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Approaching Poverty's People: some reflections on United States efforts at home and abroad.

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Summary Description of Paper

From recollections of past experiences (domestic and abroad), and from current observations of American communities in Waging War on Poverty, this paper attempts to distill some basic ideas about effectiveness in approaching the problems of Poverty's People. Illustrative case documentation is included. The War on Poverty effort is examined for its appropriateness to the American scene, and with a view to citing general and specific ways the experience of selected American communities in launching anti-poverty measures may have meaning for U.S. Foreign Assistance efforts to developing countries.

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If this paper says anything of value about Approaching Poverty's People, it is because they have allowed me to see myself in their faces, share their secrets, and sense something of what goes on behind their masks. The Agency for International Development and its predecessor agencies provided me with opportunities to enter their worlds and attempt to be of service in South-East Asia and Africa. The late Professors Robert E. Park and Charles S. Johnson first aroused and directed my curiosity in poverty's people here at home. Out of the inspiration received from their tremendous curiosity, interest, sympathy, talent for understanding peoples and places, and their skill in making social worlds intelligible, they turned my effort to escape from poverty into a career amongst people for whom poverty is no comfort. Dr. Fred L. Brownless, now deceased, and Miss Ruth A. Morton formerly of the American Missionary Association are due my sincere gratitude for providing me with first opportunities for learning how one may attempt to work creatively with people whose lives for generations have been cloaked in isolation and in poverty; peoples once "poised and timeless in the frieze of social structures," but now "shivering in the high winds of new cultures."

Miss Rachel Wizner of the Office of Economic Opportunity's Public Information section was most kind in providing me with documentation on War on Poverty Programs. Exceptionally gracious were the officials of the following organizations and institutions in arranging for me to learn first hand of experiences of communities

launching anti-poverty measures: United Planning Organization, Washington, D. C.; Community Progress, Inc., New Haven; Anti-Poverty Operations Board, New York; Department of Urban Renewal, Martins Ferry; Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; Department of Public Instruction, St. Louis; Southern Consumer's Cooperative, Lafayette; Community Committee On Youth, Education, and Job Opportunity, Corpus Christi; Papago Tribe of Arizona, Sells; Youth Opportunity Board of Greater Los Angeles; Portland Metropolitan Steering Committee; Tongue Point Job Corps Center, Astoria. To the directors of these programs and for the persons they arranged for me to meet--who took their time to guide me and discuss their particular activities--I do appreciatively acknowledge my indebtedness.

* * * * * * * * * *

"...as the cold war has consumed our energies, it has often limited our horizons. We have tended to place every challenge in the context of conflict, to regard every difficulty as part of a struggle for domination.

"Even if we end terror and even if we eliminate tension, even if we reduce arms and restrict conflict, even if peace were to come to the nations, we would turn from this struggle only to find ourselves on a new battleground as filled with danger and as fraught with difficulty as any ever faced by man. For many of our most urgent problems do not spring from the cold war or even from the ambitions of adversaries.

"These are the problems which will persist beyond the cold war. They are the ominous obstacles to man's effort to build a great world society--a place where every man can find a life free from hunger and disease--a life offering the chance to seek spiritual fulfillment unhampered by the degredation of bodily misery.

"These long years of conflict have given fresh content to the ancient prophecy that no man, and no community and no nation is an island. This truth, borne in upon us by the necessities of our protection, is equally true for those problems which stretch beyond present differences. Those who live in the emerging community of nations will ignore the problems of their neighbors at the risk of their own prosperity...

"There is no simple solution to these problems. In the past there would have been no solution at all. Today, the constantly unfolding conquests of science give man the power over his world and nature which brings the prospects of success within the purview of hope."

President Lyndon B. Johnson,
June 10, 1964

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PREFACE

When members of the Seventh Session of the Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy were asked to prepare a term paper on some aspect of United States foreign or domestic affairs, the nation's experience Waging War on Poverty seemed to afford a fascinating possibility for study. The immediateness with which I would, at the end of the Seminar, resume my assignment with AID overseas programs, provided a special reason for getting better acquainted with the domestic War on Poverty. This experience, it was felt, should have meaning for United States efforts to assist developing nations abroad. My request, to use the three weeks travel allowed for preparation of the paper, to pursue this concern was approved.

In seeking to learn first-hand of the experiences of selected American communities in launching anti-poverty measures, there was a desire to see what relevance the domestic experience might have for United States efforts at assisting nations abroad. Communities from New Haven, Connecticut to Astoria, Oregon were visited. Some reflections, prompted by what I saw and learned about the experiences of communities in Waging Wars on Poverty, resulted in this paper as it is herewith presented.

The optic through which I saw what communities were doing in Waging Wars on Poverty was somewhat fresh and uncluttered. After some twelve years had been spent abroad with United States Foreign Aid programs, the visits to communities were, in a very real way, part of my rediscovery of America. Areas visited were, for the most part, new to me.

Participation in the Senior Seminar had provided me with a current understanding of recent trends and developments within the nation. Very fresh in my experience was the awareness, in real terms, of the fantastic might and power--related to its technological superiority, wealth, and advanced social system--that the nation possesses. Also the variety of domestic and foreign policy instruments--organizational, technological, bureaucratic, military, judicial, legislative, executive, fiscal--through which the United States as a nation orchestrates its efforts to assure the maximum well being of its citizens in a Democracy and projects its concern for the progress and well being of diverse peoples abroad was now more than apparent to me.

Officials responsible for War on Poverty programs, in every community visited, were indeed gracious. They did not appear to be annoyed by the many questions posed. Replies were candid and frank. Very noticeable was the sense of dedication, enthusiasm, and the recognition of the potential that the Economic Opportunity Act holds for Poverty's people. Instances of frustration were revealed. Instances of solid progress were likewise vividly recounted. Some communities had made greater commitments to social innovation than had others. Some communities had sought to develop programs under every Title of the Economic Opportunity Act. Others had selected very few among the variety of instruments available to communities.

Poverty programs call for a lot of work. The induce a lot of activity: proposals to be prepared; meetings to be held;

conciliatory and coordination arrangements to be effected; administrative structures to be created; management devices to be invented; the orchestration of the diverse interests of public bodies, private citizens groups, and variant power structures into a mechanism for achieving War on Poverty goals.

Programs are as varied as there are communities. Whether programs are moving or as yet to get off the ground, those involved spoke of their work as being exciting. One can share their sense of excitement. Then one gets a glimpse of the relevance of the significant social experiment to the achievement of national goals.

There is much that the domestic program can learn from the overseas development efforts, and correspondingly much benefit that the overseas program can derive from a thorough acquaintance with the domestic effort. