievement of community development workers.

## What I Learned in the Philippines - I

There is no substitute for experience. The Indian experience prepared me to move into the Philippine program with the ease of a professor giving a lecture at a college in a neighboring state. By combining my experience with that of Harry Naylor and Charles Nelson, we were able to organize the Philippine program in a much shorter time and avoid many mistakes.

That people are the most important resource of a nation has been repeated so often that it has become a cliché. In the case of Binimira and the young men and women who worked with him, the full truth of this statement became abundantly clear. The administrative structure we designed would have eventually become nothing but an organization chart on the wall without the dedication, commitment to a democratic society, driving energy, ability and integrity of Binimira and the people who supported him.

Moreover, there are many people willing to support efforts of national development if given the opportunity. The faculty of the provincial vocational high schools is an example. There was an eagerness to accept 100 community development trainees. One man summed up the feeling. He said that during the Japanese occupation they often slept 20 resistors in a room. To him, the community development training program was far more important. Not one school asked about money for more space or furniture.

In working with people, *personal commitment* is more important than previous training. Most of the applicants for community development training were lawyers; conventional wisdom would predict that a rural background and training in agriculture would be the best preparation for community development training and for the job of a barrio worker. Evidence showed that the agriculturally trained applicant with a rural background had a two-week advantage only. The lawyers and

other urban background non-agricultural trained learned the tasks of farm work fast. During the one-month field training in the barrio, commitment to working with people was far more important than previous technical training.

Small successful community self-help projects initiated by barrio workers stimulated local people to become involved in larger and more difficult projects.

Community development programs are effective as an educational movement for developing more awareness of social injustice, economic exploitation, political corruption and thwarted initiative.

## CHAPTER VII

### LIBERIA – 1958-60

Liberia, an area on the west coast of Africa purchased by the American Colonization Society to repatriate American slaves to their homeland, was vastly different from India and the Philippines in every respect. The term "less developed country" only has meaning in terms of the degree of "less developed". I will never forget the shock of my first day at the office of the United States Operation Mission to Liberia! I arrived in August 1958 to assume the duties of Deputy Director of USOM/Liberia, but as it turned out, for the next two months I served as Acting Director until the new Director arrived. Thus started my experience in foreign aid administration above that of Division Chief.

The USOM office was located in an old military camp. Many of the employees were housed in the barracks on the camp. The entire camp was a depressing sight. The grass needed cutting; the buildings needed painting; the roads were in bad shape; and years of accumulated junk was strewn under the buildings. Steps were falling down and holes were in the porches of the barracks where the American advisors lived. I initiated a clean-and-repair campaign my second day in office. It was not hard to conceive how this U.S. office in its run-down condition had an ill effect on the morale of the employees and, equally as serious, the bad impression the office must have made on the Liberians.

Surprise followed tragic surprise. One day I wanted my house boy immediately. I called and called but got no answer. When he came into the house, I asked him where he had been. He answered that he had been to the toilet. I asked where, he said "In the bushes". I was shocked to anger when I learned that the house provided for the Deputy Director of the USOM had no toilet

facilities for house servants. I took the matter up with the office and discovered that none of the houses provided by the Mission to employees had toilets for servants. In bitter anger, I said, "We have a public health division in the Mission. How can we teach the Liberians public health and sanitation, if we do not provide toilet facilities for our own household help?" I directed the immediate construction of toilet and bathing facilities in all the homes for household servants.

The Liberians had agreed to provide land for a new office building and for the construction of 20 houses for USOM personnel. I gave priority attention to getting the land officially designated for this use and funds allocated from Washington to start the construction. It was about this time that the Director arrived and I turned to some of the more pressing program matters.

The Zorzor Rural Elementary Teacher Training Center needed immediate attention. The U.S. Government had agreed to provide funds for the construction of the Center and to finance a U.S. contractor to operate the Center until a Liberian staff could be trained. The Liberian Government agreed to provide the land, \$30,000 for building materials for village schools to serve as practicing and demonstration schools for the trainees at the Zorzor Training Center, and the cost of trainees and salaries for the Liberian staff. The problem requiring immediate attention was the \$30,000 for the self-help village schools. The money was not available. The project supervisor urged that I find the funds from U.S. sources so that the schools would be operational by the time the Zorzor Training Center became operational. I was sympathetic but did not see how making \$30,000 of U.S. funds available would solve the problem for the United States or the Liberians. The need for village schools would be so great after the Center started graduating teachers that some other way had to be found to construct village elementary schools. I told the project supervisor

that I thought the Liberian Government's failure to provide the funds was a blessing in disguise. The people in the villages built their homes and village centers from local materials with local labor. I wondered aloud, "Why not find out if they would build village schools?" The project supervisor arranged a meeting for us with the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Hon. Nathaniel Massaquoi. The Secretary was excited about the idea and arranged to go with us to discuss the project with the Paramount Chief and the Sub-Chiefs of Zorzor, the District Superintendent of Schools and the District Commissioner of Zorzor. The trip was over 200 miles from Monrovia. It was rough driving. It took about 10 days to get the meeting organized.

When we finally met with the tribal chiefs and government officials in Zorzor, Secretary Massaquoi told them that the Government with USOM assistance was planning to build a rural elementary teacher training center. He felt that the center should be located in the Zorzor District. The teacher training center would need practice and demonstration schools. The Government had hoped to provide the materials. The budget was short at the present. He hoped the project could begin rather than waiting until funds were available. If the chiefs would construct the schools out of native materials with village labor, the Secretary would send a teacher to get the schools started and use the schools for demonstration centers. So many chiefs volunteered to build the schools that we had to limit the selection to villages no more than a mile from the road.

Dr. Daniel Hayes, the USOM Supervisor of Rural Schools, spent most of his time in Zorzor. He and the chiefs selected and organized the villages for the construction work. I made a few visits to the area. In each site, the whole village was involved. The women brought dirt and water to the site on their heads. The men cut the thatch and lumber. The small boys and girls mixed the mud with their feet. The men constructed the building. Not one

piece of material used cost any money. The schools were built on the same pattern as their houses. Benches were made of local materials as well as the blackboards.

The next trip Secretary Massaquoi and I made to Zorzor was to participate in the selection of the site for the training center. In Liberia, as in many other African countries, land is tribally owned. I had persuaded the Secretary to secure 1,000 acres for the center. I told him that sometime in the future the Secretary of Education and the Government might not be such strong supporters of rural schools. In order to hedge against that day, he should get enough land to plant commercial trees and grow most of the food for the dining hall. The Secretary agreed and convinced the Zorzor Paramount Chief to deed to the Government 1,000 acres. We looked at several sites the chiefs offered. At one site, the Secretary walked to the highest point. He surveyed the rolling land, the stream flowing in the valley, the new government highway winding through the fields. He looked in all directions and then said to the Paramount Chief, "This is the site."

Having settled the construction of the demonstration schools and the site for the training center, we turned our attention to the curriculum. The proposed curriculum submitted by the teacher-training advisor on the USOM staff and the certification unit of the Department of Education was more or less a carbon copy of certification requirements for teaching in the city of Monrovia or in a city in the U.S. By this time, Secretary Massaquoi and I had become firm friends and shared a mutual concern for improving the life of the tribal village people. I expressed my concern about the inadequacy of the proposed curriculum. He shared the same concern. We had several meetings with the certification unit in his department.

However, we were not able to get the unit to modify the curriculum. The certification official held that the graduates of Zorzor could not receive an elementary teaching certificate unless

they fulfilled the required curriculum. The Secretary gave me all of the publications and directives in the Department of Education on teacher certification. He asked me to study these documents to find out if it were possible to have a more relevant curriculum and one which could lead to a teaching certificate. I plowed through all the documents. I finally found one document that authorized the Secretary of Education to approve changes in the curriculum requirements for a teacher's certificate. I pointed this out to the Secretary. I still remember the smile that came across his face when he read this delegation of authority to the Secretary. We would have a curriculum that not only taught the teaching of regular learning skills, but would also include improved agriculture, home and environmental sanitation, nutrition and child care!

With agreement on the broad objectives of the Zorzor rural teacher training center, the Secretary and I set off on a trip to the U.S. to find an educational institution to direct this project. We visited several colleges. From these the Secretary selected the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Tuskegee agreed to send a representative to study the project and select a team on the basis of this study. Fortunately, the person sent to study the project and to serve as the first principal of the Zorzor training center was William B. Pollard, an expert on elementary teacher training, rural problems, and an educator who knew how to motivate students and teachers and make teaching materials from local resources. Bill Pollard made the Zorzor project a reality. The teachers he trained in actual fact involved the village school in the life of the village people.

During our visit to the United States, the Secretary and I were together for 24 hours every day. Often we had to share the same room. It was on this trip that the Secretary revealed some of his innermost thoughts to me. He told me that his grandfather left the chieftancy of the Vai Tribe in Sierra Leone and moved to Liberia

because he wanted to live in an independent African country. The Secretary's father was educated by American missionaries through high school. After that he made a visit to Monrovia to enroll in the University of Liberia. He was refused admission because he was of tribal origin rather than of Americo-Liberian origin. The missionaries, however, were so impressed with his father's ability that they sent him to Lane College in Jackson, Tenn. for his college education. After completing his college education, he returned to Liberia and later joined the government service. The elder Massaquoi later became Liberia's Consular Representative to one of the German cities. During the long stay of the family in Germany, Nathaniel and several of his brothers and sisters were educated in Germany. The Secretary wrote better in German than English, and was a bit Teutonic in his logic and habits. While in Germany, his father met a bright young engineer whose father was West Indian and mother German. This young man could not find employment in Germany. The elder Massaquoi persuaded him to come to Liberia to live, and eventually this young man became the first building contractor, and later Secretary of Public Works.

After completing his education in Germany, Nathaniel returned to Liberia and taught at the University of Liberia. He was still, when I knew him called "Prof" by the students he formerly taught. As time went on, Nathaniel became more and more interested in the problems of the tribal people. He organized the workers at the Firestone Plantation and called the first strike to get better benefits for the workers. This activity led to his arrest. He was later pardoned, and for a while worked with the leader of labor political groups in other African countries, such as Sekou Toure in Guinea, Nkrumah in Ghana, and Lumumba in the Congo.

When President Tubman announced his program of integration of the tribal people, Nathaniel Massaquoi returned to Liberia and later became a member of President Tubman's cabinet. He described President Tubman with true African hyperbole as the

Creator with all the rest as his creatures. He was dedicated to, and believed in, President Tubman's program of integration. But he was haunted by the question, "After Tubman, what then?" Above all, however, he was a realist and knew that any opposition to President Tubman was futile during his lifetime.

During our visit to Atlanta University in Georgia, we were shown all the activities and accomplishments of the black community in Atlanta. We visited the insurance company, the bank, construction companies, and the large housing development. All of these activities were cooperative efforts on the part of the University and the community. Mr. Milton, one of the professors, told us that he was teaching economics but at first had no place for his students to get actual business experience. He and others, accordingly, organized a bank so students could get business experience. This led into other applied activities that finally developed into the black capitalist complex in Atlanta. After we completed the visit to Atlanta University, we returned to our room in the dormitory to rest. Secretary Massaquoi got out of his bed and began pacing up and down the floor and from time to time beat his fist on the sill of the window. I asked what was wrong. He said that after seeing the accomplishments in Atlanta it was the first time in his life that he had any respect for the American Negro.

Sometime after our return, Secretary Massaquoi dropped by my house for one of his informal visits. He told me that he had tried the communist way and had not been able to bring improvement to the tribal people. He had studied very seriously what I was trying to do. He was now convinced that this approach would help his people and he wanted me to know that he was going to give full support to the program we were trying to develop at Zorzor.

As Deputy Director of the United States Operations Mission to Liberia, I found the job different from that of a Chief of the Community Development Division. A division is concerned

primarily with one major program of the Mission. The Office of the Director in which the Deputy serves is concerned with all the programs, the administration of the office, personnel matters and relations with the host government leaders. These problems usually come to the Deputy before going to the Director. The Deputy has to be effective and he also has to keep the complete confidence and support of the Director. The technique I used was to have a brief informal conference with the Director every morning to find out what he had on the agenda for me and to report my activities and discuss any plans that were brewing in my mind. James Babcock was an understanding Director and liked to divide the work of the Mission with his Deputy. He gave me the activities that I showed interest in and in addition some delicate problems to be handled with the Government of Liberia. I liked to travel into the hinterland to find out what was going on and what the Mission and Government of Liberia could do to improve life in the rural areas, and was able in many cases to be the impartial intermediary between the two governments.

I thus made many trips into the hinterland. Some places were accessible by laterite washboard roads. Some had to be reached by single engine small planes. These were served by landing strips built for the flying doctors and surprisingly enough, good bush pilots were available to make flights into the interior. At this time, the Mission had several technicians stationed out in the bush. One was agriculturist Ryland Holmes stationed at the Gbedin Rice Project. This was a wet rice project cultivated mechanically. The project was beset with many difficulties: lack of water control and keeping the machinery repaired and operating were particular headaches. Not one good rice crop had yet been harvested. I visited the Gbedin Rice Project and spent the night with Ryland and his family. His family was made up of his wife and nine year old son. Their house was 30 miles from the last outpost for communications and devoid of services of any kind. The Mission

installed a shortwave radio for communication with Monrovia. The waves were open from 7-9 every morning. Needless to say, the radio did not work most of the time. There were no other American or European families nearby. Mrs. Holmes taught their son by the Calvert Method. The only contact they had with other American families were the infrequent trips Rylan made to Monrovia or when they visited other technicians at Gbarnga about 50 miles away. In spite of the isolation, hydrological and mechanical difficulties and the lack of labor to keep the project operating, Rylan was giving it all he had. Neither he nor his wife complained. They accepted the hardship and the difficulties as a normal part of the job.

Katherine Lowery, a retired public health nurse in her sixties, was stationed near Gbarnga. Her mother, in her eighties, lived with her. Nurse Lowery taught illiterate tribal midwives to boil instruments used for delivery, to keep a record of deaths and births with different colored beads, prenatal and post natal care. Nurse Lowery carried a candle of enlightenment to the midwives throughout the bush and lived without fear or regard for personal comforts. When I visited the government clinic operated where Nurse Lowery and a European doctor were stationed, the doctor was treating a deep wound in the leg of a patient. The doctor was depressed because he did not have a single bandage or any medicine to treat the wound. He and Nurse Lowery told me this was standard practice. Supplies were ordered but never delivered. The only way to get supplies was to drive the 175 miles to Monrovia over rough roads and exert enough pressure to get some supplies released. At another government clinic about 250 miles from Monrovia, the European doctor took me into the morgue. He showed me the body of a woman. He said that she had died during the night in child labor. He could have saved her life and the life of the child if the clinic had had forceps. He was struggling to provide medical care without basic equipment or medicines.

On a trip down the coast, I visited an agricultural project. The USOM technician had developed a field testing station, developed better grades of coffee, citrus and vegetables. The improved varieties had been distributed to the farmers. To support the field station, each farmer in the area had become a supporting member. The membership fees of the supporting members were used to pay local extension agents trained by the technician and to support the work of the field station. This was an outstanding project. It received its support from the people who used it. Unfortunately, the USOM technician had been promoted to the headquarters staff in Monrovia. No replacement had been assigned. The project was beginning to slide downhill.

On the basis of these and many other visits, I came to the conclusion that an outstanding technician doing an outstanding job in isolation still did not add up to development. Development depended on a system that delivered the things needed, provided an on-going budget, permanent personnel, line supervision, and an operational base. I discussed these observations with the Mission Director. He felt that we should organize a series of in-house seminars to re-think our approach. These seminars confirmed our observations: that there was not one technical project operating in the provinces receiving support from the central government of Liberia.

We asked the Program Officer to develop a proposal for establishing a viable local government at the district headquarter level. This concept was a radical departure from the simple practice of administering the districts from the highly centralized government of Liberia. The evidence was quite ample, however, that the central government was not providing the most elementary services to the district offices under the current system. The proposal called for the assignment of a bonded representative of the Department of Finance to each of the district headquarters. He would be authorized to make expenditures up to

an agreed level without prior clearance from the Secretary of Finance. Also in our proposal, each of the development departments of government would assign a technical representative to the office of the District Commissioner. The technician would be under the administrative direction of the District Commissioner, but would remain under the technical supervision of his department.

After the senior staff of USOM agreed on the basic principles of the proposal, the Mission Director arranged for the proposal to be discussed at one of the regular meetings of the joint Liberia-USA Committee for Economic Development. This Committee was composed of Liberian Cabinet members and three members of the USOM, the Director, Deputy Director, and the Program Officer. The Secretary of Finance was Chairman of the Committee. There was genuine interest in the proposal. The Secretary of Finance took it up with the President. The President agreed for us to proceed with the proposal. The Secretary of Finance appointed a subcommittee to study the proposal and make recommendations. The subcommittee was chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture. The other members were the Secretaries of Interior, Health, Education and Public Works. The subcommittee recommended that the Gbarnga District be chosen as a pilot project to try out an experiment of delegating authority to the District Commissioner. The recommendation was accepted and the subcommittee made a visit to the office of the District Commissioner in Gbarnga to explain the pilot project and get his views on how to make the project work. The District Commissioner was delighted that his district had been selected for the pilot project.

It was fairly easy to get agreement on basic principles. It was altogether another story to get the Secretary of Finance to officially transfer funds to the district. It was fairly easy to get agreement on the stationing of an agriculturist at the district headquarters. It was very difficult to get the Secretary of Agriculture to surrender day-to-day supervision of his employee to

the District Commissioner. What we accomplished was to get the principle of local autonomy accepted at the highest level of government and to create a climate in which a dialogue could be carried out to implement the principle. This was brought out in one of the meetings of the subcommittee. All district commissioners were under the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary sat through the entire meeting without saying a word. Before we closed he said that he wanted to say something. He said that he had heard about this local government plan, but did not know much about it, but he wanted to emphasize that he had the key and if he did not like what was planned he would lock the door and throw the key away. He closed by saying, "Now I know what the plan is, I am all for it; all I want is to be in on the knowing."

By the time the blueprint was worked out and an agreement on basic principles achieved, my two years were completed in Liberia and I was transferred to a neighboring country. I did keep in touch with the program. Increased local autonomy had now been achieved in all the districts of Liberia.

### **What I Learned in Liberia**

Viewing U.S. technical cooperation from the Office of the Director gave me a different perspective about technical cooperation than when I was involved primarily with just one of the technical cooperative projects. The most important thing I learned was the heavy demands on the limited resources of a developing government from all sources. This forced the government and USOM to establish some kind of a priority list.

There were actually two governments operating in Liberia: the central government in Monrovia and the tribal government out in the provinces. I had not realized until I tried to get rural development plans implemented that public administration in Liberia was still in its elementary stage.

Technical cooperation provided by American technicians in isolation, however successful individual projects appeared to be, is not development. Development requires an institutional framework and an effective delivery system. It was in Liberia that I first became aware of the inability of such a government to provide the most elementary services because the infrastructure and administrative organization required had not been developed.

The USOM can make a contribution by setting the example of sound operation, good personnel practices and training local employees for responsible jobs in private industry and the government. That was one of my reasons for improving the physical appearance of the USOM compound, morale of employees and the development of an effective dialogue with government officials.

The defects of Liberia are well known and publicized. I learned that by concentrating on individuals who were concerned and supporting their efforts, I would gain more results than by emphasizing the obvious defects.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SIERRA LEONE – 1961-63

The situation in Sierra Leone again was different from that in any other country where I had worked. When I arrived in Freetown in January 1961 as Director of the United States International Cooperation Administration Mission, Sierra Leone was still a colony of Great Britain. Independence was scheduled for April 1961. The Governor General, his Deputy and most of the permanent secretaries of the ministries of government were British.

Sierra Leone, like Liberia, was established as a home for ex-slaves. In the case of Sierra Leone, the slaves had fought with the British against the Americans in the Revolution because the British promised them freedom if they won the war. The ex-slaves were settled in the colony of Freetown and received educational and other advantages from their British benefactors. In time, this group became known as Krios. They developed a language (a mixture of English, Portuguese and West African dialects) of their own, and a style of life (Victorian) of their own. Due to their education and Westernization, they were able to fill many of the professional, civil service and commercial jobs in the colony, thereby reducing the number of British to do these jobs. These benefits were not extended to the tribal people in the interior. The Krios became the social and political elite.

In preparation for independence, the British did establish universal suffrage. This resulted in the tribal people dominating the elected offices and the Krios dominating the civil service.

During the period of colonial rule, adequate economic and social infrastructures had been developed. There were over 200 miles of narrow gauge railroad tracks, domestic air service and a

network of roads to all the centers of population. Through the district commissioners, a high level of local government had been developed. Sierra Leonians had been trained for responsible civil service positions at the district, provincial and central levels of government. The administrative headquarters for the tribal people was built at the city of Bo and a government secondary school had been established mainly for educating the sons of chiefs. Local Councils had been legally established with responsibility for tribal law and justice and for maintaining elementary schools, village police and roads. In short, the British had prepared the Sierra Leonians for self-government, but had done little to improve their economic conditions. For most of the people subsistence agriculture was the only hope.

The historical development of Sierra Leone and the special relationship between the British government and the settlers of the colony of Freetown posed some real questions for a meaningful function of the U.S. Aid Mission. Sierra Leone was over-institutionalized; an adequate number of British technicians were available, and secondary and university education was available. The first problem of the U.S. Mission was to develop a harmonious working relationship with the British officials, the political leaders of the tribal people and the top civil servants of the Krio people. The difficulty of achieving this objective was demonstrated in working out the Kenema Rural Training Institute Project.

Before the technical mission was established in Freetown, the Government of Sierra Leone and the U.S. Government had agreed to establish a Rural Training Institute mainly for out-of-school rural youth. In the project proposal, the Government of Sierra Leone had agreed to provide the buildings, cost of training and the local staff. The U.S. Government agreed to provide a contractor, technicians and commodities. Hampton Institute, in the U.S. State of Virginia, was selected as the contractor. The contractor sent a

team to Sierra Leone to work out the details of the project. The team was composed of Dr. Jerome Holland, the President of Hampton, Dr. William Martin, the Dean, and Dr. Arthur F. Raper, ICA Consultant. The team reached an understanding with the Government of Sierra Leone and Hampton sent Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rice as the first technicians to get the project started.

By the time the Rices arrived, the faculty of the Kenema Technical Institute had convinced the Ministry of Education not to make the buildings available for the Rural Training Institute. The faculty felt that the Americans were so eager to introduce their system of training that they would provide the buildings. The Ministry of Education also had second thoughts about sponsoring the project. It was felt that the curriculum was too elementary and skill-centered. When these problems were brought to my attention by the Rices, I took the position that the agreement stated that the Government of Sierra Leone would provide the buildings and I expected the government to do so. The sponsorship of the project was a determination of the government also.

It was during these discussions that the special talents of the Rices for this project began to be manifested. Bob Rice made the proposal that the abandoned airport at Kenema be made available for the Kenema Rural Training Institute and he would build temporary native buildings to get the project started. He needed three pre-fabricated houses to get started, one for a boys' dormitory, one for a girls' dormitory and one for his family. The government accepted Rice's proposal. The District Commissioner at Kenema was authorized to make funds available for the project. Bob Rice got the temporary buildings and the prefabs constructed in a very short time. With the students and faculty housed, he began the construction of the permanent buildings with mostly student and faculty labor. The project was placed under the more sympathetic Ministry of Agriculture.

The students were thrilled to be engaged in actual construction work. One day while visiting the project, I noticed one group of boys making concrete blocks and another laying the wall of the classroom building. The bell rang for lunch. The boys kept on laying the blocks. Finally Bob Rice came out and made them stop for lunch. He said that the boys were like that on all "live" projects. The girls were busy making mattresses for the dormitories and preparing the food for lunch (most of the food had been gathered from the school garden). The excess vegetables were sold in the local market. The local people referred to them as "American vegetables" because they were superior to the local vegetables. On later visits, I saw the girls teaching the village women child care and the boys teaching the men of the villages how to make and lay concrete blocks. The reputation of the school spread. Finally the Prime Minister made a visit to the Institute. He was very pleased with what the boys and girls were doing and how the faculty was teaching them. He made some favorable remarks about the school in the cabinet meeting. From then on the school received full support from the government and we were under pressure to open more schools.

Most of the boys and girls who graduated from the Rural Training Institute never returned to the villages. Managers of government farms and private contractors employed the boys as soon as they graduated. The girls found work in the towns.

I did not want another Kenema conflict of interest. I made special effort to keep the lines of communication open and the people who were concerned with project activities informed. I had learned about the work of the Governor General, Sir Maurice Dorman, when he was the director of community development activities in Ghana and I was in India. This common professional background served to establish a friendly and relaxed working relationship. He was most helpful in giving me an objective evaluation of the people in his government with whom we had projects.

The Prime Minister, Sir Milton Margai, built his political base with the village midwives and school teachers when he was a medical officer. He taught the midwives elementary sanitation and child care. He involved the teachers in local political elections. He was interested in having adults go to Kenema to learn about making and laying blocks as one way of improving village housing. I called informally on both the Governor General and the Prime Minister to keep them informed on the activities of the U.S. Mission and sought their advice for help. Both men appreciated these visits and sometimes took the initiative to invite me to their offices.

During the transition period from colonialism to independence, most of the permanent secretaries in the ministries of government were British. The one I found most helpful was Denis Pearl, Permanent Secretary for the new Ministry of Development; he had served in the colonial service in Sierra Leone for 12 years. He had written the five-year development plan, coordinated all foreign aid and approved every project supported by the U.S. Mission. We developed the kind of personal and working relations that I had found so useful in other countries. Denis was honest, competent and dedicated. At first he had some apprehensions about the U.S. Mission. We found it easy to level with each other and pleasant to play an occasional round of golf, to have a drink at the club and dinner at each other's homes. In time his apprehensions disappeared and my respect for him and other dedicated British civil servants in Sierra Leone increased.

After independence and the rising tide to Africanize the civil service, Denis was hurt to see his efforts being hindered by these new developments. He told me that he should have been prepared for the growing reaction against the colonial civil servants, but he worked so hard for an orderly independence and the development of Sierra Leone that he never thought about anything else. In light of these developments, he said that he knew it was time to go

before being asked to go. In going, he wanted me to know that he was glad the Americans had come and he was convinced that we, like the dedicated British civil servants, were working for the best interest of Sierra Leone.

Dr. John Karefa-Smart, Minister for External Affairs, was very helpful on policy matters and in keeping me clear of entanglements with the special interests of the British, Krios and the tribal groups. John was a Temene, the second largest tribal group in Sierra Leone, the Prime Minister was a Mende, the largest tribal group. Both were medical doctors and close personal friends in spite of the years that separated them. John was educated by American missionaries in Sierra Leone through high school; his college education was completed in the United States, his medical education in Canada, and his Master's Degree in Public Health in the United States. He was married to an American and had worked for the World Health Organization of the United Nations. He understood foreign aid, bilateral agreements and the legal problems associated with foreign aid. He asked me to keep him informed on these matters so he could be helpful when they came up for discussions in cabinet meetings. With John's help, Sierra Leone was the first new independent African country to sign a bilateral agreement with the U.S. Government.

John's advice was most helpful for the planning of the Njala Agricultural College project. Before Independence, the Department of Agriculture was located at Njala, a small town about 100 miles from Freetown. When the Department became a ministry, it was moved to Freetown. Only the research activities remained at Njala. There were excellent facilities at Njala including an elementary teachers training college. We began discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture officials and the Vice Chancellor of the University to use these facilities for the establishment of a college of agriculture as a unit of the University. We even injected into the discussions the proposal for stationing the agricultural extension at

Njala so that extension and research could work together. The Minister of Agriculture and the Vice Chancellor were interested in these ideas. During the discussions, John informed me that some of the British officials were concerned about introducing the American type of education in the university system of Sierra Leone and that there was a lot of support for the British views among the Sierra Leonians. John advised that the Minister of Agriculture introduced the discussions in a cabinet meeting. If the cabinet approved the college of agriculture project, then the Americans would not be accused of pushing their educational system on the Sierra Leonians.

The proposal was presented to the cabinet and was thoroughly discussed. The cabinet approved sending a team to the United States to study a few land grant colleges and to explore the interest of a U.S. land grant college to send a team to Sierra Leone to study the feasibility of establishing a college of agriculture. The African team visited five U.S. land grant colleges and made a report to the cabinet on its return. The team recommended that the University of Illinois be invited to study the feasibility of establishing a college of agriculture in Sierra Leone. The cabinet accepted the report and extended an invitation to the University of Illinois to send a team to Sierra Leone. The University of Illinois accepted the invitation and sent a team of qualified men to Sierra Leone. This team recommended the establishment of the college of agriculture at Njala. Their report was accepted by the cabinet and the University of Illinois was invited to accept the job of advising the Government of Sierra Leone on establishing the agricultural college at Njala. By following the advice of Minister John Karefa-Smart we were able to get the government to establish a much-needed college of agriculture and to try to adapt the land grant college idea to Sierra Leone.

At Independence ceremonies, the British Government surrendered its authority with "a golden hand shake". The golden

hand shake was usually the last fiscal grant to an ex-colony. One of the casualties of reduced financial support from the British Government was the State University. The new government of Sierra Leone did not have the money to complete the expansion of the State University nor to continue the scholarships to students from other African countries. Dr. Davidson Nicol, the first Sierra Leonien to head the college, discussed these problems with me. He was recognized as an outstanding scholar in the international academic community; he had expanded the physical plant, teaching facilities and faculty more than any of his predecessors. Our support to the Forah Bay was increased accordingly to include a social science classroom building, five faculty cottages, and scholarships for students from other African countries. We believed that this was one way to help the college until the new government could budget the funds to maintain the work already in progress.

By keeping the lines of communication open, the AID Mission\* did achieve acceptance by the three major groups in Sierra Leone and did find areas for assistance that were not duplicating or competing with projects undertaken by the British or the Government. The Kenema Rural Training Institute recognized the problem of the out-of-school rural youth and the Institute was an effort to develop skills that had immediate market value as a case in point. The British Government and missionaries as well as American missionaries had spent large sums of money and provided personnel for educational work for over a century. But nowhere in Sierra Leone could a young person study agriculture at the college level, even though 90 percent of the people derived their livelihood from agriculture. This was the main reason so much effort was expended to establish the College of Agriculture

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\*In November, 1961, U.S. foreign assistance agencies operating under various titles were merged into the Agency for International Development (AID).

at Njala. Throughout most of the colonial history of West Africa, Forah Bay College was the only institution of higher learning serving Africans. The College maintained high standards and had achieved prestige among the African colonies. With funds drying up from Britain, we felt it was a good investment to support Forah Bay College.

The AID Mission did many other things, such as establishing an audio-visual unit for the schools in Freetown, providing tools and commodities to support the self-help activities of the local councils, supporting rural health services and supporting some engineering feasibility studies.

Sierra Leone posed a difficult problem. As stated above, the British did develop functioning local government at the district level, a primary economic and social infrastructure that provided adequate power, railroad service, port facilities, air service and roads adequate for the existing commerce and transportation needs of the country. There was more available space in the secondary schools, teachers colleges and the university than qualified students. But as far as the village peasants were concerned, I observed no significant improvement in their standard of living than among their neighbors in Liberia where the infrastructure was much less developed. Nor were our projects any more successful in improving the level of living of the peasants.

### **What I Learned in Sierra Leone**

The directorship of a U.S. Technical Mission provides an excellent opportunity to recruit and develop a competent staff, establish the necessary working relations with government officials and to develop a climate favorable for U.S. technicians to work cooperatively with host officials.

Where well-defined sociological entities make up a nation such as the British, Krios and tribal groups in Sierra Leone, it is essential to develop harmonious working relations with the leaders

of each group before initiating a project, e.g., the Kenema Rural Training Institute.

When representatives from foreign governments convince the leaders of a country that their primary concern is to assist with the development of the country, they will receive support. This was demonstrated by the support and advice our Mission received from Denis Pear, the British colonial civil servant, and Dr. John Karefa-Smart, the Minister of External Affairs.

Significant projects can be developed with government support, as in the case of Kenema Institute and the Njala Agriculture College. The real problem, however, is to translate these projects into a means for improving the livelihood of the peasants.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PHILIPPINES REVISITED – 1964-69

In August of 1964, I returned to the Philippines as Deputy Director of the AID Mission. At the first staff meeting, I heard many of the same problems discussed that we discussed in 1956-58. The problems centered around the difficulties of getting support from the various departments of the central government for joint projects. What was more surprising, I heard many of the solutions proposed that were proposed eight years earlier. I had the feeling that I had never left the Philippines. I discussed my feelings with Jim Ingersoll, the Mission Director, and suggested that I hold a few in-house seminars with the senior staff to find out if we could come up with some new suggestions. He willingly approved.

The seminars were both heated and enlightening. There was complete agreement about the central government's short-coming. When I suggested that we work with local governments on a pilot basis to find out if projects would receive better support, the weight of opinion remained with the central government. It took several seminars and the active participation of the Mission Director to gain the support needed to try working with local governments on a pilot basis.

We continued the seminars with Philippine scholars, ex-government officials and representative of private groups. I was surprised to find how strongly these individuals supported working with local governments. The general feeling was 10 years overdue. With the favorable reaction from this group, I appointed a small task force to develop a working paper. Some of the main points brought out in the paper were:

1. AID would request approval from the Philippine Government to enter into a project agreement with two provincial governments to test the capability of local governments to support and operate externally aided projects. The request would emphasize that this was a pilot project and under no circumstances would AID request expansion to other provinces.
2. AID would assign a public administration advisor with experience as a city manager of a city between 25,000 and 100,000 people to assist the governor to improve the operation of the provincial government. A manager of a small U.S. city gets the kind of experience relevant to the problems of a governor in the Philippines.
3. The rationale for assisting the provincial government was to improve its capability to provide logistical support to projects. Over the past 60 years, the Philippines had to import rice to meet domestic requirements; the project would concentrate on the increased productivity of rice. The selection of pilot provinces would be from those that had irrigation facilities and produced at least five per cent of the rice of the country. Seven provinces in the Philippines produced about 85 percent of the rice. These same provinces had about 90 percent of the irrigation facilities. Increased productivity would have to come from these provinces.
4. The agricultural technicians did not know specifically why the productivity of the farmers was low. The place to learn would be from the farmers. An AID agricultural technician would be assigned to the province to explore the feasibility of increased productivity, the barriers to increased productivity and how to overcome the barriers.
5. An adequate number of employees were in the provinces and municipalities, therefore this project would be initiated and implemented with the existing personnel and as far as possible with existing resources.

6. All the units and divisions within the Mission supporting rural development, such as agriculture, food for peace, local government, military surplus equipment and community development would be grouped together into an office of rural development.

When I began discussing the implementation of the working paper with the senior staff, I ran into a hornet's nest. The technicians were proud of their assignment as advisors to national offices. An assignment to a provincial or municipal office did not have much appeal. Neither were they convinced that a project supported by the provincial government would be any more successful than projects sponsored by the central government. The heads of technical units were not too pleased to be grouped under a new manager of rural development. We agreed on a compromise. The technicians would work in the provinces on a temporary basis until full-time technicians could be recruited. The units making up the office of rural development would be coordinated in the Director's office until we had a better idea how the program would develop.

Now we were ready to begin a serious dialogue with the Philippine Government about the project. There was some opposition from the professional, able, dedicated civil servants. They were apprehensive of the political aspects of the project, they did not have much faith in the governor's ability to keep the projects out of partisan politics or to use provincial funds to support the projects. We had kept the Philippine Desk in Washington informed about our plans. But there was not much enthusiasm for what we were attempting from the Desk either. At this point in my career, I had become accustomed to opposition to innovation, but I was convinced that there was little progress without innovation. We continued our dialogue with officials in the government.

As often happens, luck plays the decisive role rather than strategy. One afternoon, the young, dynamic and ambitious governor of Tarlac burst into my office beaming with enthusiasm. He had seen a Food for Peace movie on self-help work in Korea. He wanted to know how he could get AID assistance for similar projects in Tarlac. I reviewed our working paper with him and told him we would like to help but could not because all assistance to the provinces had to be processed through the National Economic Council (NEC). He wanted to know how to work directly with AID. I told him that we could not work directly with a province, but if the government of the Philippines authorized the Mission, we could work with two provinces. He wanted to know who could authorize this. I informed him that the Chairman of NEC could do it.

He left my office immediately and went to the office of the NEC Chairman. Shortly thereafter the Chairman of NEC called me to find out why I did not give his friend Governor Aquino some assistance.

"Mr. Chairman," I replied, "you know as well as I do why I cannot give assistance directly to the Governor."

"How about us getting together to discuss the matter?" he asked.

I said that I would be delighted. We all met within a few minutes and before the workday ended the Chairman had composed and signed a letter authorizing the AID Mission to work with the Governor of Tarlac. A copy was given to the Governor. Not long thereafter, the President of the League of Governors heard about the letter for the Governor of Tarlac. The President of the League, Governor San Luis of Laguna, had a similar letter prepared for the province of Laguna. Through chance, two of the most progressive governors in the Philippines had been selected for the pilot project. Their provinces met all the criteria spelled out in the working paper. No amount of planning and setting up criteria

for selection could have produced any better leaders for AID's initial effort for working with local governments.

A technical team from NEC and AID was sent to the provinces of Tarlac and Laguna to assist the governors develop provincial development plans. The governors sat through all the planning sessions, and made excellent contributions to the plans. The main concern of the governors was the provincial garage. Over 85 percent of the equipment in the provincial garages was deadlined, mainly for lack of spare parts. The central government prohibited the stockpiling of spare parts. The broken part had to be submitted to get a replacement. The broken down machine had to be sent to a regional repair shop and was usually not returned to the province. The practice was to keep the machine at the provincial garage instead of sending it for repairs. The deadlined equipment was essential for building, repairing and maintaining municipal and barrio roads and for maintaining irrigation systems. The governors felt that the efficient operation of the garage was the key to improving the agricultural production of the province.

We brought in two technicians from the U.S. Army Depot in Japan to survey the provincial garages. The technicians worked with the mechanics at the garages. They selected the equipment that could be repaired, declared the other junk and moved it away. They established a system for stockpiling spare parts, made a list of tools required to keep the machinery repaired and taught the provincial mechanics how to operate the system. A cost-sharing plan was worked out between the provincial government and USAID to purchase the spare parts and tools. The technicians from Japan returned at intervals until they were satisfied that the system was working. The deadline equipment was reduced from 85 to 15 percent, and the time for repairing deadline equipment was reduced from an average of six months to one month. With the better operation of the provincial garages, the governors were able to send construction teams to the municipalities and barrios every day.

Property taxes were the main source of revenue for provincial, municipal and barrio governments. The governors requested a study of the assessment and collection of property taxes. The study showed that less than half the property was on the assessment rolls and about half of the assessed taxes were collected. A team from the tax division of the finance department was sent to the provinces to work with the provincial tax assessors and collectors. The tax experts secured aerial photographs from the Philippine Army to map the land holding. They checked the holding with the owner. If the owner agreed to the plot, then the plot was registered by the tax assessor and an assessed value was given the plot. Getting the property on the tax rolls was a fairly easy matter. Improving the collection remained a problem.

Our main target was increased rice productivity. Harold Koone, the chief of the Food and Agriculture Division in the AID Mission, worked with the provincial agriculturists in both provinces. They recommended areas that had the best chance for increased production. Both governors approved the recommendations. The area selected to begin the increased rice productivity project in both provinces had about 40 farmers. All the farms were irrigated, and averaged two hectares in size. In the pilot areas of Laguna, the farmers were mostly tenants. In the Tarlac area most of the farmers were owners.

We were now ready to assign AID advisors to the two provinces. Wilmot Averill, a high-pressure, hard-driving, can-do person, with city manager experience, was assigned to work with the high-pressure, hard-driving Governor Aquino of Tarlac. Harold Koone, a first-rate agricultural scientist with a touch of the dirt farmer from the Ozarks of Arkansas, was assigned to Tarlac as agricultural advisor. Donald Brown, a low-pressure, technically competent ex-city manager, was assigned to work with the level-headed, competent, dedicated Governor San Luis of Laguna. Huron Smith, another competent agricultural extension advisor

with flair for public speaking and singing, was assigned agricultural advisor to Laguna.

The first task was to organize the municipal field workers into a team to find out from the farmers what they considered to be their problems and how they thought the problems could be solved. In Laguna, the farmers wanted to know how to get rid of rats. In Tarlac, the farmers wanted to know how to stop the erosion of the banks of streams that were cutting away their farms at every heavy rain. To our surprise, the farmers knew about high-yielding seeds, the kinds of fertilizer needed as well as about pesticides. When asked why they did not use these things, the farmers wanted to know where they could get them and how could they pay for them.

Our problem shifted from motivating the farmers to use modern practices, to making the commodities available to carry out modern practices. In Laguna, we began with a rat eradication campaign. The governor asked the mayor to organize the farmers into a task force. Rat poison was requested from the pesticide department of the central government. The department had bulletins and a technician, but no poison. The technician was requested to come to Laguna to show the farmers how to use poison, which was secured from a private dealer. Huron Smith, the AID technician, and the technician from the central government taught the provincial and municipal agriculturists how to use rat poison safely. These agriculturists were assigned to work with teams of farmers to show them how to use the poisons safely.

During the rat eradication campaign, it was discovered that the sugar cane farmers had a practice of burning the cane from the center of the field and letting the fire spread to the outer edges. The rats from the sugar cane fields fled from the fire to the rice fields. The two groups of farmers got together and helped each other. The rice farmers provided enough men to light the fields from the outside. This drove the rats to the center of the field

where they burned to death. The campaign was successful. The farmers were ready to listen. But only one farmer in the pilot community of 40 agreed to try out the new high-yielding rice variety recently developed by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), even though the farmers saw the new rice growing on the experimental fields of IRRI every day. Huron Smith and the governor agreed to subsidize this farmer who dared to break tradition and try something new. Huron and the municipal agriculturists worked with the innovating farmer from preparing the field to harvesting, to be sure that all practices were followed. In this case, the new IR-8 seed produced an increase of 200 percent over the old variety. The pilot farmer became a hero in his own community. The governor bought all of the new rice strain and used it to supply seed for the new converts. We now knew what and how much was required to grow the new rice variety.

In Tarlac, the governor was provided with Food for Work, under the Food for Peace program. He and the public works engineer, along with community and religious leaders, organized the community into a work campaign to stop the erosion of the banks of the stream. There was frenzied activity to complete the work before the rains came. The work was finished; the banks held. With this success the governor organized many similar activities to improve irrigation and decrease the damage of floods.

Harold Koone worked with another cooperative farmer on increased rice productivity in Tarlac. He had success similar to that of Huron Smith in Laguna.

Our experience with the rat eradication campaign underscored the inability of the central government to meet all the service needs of the farmers. We made the decision to look to the private sector for the commodities it could best provide and to the government for those services it could provide. The farmers needed reliable technical information and how to use it, controlled

water, better seeds, better culture practices, credit, fertilizer and pesticides. All these things were present in the Philippines but, except water, all were not available to the farmers in the areas where we were working.

We began with credit. There is a network of rural banks in the Philippines. They are privately owned, but by charter they were required to be responsive to small-and-medium-sized farmers. In practice, however, they had made loans only to farm owners. The rural banks were supervised by the central bank. About the time we began our local government experiment, the central bank had trained farm credit supervisors and was ready to assign some of these supervisors to rural banks. The central bank agreed to reserve two of the positions for the rural banks in the areas where we were working on the increased rice productivity project. When we discussed credit for the farmers in the Laguna area, the rural bank would not agree to make loans to tenants.

We asked the manager of the rural bank, if a collateral deposit was made in his bank, would he lend the money to a tenant who met every other requirement for a loan except title to the land he was cultivating. This was agreeable to the manager. The NEC, the central bank and AID agreed to deposit counterpart funds of 25,000 pesos in the rural bank in Laguna and Tarlac to provide collateral for the farm operations of the farmers in the increased rice productivity project. The central bank assigned a full-time credit supervisor to work as a link between the bank and the farmers. The credit supervisors were trained agriculturists as well as credit supervisors. About 40 farmers were approved for supervised loans in both provinces. Before, or on the due date of the loan, each farmer went to the bank on his own initiative, repaid his loan in full and made a little speech thanking the banker for the excellent assistance he received from the credit supervisor. From that time on, we had no more trouble with rural banks approving loans recommended by the credit supervisor.

Loans without available supplies and commodities are not very useful. Esso Fertilizer was training an agriculturist to operate Agri-business Service Stations to handle the retail end of the Esso Fertilizer. We discussed with the manager of Esso Fertilizer the possibility of establishing an Agri-business Service Station in the areas of Laguna and Tarlac where we were working on increased rice productivity. The manager was pleased to cooperate and set up the stations soon after the discussions. The farmers were able to purchase the kind of fertilizer required when needed; the service stations also carried pesticides, agricultural tools and equipment used by small rice farmers.

The new rice varieties produced by IRRI required a technology different from the old variety of rice. IRRI established short, medium and long term training courses. The short courses were designed for people on the job who could not get away for more than a week. Governor San Luis of Laguna enrolled in one of the short courses. He scored the lowest in the class on his entrance test. After completing the course, he scored the highest score in the class. He took the course as an example to get the agriculturists in Laguna to study the new rice technology. One senior agriculturist from Tarlac and Laguna took the medium course at IRRI and set up training programs for all the agriculturists in the provinces.

The municipal field workers in Laguna and Tarlac had the reputation of being lazy, spending too much time in coffee houses and local bars, and playing cards instead of getting out and helping farmers. What Harold Koone and Huron Smith discovered was that the field workers had no demonstration supplies or tools. They had no way to travel from their station to the farmers and there were no funds to cover their per diem when they had to spend time away from their stations. The project then provided a vehicle to get the workers to the barrios, demonstration supplies and equipment and per diem. They learned the new rice technology by

working with Harold and Huron on farms. The municipal field workers in both provinces were transformed. They went out working with farmers every day, holding group meetings at night and were filled with enthusiasm and new ideas. These workers were not lazy or careless. They simply had had nothing to work with and no way to get to the farmers.

In one meeting with the municipal workers, I heard them discussing their work. They realized that they could not hold group meetings every night and carry on the work every day. They agreed to cut out one night meeting per week. One girl reported that she had walked so much getting to farmers that she had worn out her shoes and could not get another pair until she received her pay check. The governor used his special fund to purchase heavy duty shoes for all the girl workers in the municipality.

The first growing season, only one farmer in each area was bold enough to try the new variety; the second growing season, 40 farmers planted the new variety. The increased production averaged 90 percent. The third growing season, the new varieties spread like wildfire. The governors took to the stump extolling the virtues of the new rice. Relatives and friends visited farmers growing the new varieties. The converted shared their seeds and technology with their relatives and friends. All the farmers in the areas of the provinces that had enough water were turning to the new variety and using the services of the rural bank and the new technology provided by the municipal agriculturists.

Something more needs to be said about the role of the two AID agricultural technicians, Harold Koone and Huron Smith. The International Rice Research Institute and the University of the Philippines' College of Agriculture were located in the middle of the area where Huron worked in Laguna. He established excellent relations with the staff at the College and IRRI. He took farmers on field trips to the College and IRRI and had IRRI plant scientists visit the field of farmers to help with problems. Most

important was the activation of the Philippine extension workers to become better technicians and to spend more time working directly with farmers. Huron's work was largely promotional and he did an excellent job.

Tarlac Province was too far from IRRI and the College of Agriculture to profit by field visits. Large areas of the farm land in Laguna was under permanent irrigation. One rice crop could be grown after the other. Most of Tarlac, however, was farmed by rain-fed irrigation -- that is, when it rained there was enough water in the rivers to provide irrigation. During the dry season the streams became dry and no irrigation was available. Harold selected one farmer, assured all risks for each new practice, and tried the practice out on the farm of the demonstrator before recommending the practice to the local technicians and farmers. This established his credibility with the technicians and farmers.

"We accept Mr. Koone's recommendations because we know he has tried it out," they said.

Both Harold and Huron found out that none of the farmers would risk planting their entire rice farm with the new varieties. They hedged against the unknown by planting most of the land in the tried and tested varieties. The average farmer, it was discovered, would risk planting between a fourth and a half of his land with the new variety. This knowledge permitted the planners to develop a rice kit, or package, which contained printed information and enough seeds, fertilizer and pesticides for a fourth of a hectare of rice land. The rural banks approved the idea of the package plan and made it eligible for loans. To determine the initial risk-taking propensity of the average rice farmer and to tailor the kit to this sociological fact of life was crucial in the eventual widespread acceptance of the new rice variety.

Harold was the first to recognize that a two-hectare farm depending on rain fed irrigation could never produce enough rice to give the farmer an income large enough to bring him far above

the poverty level. But he knew that the new rice required a shorter growing period than the old rice. He therefore persuaded his demonstration farmer to rush the harvesting of the rice because there was enough residual water and fertilizer left in the ground after the rice season to grow a crop of sorghum. He proposed that the sorghum seed be used to feed poultry and swine. This gave the farmer a second crop and the use of his land for 12 months instead of the usual six months.

Within a year's time, we demonstrated that the provincial government under the leadership of the governor could support projects. The governors learned that performance was good politics and added a new dimension to political activity at the provincial and municipal levels. The supporting role of the private sector was also well demonstrated. The most doubting of Thomases were convinced that certain activities could be performed better at the provincial and municipal levels and that the local governments should be given these responsibilities.

By this time the Philippines had a new President and AID had a new Mission Director. President Marcos brought into his cabinet several young, able technocrats. This group was headed by his Executive Secretary, Rafael Salas. The new government then began a dialogue with our new Mission Director, Wesley Haraldson. The new government and the new Mission Director agreed that the model recently developed in the provinces of Tarlac and Laguna should be expanded to all the major rice producing provinces. Rice and roads became the foundation of the Marcos Government's political and economic underpinning for the rice growing areas of the Philippines.

All of us engaged in the Laguna and Tarlac programs worked with the new government on an expanded rice productivity program. The President revitalized the old Rice and Corn Production and Coordinating Council with Executive Secretary Salas as the Secretary of the Council and the Vice-President as

Chairman. Wilmot Averill, the management expert, was transferred from Tarlac to help the new government get the council organized and functioning. Harold Koone and Huron Smith helped with the training program. Within 18 months, the Laguna and Tarlac models had been established in 10 major rice growing provinces. Thus it was that the Philippines moved from a rice deficit to a rice exporting country with a new set of problems, such as drying, milling and storage facilities, a floor price for rice and quality control.

When the first shipload of rice was exported, a wave of enthusiasm spread throughout the Philippines similar to the first successful space flight in the United States. It gave the Filipinos a sense of accomplishment; they felt that they could do something on their own.

Rice development in the Philippines was successful because of *people*. Executive Secretary Salas had the full support of the President. Salas was able, dedicated, honest and placed national interest above partisan politics. The coordinating council provided the mechanism for making decisions immediately at the highest level of government and to provide the resources to implement the decisions. The able young governors provided the leadership at the local level to get things going. The AID Mission held firm that our support would be limited to those provinces that had irrigation systems and which produced at least 10 percent of the rice of the country, lest we dilute our effort. We would not respond to pressures from those provinces that failed to meet this criterion. We would assist with the repair and improvement of existing irrigation systems, but would not become involved with long-time and expensive new irrigation systems. We rigorously supported the target of closing the rice gap through better use of existing facilities and concentrating on the areas where the chance of success was best. This was an unpopular political decision. We held firm. In time, the national government adopted this same policy with other development programs.

During the rice production campaigns in the two pilot provinces and later with the national program, I became more convinced than ever that the provincial and large city governments would have to become equal partners with the national government in the program of development. The old spellbinder orators and political artists were being replaced by young, professionally competent and dedicated young men in the provinces and cities. This new breed of political leaders needed to be given more responsibility and support. I discussed this concern more and more with my friends in the National Economic Council, as well as taking them on field trips to observe the work of some of the new governors and mayors. My friends in NEC became the leading proponents of transferring more development responsibility to local governments and giving more assistance to the local governments to carry out these responsibilities. What evolved from these discussions and trips was the establishment of a permanent office in the National Economic Council for Provincial and Urban Development. This office had the funds and staff personnel to assist provincial and urban governments with development plans, technicians from the central government, on a temporary basis, to process requests with the various departments of the central government, and to sponsor training courses for the specialized needs of provincial and urban governments.

In the process of working on joint Philippine Government and AID projects, I learned through trial and error that organizational charts and lines of authority drawn on these charts were for the most part meaningless. In the National Economic Council, for example, Ben Villavicencio held much power. He was deputy chief of the Program Office. Every project receiving foreign assistance had to be cleared by Ben. The Chairman of NEC was a political appointee and a member of the cabinet. Chairmen came and went. Ben stayed on; he was indispensable. Each new chairman found this out, and also found himself not signing any important paper until

it had been cleared by Ben. Ben knew more about the foreign aid donors and the local cost components and operational problems of foreign aid projects than anyone in the Philippine Government. His security depended on his anonymity. Through my close personal and working relationship with Ben, I learned that his counterpart existed in every major department of the Philippine Government and they were held together in an informal network. It made little difference who headed the offices or how many re-organizations the government went through; this group of able, dedicated, anonymous civil servants retained the reins of bureaucratic power. They more or less held power over which papers were approved, disapproved or remained in the files. Through Ben, I got to know his counterparts in the offices that were concerned with joint projects. We met together at informal breakfasts and got things done. These informal breakfasts explain more than anything else why the pilot projects and later the national rice program achieved so much success in such a short time.

After the rice program became operational and the Provincial and Urban Development Offices were established, I had some time to begin reading the accumulating information on population problems. The Philippines, like the rest of the developing world, had achieved a marked decline in the death rate over the past decade without any decline in the over-all birth rate. The rate of population growth was more than three percent and the population under 15 years of age was over 40 percent. I realized that the increased rice production would soon be overtaken by the rapid population increase. The social requirements of the young people would consume money badly needed for development.

The more I read, the more I realized that the major threat to the development of the Philippines was the rapid growth of the population. I discussed this concern with Ben. He got together a

few of the able young economists. They confirmed all of my apprehensions. Ben and I put some AID and Philippine Government economists to work on the population growth in the Philippines and what this population would require over the next decade. We gave this information to Executive Secretary Salas. He held a private meeting with the economists. They convinced him that the Philippines had a population problem.

Later, Secretary Salas made a public speech about the growth of the population in the Philippines and the need for a population policy. Soon after the speech Secretary Salas convened a conference of Philippine demographers, economists, church leaders and government officials to discuss the need for a government population policy. The conference recommended a Presidentially-appointed council to develop a population policy for the Philippines. All of this action took place in the closing months of 1968. The President did appoint a council early in January 1969 to develop a population policy.

My tour of duty in the Philippines was ending. I decided at this late date in my foreign aid career to become involved in population work. I left the Philippines early in January 1969 to enroll in a special population course offered by AID in Washington.

### **What I Learned in the Philippines – II**

As Deputy Director of the Philippines AID Mission, I had direct contact with the whole staff. From this vantage point, I could observe the performance of each member of the staff. It so happened that we had five young men on our staff whose performance I had been watching with great interest. They were James Brady and David Christensen in the Office of Rural Development, William White and Robert Gaul in the Program Office, and Ain Kivimae in the Food for Peace division. I had the feeling that they could and would be willing to contribute much

more to the work of the AID Mission. I called all of these young men into my office one morning and told them of my observations. I asked them if they would like to work with me on some of the programs that I was developing with the Philippine Government. I made it clear that this would have to be above and in addition to their normal assignments.

Each of the young men willingly volunteered to accept the additional responsibility. They did all the research on position papers prepared from my office. Some did special field assignments. I cleared their additional work with their supervisors. In not one case did the work of their regular assignments suffer. I learned that given the opportunity and encouragement, able staff members will achieve excellent performance. This was brought out very vividly in the case of Huron Smith. His supervisor had considered his performance marginal before Huron was assigned to the Laguna rice project. I read one of Huron's regular weekly reports and wrote on it, "This is an excellent report - please continue sending me copies of your reports."

Huron came to my office and said that in 30 years of work with the government, this was the first time anyone had ever commented on any report prepared by him.

"Because of your encouraging remarks I am going to give the Laguna project everything I have," he said. And so he did.

About two years later, before he died from an incurable disease, he requested that his ashes be scattered over Lake Laguna. The people of Laguna were touched. The publication of the Rural Bankers Association dedicated one issue to the memory of Huron. The eulogy was written by the credit supervisor in Laguna who had worked so closely with Huron.

One of the five young men whose performance went beyond research work on position papers was Ain Kivimae. He became involved with the youth leaders at the University of the Philippines. This led to his appointment as secretary to the youth

committee in the Embassy and later he became Chief Advisor on youth activities for the Philippine Government, working directly with Executive Secretary Salas. In addition, he assumed all the advisory work for the Mission on urban development with the National Economic Council.

1. In performing my duties as Deputy Director, I learned that the only office that can provide cohesion and overall direction to Mission programs is that of the Director. Otherwise each division fences off its own area of interest and digs in. This was brought out in the seminars where the pilot projects for working with provincial governments were discussed.
2. Once there is enough evidence to support trying an innovation, this course should be pursued regardless of the obstacles.
3. When local governments are given the opportunity to plan their own development, they must be given the authority and resources to carry out the approved development plan, e.g., the resources to improve the provincial garages. If funds had not been available to purchase the spare parts and tools, the equipment would have remained deadlined.
4. The responsibility of the technical advisor for jointly funded development projects is to persuade his counterparts that the funds be used on projects that have the best possibility for success. For example, we firmly restricted the use of AID funds for the rice productivity project to irrigated areas and provinces that grew a significant percentage of the country's rice.
5. Organizational charts and the formal structure of government departments have little relation to the actual functioning of those departments, as the role of Ben Villavicencio in the NEC and his counterparts in other government departments demonstrated. It is the responsibility of the foreign advisor to find out where the

reins of bureaucratic power are and how to achieve the support of these anonymous officials of power.

6. Development is a continuous process; it has no end. The solution of an existing problem creates new problems, just as the solution of the rice deficiency problem created problems of storage, milling, drying, marketing, price support and quality control.
7. Development is complex. Many factors are continuously at work with the potential for upsetting the planned rate of economic growth. One such major factor that was not even considered in the economic growth of the Philippines until very recently was the rate of population growth. Development planners must develop better techniques, such as social indicators to be used in concert with economic indicators for early identification of such variables and how to incorporate them in the planning process.

## CHAPTER X

### AFRICA – 1969-1971

After completing AID's Population and Family Planning Course, I was appointed Regional Population Officer for Africa with my duty station in Accra, Ghana. I arrived in Accra in June, 1969. Remembering my Tuskegee experience with the Rural Life Council, I did not want to begin initiating programs until I found out what had been done and what programs were already in operation. For the first six months, I traveled extensively throughout West, East and North Africa. Later I traveled to Central and South Africa. The purpose of the South African trip was to visit the black independent countries formerly under the trusteeship of Great Britain -- Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana.

During my visits throughout West and East English-speaking Africa, the name of Miss Edith M. Gates came up in every family planning clinic visited. They all said the same thing: "Miss Gates visited us in the mid-1950s and organized the first family planning association in our country."

Miss Gates was employed by the Pathfinder Fund in Boston. She visited the African countries from 1955-60 telling the people "you can plan your families". She organized small groups of the socially conscious among the elite into family planning associations, trained a few nurses and doctors in the use of contraceptives and provided the supplies. It was difficult pioneering work. None of the colonial governments supported her efforts. Nevertheless, the seed was sown in most of the countries she visited. Small family planning associations made up of influential people were organized and a family planning clinic began operating with volunteer doctors and nurses. Today the Pathfinder Fund is performing similar work in the independent French-speaking West African countries.

In 1964, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) founded by Margaret Sanger more than 50 years ago with headquarters in London, expanded its work in Africa. With a larger professional staff and much more money, IPPF was able to revitalize the Family Planning Associations organized by Miss Gates. IPPF was able to provide funds to pay rent for clinics, staff and commodities. With increased IPPF support, attendance at clinics soared for about 18 months. Then attendance began to stabilize, with dropouts and new recruits canceling each other out. Egypt, more than any other country, used IPPF funds to expand family planning clinics. Nearly 400 family planning clinics in Egypt received some support from IPPF. Kenya followed with 100 IPPF-supported family planning clinics. With the exception of the city of Lagos, and Ghana, all the other countries I visited in East and West Africa have only one or two family planning clinics.

The Population Council of New York at first confined its work to developing demographic training and research at selected colleges. The best work supported by the Population Council was done at the University of Ghana. More recently, the Population Council has supported family planning work by providing medical advisors to the family planning programs of the ministries of health in Tunisia, Morocco and Kenya. European donors are supporting family planning work in East and North Africa. The Ford Foundation has led the way in helping countries develop national population policies.

In addition to the work of private groups, the United Nations is actively engaged in population and family planning work in Africa. The UN provides population advisors to all regions of Africa. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa supports demographic and census work. The ECA has reached an agreement with the University of Ghana to establish a regional demographic training center for the English-speaking countries at the University of Ghana. It is working hard to establish a regional

demographic training center for the French-speaking countries at a university in one of the West African French-speaking countries. The ECA is also working with the African countries to improve census taking and to do the census work largely within the resources of the countries. The population and family planning work of Pathfinder, IPPF, the United Nations and the Population Council in Africa is all supported by grants from AID.

In all the countries I visited that had family planning programs sponsored either by private organizations, the government, or both, the clinic was the main mechanism for promoting family planning work. At the end of my first six months of field visits, I made an effort to evaluate the work of family planning clinics. In December 1969, only three African countries had significant family planning programs. They were Egypt, Tunisia and Mauritius. Egypt's program began in 1963; Tunisia and Mauritius began their programs in 1964. In addition to family planning clinics, family planning service was available at government hospital and clinics.

From the records that I was able to obtain about the clinics, the percentage of the childbearing population using the services of the clinics in Egypt was 11 percent, Mauritius 12 percent, and Tunisia 10 percent. The story was the same in all three countries: a rapid increase in clinic attendance when the clinic first opened, reaching a peak of attendance in about two years, then a clinic attendance made up mostly of re-visits. This same pattern was observed in countries that had been operating a few private clinics for a number of years, such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

From my observations and evaluation of the available information on the family planning clinics, I reached the conclusion that family planning clinics were not an effective mechanism for reducing fertility or providing better health services. I believe child spacing should be an integral part of health services, especially maternal and child health services. Child spacing should be

promoted as a part of public health services to improve the health of mothers and children. The promoters of the idea that families can be planned have achieved a degree of success in Africa. The people who have kept the family planning associations alive through the lean years have influenced enough of the policy makers to become more lenient about the sale of contraceptives and the right of individual families to decide how many children they will have. The step ahead is to integrate child spacing into the training of health workers and the health services. I found general support for this point of view among workers in the ministries of health and among WHO advisors.

Demographers and population economists agree that the economics of population need to be presented to government policy makers in order to develop an awareness of the population problem and to include the economics of population into programs of development. All the available census and demographic data support this point of view. It is estimated that Africa is approaching a growth rate of 2.7 percent. This means a doubling of the population in about 25 years. The critical population problem is the disparity between births and deaths per 1,000 population and the increasing proportion of the population under 15 years of age. Tunisia's death rate has declined to 16 per thousand with a birth rate of 44. The death rate in Morocco has declined to 17 per thousand and the birth rate remains at 50. Ghana and Uganda have a death rate of 18 per thousand with the birth rate remaining at 50 and 46 respectively. The percentage of the population under 15 years of age is approaching 45 percent for Africa. Evaluation of these figures from the Western point of view is indeed cause for alarm. In the historical and cultural context of Africa, these statistics may have an entirely different meaning.

A brief summary of the long scope of the history of the black people of Africa, which began when the waters of the Sahara began receding southward thousands of years before the birth of

Christ, shows that the agricultural subsistence, economically self-sufficient village has been the key to the survival of the people. Survival of the species under the ecological conditions of Tropical Africa has rested on small numbers spread over wide areas. This explains the emergence of the small self-contained village as the viable economic, social and political unit of Tropical Africa. The villages grew into clans and the clans into tribes, and some of the tribes developed ancient kingdoms.

It is amazing how little the rural agricultural village has changed throughout the long history of Africa. The people in the villages developed customs and laws by which they were self-governed. Continuity was achieved through a rigid social order based on mutual privileges and responsibilities. The tribal village is one which cherishes the status-quo. Even today, roughly 90 percent of the population of Tropical Africa continues to live in the self-sufficient village under tribal conditions. This population is outside the money economy. For all practical purposes it is outside the political and economic sphere of national governments as well. This population grouping neither impedes nor facilitates programs of national development. Communal ownership of land and mutual privileges and responsibilities guarantee survival.

Within these subsistence villages, the rise and fall of birth and death rates are of little significance to the money economy, and of less significance in the computation of the Gross National Product or the economics of population. This is not to say that the tribal socio-economic structure is to be deplored. On the contrary, it provides order and stability to a good part of Africa and, where there are no institutions adequate to replace it, it is a useful structure resulting in a certain degree of economic, social and political stability, security and equilibrium, without which greater social disintegration could be expected.

Cities are as old as the history of Africa. For centuries they remained islands in a sea of villages. Since independence from

colonial powers the rate of urban growth in Africa has become the fastest in the world. For the purpose of population programming, I have divided the population of Tropical Africa into three categories: the traditional tribal village population, the urbanized population and the population in transition (PIT). I have dealt with the traditional tribal village population above. The urbanized population is defined as those people who were born in the city, have become dependent on and adjusted to a monetized economy and are least inhibited by tribal customs and traditions. Demographic data on the urbanized population show that it has already achieved a reduction in the fertility rate. I suspect that this is the population that makes the greatest use of the services of family planning clinics. The urbanized population has achieved the highest level of education, acquired the best jobs and is farther along the road of modernization than any other population group in Africa.

The population of concern is the population in transition (PIT). The PIT is made up of people who have moved from the traditional subsistence economy to the towns and cities and the non-urban monetized economy. It is estimated that the PIT makes up 50 percent of the urban population; the other half is made up of the urbanized population. The urban population is growing at between 4 and 6 percent per year, but the PIT is possibly growing as much as 8 percent per year. As an individual moves out of the subsistence economy into the money economy, he becomes a significant demographic and economic statistic. This is the population for which the economics of population has meaning.

It is my belief that our main population efforts in Africa should not be with the crude rate of population growth or with the demographic characteristics of the total population, but rather our attention should be focused upon the PIT, whose growth rate can have a crucial effect in determining whether or not the African governments can devote their resources to economic development.

The population problem in Africa, as I see it, is the rate of rural migration to the towns and cities and the growth rate of that population and not the rate of national population increase.

The concept of the PIT in African cities and towns is a crucial one for population planning. It is the group critically affecting political stability and economic development, yet small enough for effective family planning and population programs within the resources of the African governments. With efforts concentrated upon this target population, it may be possible to avoid urban chaos, political instability and economic sluggishness. By controlling the growth rate of the PIT, Africans may make their cities the bases for achieving political stability, economic development and social modernization.

Now that we have identified the target population that shows promise for programs of family planning that could lead to reduced fertility, let us return to the fertility problem of the traditional population. The traditional population in the villages and the shanty towns make up over 90 percent of the population of Tropical Africa. The available census and demographic data on this population are mostly estimates. We have no reliable data to support the figures in the UN Demographic Year Book for 1968 that the crude death rate has declined from around 40 to 23 per 1000 population over the past two decades; while the crude birth rate has remained at about 50 per 1000 population.

Available medical information reveals that in the traditional villages roughly half of the children die before they reach the age of five, and maternal mortality remains a serious problem. We also learn from the medical people that they have not been able to develop any truly decisive treatment or preventive for at least half of the diseases that kill infants and children in the traditional societies.

Anyone familiar with living conditions in African or other villages of the developing nations has observed flies swarming on

the unwashed nipples of the mothers' breasts and the infant nursing this breast and at times swallowing a fly in the process. Lice crawling in the hair and fleas crawling on the urine-soaked beds are normal occurrences in the overcrowded and waterless houses. The common occurrence of these conditions in the villages and shanty towns where over 90 percent of the people live led me to the conclusion that the overriding objective of all population efforts in Africa must be based on the *improvement of the quality of life*.

Having acquired this much understanding about the population of Africa, I felt that I was ready to begin the development of regional population programs. Program development was significantly improved through two trips to Washington, where I was able to work in the Africa Bureau directly with Arthur L. Howard, Deputy Director of the Office of Technical Assistance Coordination; Dr. Julius S. Prince, Head of the Population Division, and Miss Elizabeth Hilborn, Nursing Advisor in the Population Division. In addition, I was able to get help from Dave Shear and his staff in the Office of Program Development of the Africa Bureau and Dr. Ravenholt and his staff in the overall office of population of AID. Projects were developed in the following areas:

**MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH:** This project was designed primarily to improve the quality of life by assisting interested African countries improve and extend health services to mothers and children and to include child spacing for medical reasons as an integral part of maternal and child health service. The purposes of the project were to assist in reducing morbidity, mortality and malnutrition in mothers and babies, to promote awareness and acceptance of child-spacing services. It was envisioned that the project would begin in three of four pilot countries and gradually expand to others.

Miss Hilborn and I began a trip on October 7, 1970, ending on November 12, 1970, that included visits to the Gambia, Dahomey, Niger, Cameroon, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mali to

explore the acceptability of the project by the governments and to investigate the feasibility of the project. In every country visited, Ministry of Health officials accepted child spacing for medical reasons as an integral part of maternal and child health services. No objection was raised to extending child spacing services to any individual requesting it. The only strong feeling seemed to be against organized public propaganda programs promoting family planning. With the exception of Swaziland, whose government had requested UN assistance for a similar project, the health officials of all countries expressed hope that their country would be included in the project. The visit proved encouraging enough to begin steps to implement the project.

A contract was developed with the extension health services of the University of California to send a team to the Gambia, Dahomey and Lesotho to work out the details of the project.

*TEACHING OF POPULATION DYNAMICS:* Shortly after I arrived in Accra in June 1969, I met Dr. J.L.S. Abbey, Lecturer in the Department of Economics, University of Ghana. Dr. Abbey was educated at the University of Ghana and the London School of Economics, and received his Ph.D in economics and statistics from Iowa State University. Dr. Abbey, the son of uneducated, non-English-speaking traditional tribal parents, was in his late 20s. We shared common concern about the need for a more realistic economic interpretation of the demographic data on Ghana. I provided Dr. Abbey with a small grant to employ three of his graduate students to locate and pull together existing data on school population and school attendance, fertility differentials, the labor force, employment, and population under 15.

Within three months, the graduate students, under Dr. Abbey's supervision, had pulled together all existing published data into tabular forms. Another grant was provided for Dr. Abbey to employ one of his best graduate students, Kenneth Brew, to refine the data and develop papers from the data. These papers were

good. They were used for discussions in the weekly economic seminar, public forums and on the TV.

Dr. Abbey was called in as a consultant to the Ministry of Economic Affairs to give in-depth interpretation to the papers, especially the significance of his interpretation for the emerging national family planning program. Dr. Abbey and I became convinced that there was a need for a mechanism within the University of Ghana to develop and provide leadership for an inter-disciplinary approach to the study of population and the training of population and family planning specialists. We discussed our concern with Vice Chancellor Dr. Kwabong, including the desirability of exploring an American university operating a population center to assist the University of Ghana in developing the program. The Vice Chancellor informed us that he had been nourishing a similar idea for a long time and gave us the green light to proceed.

During a visit to Washington in June of 1970, I visited Dr. Moyo Freyman and his staff at the University of North Carolina Population Center in order to get a better understanding of a population center and to explore the interest of the center in helping the University of Ghana develop a program.

The interest was so great for working with the University of Ghana that Dr. Freyman arranged for me to discuss the proposal with Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson and Mr. William Friday, President of the Consolidated University of North Carolina. We all agreed that the Population Center idea should be explored with the University of Ghana. The Chancellor, the President and Dr. Freyman thought it would be better for the Chancellor of the University of North Carolina to extend an invitation to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana to visit the Population Center as a guest of the University of North Carolina, rather than trying to explain the population center idea to the Vice Chancellor. The invitation was extended and accepted.

By August 1970, Vice Chancellor Kwapong and Dr. Nelson Addo, Director of the Demographic Unit, University of Ghana, were on the campus of the University of North Carolina. The Vice Chancellor was so favorably impressed with the work of the Population Center that he extended an invitation on the spot for the University of North Carolina to send a team to the University of Ghana to assist with the development of such a program. Dr. Freyman accepted the invitation. On November 24, 1970 Chancellor Sitterson and a team from the University of North Carolina Population Center arrived at the University of Ghana. By December 6, the team and the University of Ghana had developed a program for the two universities to develop. This program has been refined, but not basically altered. The project has been approved by AID. The University of North Carolina will send an advisor to work with the University of Ghana to develop an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and research work in the field of population and family planning. If the initial effort proves successful, similar programs will be developed at more universities in Africa.

*CENSUS AND DEMOGRAPHIC SAMPLE SURVEYS:* From my experience with complete censuses in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the late 1950s and early 1960s, I learned that the small countries of Africa will not be able to carry out periodic censuses without outside financial and technical assistance. Today there is very little likelihood for such assistance. During my last tour in Africa, I noticed that an authority on census and demographic work makes an estimate of population size, composition and rate of growth. This figure is religiously quoted by all data-gathering groups as a fact. It occurred to me that the experts in the U.S. Census Bureau, the United Nations and the UN Economic Commission for Africa should be able to work out with the small African countries a more reliable low-cost system for gathering census and demographic data. This idea was discussed at length

and in detail with representatives of the Census Bureau and the United Nations during my two visits to Washington. The discussions were continued with the UN and the Bureau of Census by Dr. Prince, population chief in the Africa Bureau, and others. Finally a working budget was set up in the UN population program. It has been agreed to send, upon request, a task force to any African country to help develop a plan for taking a sample census or demographic study. Now that the machinery has been established and a working budget made available, it is hoped that more reliable census and demographic data will be developed about Africa in the 70s.

*SELF-HELP POPULATION ACTIVITIES:* During my visits I discovered an individual struggling with a family planning clinic, or in need of a calculating machine to compile demographic data, or who needed a short-term training course in statistics or family planning. In all of these countries, the American Ambassador was sympathetic and wanted to help, but under existing regulations there was nothing that he or I could do. When I visited Washington, I brought this problem to the attention of Dr. Prince. We developed and won approval of a special population self-help fund to be used by Ambassadors for these kinds of activities. A few of the Ambassadors have made use of the fund, but most have not. Ain Kivimae, Program Assistant in the Accra Regional Population Office, has assumed the responsibility to get this program moving; he has developed interest in Sierra Leone and Togo. I feel certain that more projects will develop as Ain finds the time to visit more countries.

From June 1969 until early 1971, I labored to build the foundation for regional population and family planning programs in Africa and a competent staff to complement the contract project staff. By March of 1971, I felt that this phase of the work had been completed and it looked like clear sailing ahead. Unfortunately for me, I was medically evacuated from Accra in

April 1971 and placed on the medical complement in Washington. The task of completing the program in Africa has been passed on to other hands.

*POPULATION IN TRANSITION (PIT):* The population in transition - the rural migrants who have not been culturally assimilated into the urbanized population - has been described above. During my Washington assignment, I tried to refine the concept and develop it into a research project. Arthur L. Howard, Acting Director, Office of Technical Assistance Coordination, has been most understanding and helpful on this project. In an action memorandum to the Acting Assistant Administrator for Africa to approve funds to hold a two-day workshop with selected AID staff and outside professionals, Mr. Howard writes:

"The potential significance of these hypotheses to the development of Tropical Africa is obviously great: where it proves economically or politically impractical to work with total populations on family planning, it may still be possible to work with the PIT. The PIT could prove to be the place to start with innovations. Examination of the change process in the PIT may enlighten us on broader society.

.....:The change which seemed exceedingly difficult to learn from the population as a whole now seems vastly easier to grasp with the concept of the PIT. This provides focus on the people who are changing most rapidly. Africa, where urbanization is more rapid than anywhere else in the world, may therefore be the most promising place for expansion of the knowledge on motivation."

*THE CITY:* I have also given much thought to the cities of Africa during my Washington assignment. On the one hand, Africa is the least urbanized region of the world's major regions, or around 13 percent. On the other hand, the growth rate of urban population is one of the highest, estimated at 5.4 percent annually as against the world rate of 3.2 percent. In cities of

100,000 and over the growth rate for African cities is estimated at 8.6 percent annually. The main reason for the rapid growth rate in African cities is that people are increasingly moving from rural areas to towns and cities. This is because the advantages of a marginal urban job are so much greater than marginal agricultural and other traditional village jobs that an increasing number of rural people are willing to take a chance on getting an urban job. Therefore, whatever improvements will be made in towns and cities, this will increase the flow of rural migrants, thereby worsening rather than improving urban conditions. As long as the advantages of the marginal city jobs significantly exceed the advantages of the marginal traditional village jobs, the rural exodus will continue at an increasing rate. The economists and political leaders know they must find a new approach to creating jobs if African cities are to avoid the squalor and upheaval of cities in other regions of the world.

Here is what I think is the emerging role that African cities will play in the modernization of Africa. Historically, the village-state provided political unity through a static social order. It met the economic needs by developing and maintaining a subsistence economy. The village-state cannot meet the needs of a society in transition. There was great hope that the new independent governments would develop a unified political community which is a necessity for modernization. Unfortunately, political unity has been one of the greatest failures of the independent nations of Tropical Africa. The political instability of the new nations reflects the complexities of a society in transition. Tribalism, a necessity for unity and security in a traditional society, is one of the major forces militating against the political unity that the new governments are trying to build. Part of this is a legacy of colonial rule which established political areas without regard to ethnic cohesion, but it is also a reflection of people whose loyalties have been and continue to be centered in the family or clan and not the national government.

In this generally gloomy scene of the village-state tenaciously holding on to traditionalism and the central government's inability to establish political unity, I do see a glimmer of hope in the provincial towns and cities. I recall a 500-mile field trip in August of 1970 through the western region of Uganda with Lloyd Trawick, AID Extension Advisor for the western region. As we drove over the highway, I began to notice the number of bicycles loaded with produce, trucks loaded with produce and people traveling by bus. When the bicycle traffic became heavy, I knew we were approaching a large town or a city. In one city, the bicycles were bringing cans of milk to a modern creamery. In another town, the bicycles were bringing bananas to a central market place where they would be picked up by a truck. For the most part the village houses on the roadside were covered with tin roofs reflecting a growing money economy. In addition to the trade and commerce of the city, there was usually a hospital or clinic, a school, cinema and other culturalizing activities. During the 500-mile trip, we stopped in several of the cities and towns. I was impressed with the comforts available for the traveller. I was more impressed by what I saw and heard. The boys and girls working in the restaurants and bars were from different tribal groups. But in the city they were working together in harmony and friendship, at least on the job. The central government had a policy of nationalization of trade, commerce and industry. For the most part, the people were ignoring the policy and were developing a rather healthy private trade. Occasionally a proprietor of a bar or restaurant would join us for a drink. He would tell us about his plans for expanding his business and how he and others were working on accumulation of capital to open a new business. I did hear a note of concern about the success of Trawick's agricultural extension program. The increase in production had glutted the market and prices were falling. The affected people felt that increased production and market expansion ought to go

hand-in-hand or else there should not be programs of increased production. In the small towns where we stopped to purchase gasoline and buy a drink, the proprietor of the filling station-cafe was usually an ex-government employee who had saved enough money to start his business. Here one could buy food and drink and listen to the latest hit records in Kampala. The cotton farmers were bitter. They reported bicycling their cotton for 10 miles to the government warehouse only to find out the manager had no money for the cotton. The farmer could either take an IOU note or take his cotton back home. The farmer usually peddled his cotton back home.

These provincial towns and cities emerged as trade and service centers. I sensed, they were growing into the elementary stage of the old Asian and European city-states. Through trade and commerce they were unifying the area, but they were also educating and modernizing the people. Here it seemed to me was the alternative to tribalism and the first stage of modernization. The more I thought about what I saw in Uganda, the more I recalled similar developments in other African countries I had visited. I see the emergence of the market-city-state as the next stage of political development beyond the village-state and the hope for larger areas of political unity. This is a subject that merits serious study.

As I close this narrative account of Africa, I want to make it clear that the programs described do not cover all of AID's population and family planning work in Africa. I have discussed those in which I participated. There are family planning and population programs receiving bilateral financial support in Morocco, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Liberia, Ghana and Zaire. Other countries are receiving AID assistance through the Pathfinder Fund, International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Population Council. I am omitting the section on what I have learned because my work on population in Africa was largely

applying what I had learned in other situations; instead, the section will be "Common Threads".

## COMMON THREADS

As I look back over 32 years of working with people seeking solutions to their problems, I am aware of some common threads that I have utilized in all the experiences encountered. The ones that stand out most vividly in my memory are:

1. *RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY*—I recognized the importance of respecting the dignity of individuals when I was working with the Sabine farmers. The white storekeeper had insulted their dignity by refusing to sell them scarce items during the war but letting them see him sell the items to the few favored white customers in the area. These men were also hurt because they could not demand the proper respect for their wives. There was no sacrifice too great for them to establish a store where their dignity and the dignity of their families would not be violated.

As I moved from the domestic scene in the South to the international field, I became aware of the universality of the urge for human dignity. In India, S.K. Day was trying to re-establish a sense of pride and wash away the shame of colonialism and poverty by holding seminars in the ancient halls that reflected India's past greatness. In these settings and through the power of his voice, he was able to get his people, even if for a short time, to relive the glories of the past. In the Philippines I heard over and over, "We are seeking our Asian identity". In Africa, the dominant theme was the African personality.

The strongest urge motivating the underprivileged and the dispossessed today is the search for human dignity. Unless this urge is recognized and given the consideration it is due, all efforts to support technical cooperation are doomed.

**2. LEARN THE PROBLEMS FIRST** — Out of desperation, I stumbled on the importance of collecting information on a problem when I began my teaching career at Texas College. Once I understood the problem of my students by observing the schools from which they graduated, I was able to develop an effective method of teaching. By listening to what the Board members at Sabine Farms had to say about the importance of operating a cooperative grocery store, we knew what action to take.

By the time I arrived at Tuskegee Institute in 1948 to direct the Rural Life Council, I had developed a more sophisticated method of collecting data through observation, schedules, case studies and seminars. I used variations of these methods on each of my foreign assignments. I am certain that our programs would have been less effective if the effort had not been put forth to gather relevant information before the programs were initiated.

**3. INVOLVE THE PEOPLE** — I learned this early in my career. The members of the community council in Tyler, Texas, participated in every discussion, worked in every project, e.g., the street paving, playground, library and site for the new high school. The principle is valid at all levels. At Tuskegee Institute, we were dealing with a college council made up of the most senior members of the faculty. If the council members had not been involved in the discussions of our findings, we would not have been able to get the full support of the Institute to move from futile action to effective information on the changes taking place in the old cotton south.

The key to the village activity through programs of community development in India and the Philippines was the skill of the village level worker involving village people in the identification and solution of village problems. This principle was applied in getting the temporary community development training centers established in provincial agricultural high schools, the demonstration teaching village schools associated with the Zorzor

Rural Teacher Training Institute in Liberia, the two demonstration pilot provinces in the Philippines and the cooperative program between the University of North Carolina and the University of Ghana.

4. *LEADERSHIP INDISPENSIBLE* — All of our plans, efforts and resources that went into establishing the Sabine Farms Cooperative Store would have come to naught if we had not found those rare traits of leadership in the young farmer Epps that somehow separate the successful from the failures.

Without the leadership of Ramon Binamira or another person of equal leadership ability, U.S. funds and technical advisors would not have been able to build a community development program in the Philippines that continues to operate even today on the basic principles that were developed in 1956.

Hon. Nathaniel Massaquoi, Liberian Secretary of Education, provided the leadership to create the conditions needed for a Rural Elementary Training Institute. William Pollard, the first Principal, made Zorzor a reality. Robert and Eleanor Rice did the same thing for the Kenema Rural Training Institute in Sierra Leone. Governors Aquino and San Luis made effective provincial government a reality in the Philippines.

Perhaps the most important quality of a foreign technical advisor is the ability to identify and develop effective leadership, for without such leadership cooperative projects are doomed to mediocrity or failure.

## CHAPTER XI

### REFLECTIONS AND HOPE

*REFLECTIONS* – Have my 32 years of working with people to find solutions to their problems been only a succession of jobs in different parts of the world? Or have these experiences provided the opportunity to learn something of value beyond the time and place where the experiences occurred?

At Tuskegee Institute in the late '40s and early '50s, Lewis Jones and I were among the pioneers who reported the impact of the agricultural revolution in the old cotton south on black farmers. We saw with our own eyes what tractors, cotton pickers, airplanes and the shift from row crops to cattle were doing to people. We knew it was going to get worse. We realized that the problem could not be solved by Tuskegee Institute. It was a national problem and would have to be dealt with nationally. Tuskegee's opportunity was to create a national awareness of what the revolution was doing to black farmers.

The more intimately I became acquainted with the subsistence farmer's surrounding Tuskegee Institute, the less hope I had that they could become profitable commercial farmers. They were caught up in the web of economics and agronomy. Their farm units were too small for row crop agriculture and not large enough for tree crops or livestock. When they cut the trees and continued year after year planting cotton and corn, the heavy spring and fall rains washed away the top soil. The subsistence farmers did not have the resources to rebuild the soil or alternative employment to wait for the rehabilitation of their land. Their only choice was subsistence farming. We tried to do what we could to improve the quality of their life through self-help low-cost housing, savings clubs and introducing better farming technology such as contour

plowing, winter cover crops and year-around gardens for a better diet. This type of work of the Rural Life Council was more within the tradition of Tuskegee Institute of trying to improve life within a situation where there was little hope for improvement from without.

During the time I was involved in community development work in India and the Philippines, from 1954-1958, I believed the work had a better chance for success because it was supported by the governments of both countries and the United States. It was not until about 1962 that I began to question the basic concept of community development as an effective program to modernize the rural villages of the developing countries. The basic theory of community development was that people in villages through aided self-help could solve their economic problems. The aid extended to the villagers by government was a multi-purpose, young, elementary trained village-level worker. The village-level worker was backstopped by an administrative organization and technically competent workers. The self-help projects generated by the village-level worker received assistance that was not available in the village, such as cement for making building blocks, pipes for water systems, some road building equipment and improved seeds and livestock. The concept that villages could be developed largely through aided self-help was too simplistic to cope with the magnitude and complexity of modernizing village societies.

Programs of community development did not become involved in alleviating social injustices that accounted for much of the poverty in villages such as tenancy, usurious credit and marketing. On the economic side, the village is not a viable economic unit. It has to be tied into a larger area that is served by a commercial and service center. The social services generated by aided self-help activities such as schools and clinics require personnel and equipment and recurring costs. Government planners and ministries of finance are worried about the recurring costs of these services.

Granted that programs of community development did not become involved in removing social injustices or effective for the economic development of villages, there is a strong case for community development. They were effective for gaining allegiance of the villages to the new independent governments. The village-level worker was an official representative of the government. He came not to give orders or collect taxes, but to listen and to help. He represented the new government's concern for the neglected. He showed the villages how, through cooperative effort and some outside assistance, to solve some of their local problems. This helped to restore a sense of worth and some of their lost human dignity. The villagers' response to aided self-help projects led to the rebirth of local government. By 1959, the governments of India, Pakistan and the Philippines had enacted legislation restoring a good deal of local government to the villages. Thus, the by-product of community development, the rebirth of local government, may have achieved more than the economic objectives set out when the programs were initiated.

My work as Deputy Director of the U.S. Mission in Liberia and Director of the Mission in Sierra Leone provided the opportunity to view U.S.-assisted programs of development from a broader perspective and to learn about problems of development in two West African countries. As I recall, in Liberia we were providing loans to construct roads, power and water systems, and on the technical assistance side we were supporting programs of public safety, public administration, public works, public health, education, agriculture, communication media, census and economic planning. As deputy to the Director and Acting Director during his absence, I had to acquire knowledge about and concern for all of these programs; this I did. In the process, I learned how little of the most elementary economic infrastructure had been developed in Liberia. Construction of roads to the interior was just

beginning, power and water in Monrovia were unreliable, telephone service was unpredictable and for the most part non-existent. Bush pilots provided internal air travel. I saw what primitive technology existed in the villages. Practically all work was done with the machette. It was used to cut the bush, dig the soil, build the houses, protect the people from snakes and animals. Weaving and blacksmith work had not been up-graded for centuries.

There were islands of modernization in the foreign-operated plantations and iron mines. Most of the technically trained Liberians were former employees of these establishments. Beyond the outskirts of Monrovia, a few coastal towns, the plantations and mines, Liberia remained a traditional society. Foreign capital and technical assistance were helping to develop the needed economic infrastructure and the skills required to operate the small modernized sector. Our effort to help the government to establish schools in the interior and develop local government did establish some beachheads that hopefully would contribute to the modernization of the interior of Liberia.

In Sierra Leone, the colonial government built the basic economic infrastructure and the missionaries overbuilt the social infrastructure in the Freetown Colony. The benefits of the economic infrastructure accrued primarily to the diamond and ore mining companies and to the palm plantation owners. The benefits of the social infrastructure went primarily to the Krio population in the Freetown Colony. Most of the population in the subsistence villages did not derive any benefits from the infrastructure. For the families whose survival depended on subsistence agriculture, the roads, railroads and airports had little meaning. For the rural migrants to the cities who became members of the unemployed in the shanty towns, the schools and other advantages in the cities had little meaning. We were not able to develop cooperative programs with the governments of Liberia or Sierra Leone that

provided a better life for the people living in the traditional villages or the unemployed in the slums of the cities.

By the time I returned to the Philippines in 1964 as Deputy Director of the AID Mission, I was convinced that there was little, if anything, the Mission could do for the urban unemployed or the subsistence farmers. It was not that my interest in and concern about these people had lessened; I just did not know what the Mission could do about these problems. Therefore, I concentrated on that sector of the agricultural economy that offered the best potential -- the irrigated rice growing areas. This did lead to closing the rice gap, saving millions of dollars of badly needed foreign exchange for programs of internal development, and an increased income for the rice farmers.

The new high yielding rice required more in-puts and more efficient cultivation practices. Many of the landless laborers in the villages were eliminated from the planting, cultivating, gathering and threshing of rice. Under the traditional rice growing system, there was a fixed percentage of the harvest for each of these operations. Under the more efficient system of cultivation, the little security that the landless laborers had was taken away. I was learning how delicate the balance is in an agricultural area where most of the people are poor and under-employed and the social consequences when this balance is upset. It seemed to me that the expansion of the use of science and technology was contributing to the lowering of the death rate, increasing productivity with fewer laborers which was resulting in a rate of population growth beyond the resources of developing countries.

It was at this point that I became seriously interested in the population problem and decided to work in that field. As I became involved in population work, I learned that most efforts to reduce the rate of population growth are concerned with improved contraceptive technology and more efficient and expanded distribution systems. This approach works well for the urban,

literate, employed population. Available evidence gives little encouragement that the illiterate, unemployed urban population or the traditional village population will become users of contraceptives to any significant degree. This group makes up between 60-90 percent of the population in the developing regions of the world.

I have often asked myself why programs of technical assistance have been unable to improve the quality of life of the people in the traditional societies of the developing nations. After 17 years of working in this field, I have come to the conclusion that so far we have been unable to develop a technology to deliver the benefits of modern science and technology to the people in traditional societies. Most of the people in traditional societies have, at best, a marginal involvement with the monetized sector of the economy. They are largely agriculturally subsistent and economically self-sufficient. They consume most of the food they grow; they build, maintain and repair their houses from local materials. The village specialists, such as blacksmiths, healers, midwives, carpenters, masons and weavers are repaid in kind; the people in traditional societies sell little to and purchase little from the money economy. They pay little in taxes and receive little in government services.

The intellectual challenge facing those of us engaged in cooperative technical assistance is the development of a technology that can deliver the benefits of modern science and technology in such basic areas as food and nutrition, health and population, housing and clothing to the millions of people in subsistence economies whose governments cannot provide more than one dollar per year per person for each of these services. Such a technology has to be independent of a costly delivery system that requires professionally trained and paid personnel. We must develop such a technology because it is right and it will serve humanitarian interests. Through electronic media, the wretched of

the earth have become aware of their wretchedness. Under the most favorable conditions of development, it is doubtful that even half of the labor force in the traditional societies could be integrated into a monetized economy by the end of this century. For those people who must continue to derive their livelihood within a traditional society, a technology that will improve the quality of their life within the traditional society is needed.

I want to emphasize that I am not advocating changing the technology or the delivery system for that segment of the population that has moved into commercial agriculture and industrialization. My concern is about the people who must derive their livelihood from traditional economies and who make up more than half the population of the developing world.

*HOPE* — I have been involved in and observed enough elements of a technology that delivers some of the benefits of modern science and technology to people living in traditional societies to have the hope that it is possible to develop a basic technology for improving the quality of life in traditional societies within the capabilities of the governments of the developing nations.

When I made the 500-mile trip through Western Uganda with Lloyd Trawick, AID Agricultural Extension Advisor, I met some of the young men in the lowest echelon of the extension service that he trained. These young men, without the benefit of formal agricultural training, were teaching farmers to plant in rows, weed, mulch and prune. None of these practices cost any money. The farmers who used these practices increased their productivity by 100 percent.

I visited the commercial poultry farm of Mr. Plange in Ghana. He is a Ghanian, educated in the United States. At the farm, Mr. Plange separates the young roosters from the pullets. The roosters are placed in an open pen; they are given no medication. Mr. Plange explains that he is placing these pure breed birds under

conditions that the chicks he sells to Ghanaian farmers will have to live. The roosters that survive these conditions are put in the pen with the hens; they pass their survival traits to the baby chicks. The mortality rate of day-old chicks from the Plange farm is one percent compared with 50-80 percent for day-old chicks from Europe.

At the comprehensive rural development program in Comilla, East Pakistan, I saw the entire thana (county) government turned into teachers and supervisors. The villagers surrounding Comilla selected individuals to be trained for various activities in the villages such as secretary of the credit union, operator of the pump, farming, adult literacy and family planning. The village representatives were trained by the thana government staff. The thana staff was trained by the faculty of the Comilla Academy for rural development. Training for each activity was one day per week. There did not seem to be a terminal period for the training because the program was alive and constantly expanding. The individuals in training did not receive compensation, nor did they receive pay for village work. To be selected by their peers for training seemed to be the only reward they needed. Members of the thana government staff made visits to villages to see how well the training was working, how they could help on the spot and what changes needed to be made in the training program.

The Comilla project demonstrated that an existing staff can be trained as teachers and the facilities of the thana government can be used for teaching purposes. This adds little additional expense to the government. The project also demonstrated that villages can select individuals who will become trainees without compensation and will demonstrate the value of their training in the village without compensation. This is a very effective way to reduce the cost of a delivery system and a professional paid extension staff.

Harold Koone, Chief of the Agricultural Division of the AID Mission to the Philippines, used his yard to test the resistance of

American vegetable seeds to the diseases and insects in Manila. The seeds from the plants that survived were field tested on selected farms in Tarlac. I also noticed that Harold looked for plants in the fields that resisted attacks by insects and diseases. He husbanded the seeds from his garden at home and the plants he found on farms to test further to find out if the resistance was permanent. This was an inexpensive but very practical way to accumulate seeds that had a good chance to survive and increase the productivity of the farms.

The fishermen along the coast in Ghana are using nylon nets and outboard motors. The outboard motors increased the distance they could go out to sea and reduced the time; the nylon nets were stronger and lasted much longer than the cotton fishing nets; the fisherman did not have to spend so much time repairing nets.

These few examples are illustrative of the kind of technology needed to improve the quality of life in traditional villages. A more sophisticated and rational approach is needed. The traditional villages of Tropical Africa, in my opinion, provide the best possibility for the development of a practical technology for traditional societies. The African villagers have survived against a more hostile ecological environment and destructive history than most other traditional societies; a larger proportion of the population still lives in traditional villages; and there is little likelihood that more than 50 percent of the tribal village population will be absorbed into the modernized sector of the economy during this century. In most of Tropical Africa, the land is still tribally owned and families have a right to the use of the land. When a young man takes a wife, his relatives help him build a house, he is given a plot of land and his children become members of an extended family. Basic economic necessities as well as a place in the village community are guaranteed. The technology that sustains present day village life was developed centuries ago and very little change has taken place. The social order governing

village life was also developed centuries ago and little change has taken place in it. Therefore, the African villagers have not been the victims of oppressive landlords, money lenders and conquerors. They have been left alone with a static technology and social order. This is now beginning to change. The transistor radios, the buses traveling the nearby roads, are pulling more and more of the young village men to the cities in search of work and a better life. All indications are that the flow of rural migrants to the towns and cities will continue to increase. For those who remain, there is some hope. A people who were able to evolve a technology centuries ago to survive in the rain forest and savanna areas of Africa and a social order to develop the tribal system without assistance from a more advanced civilization, certainly have the capability for helping build onto their existing technology a better one for the utilization of modern science and technology to improve a quality of their life.

The term "traditional society" implies a social and economic system outside the monetized sector of the economy; therefore, a technology that requires money and a delivery system operated by trained and paid personnel is not relevant for traditional societies. A relevant technology must be able to provide the benefits of modern science and technology largely independent of money and a costly delivery system.

As a beginning the establishment of an office within AID to work with selected African governments on developing a technology relevant to the needs of people living in traditional societies would at least provide some hope.

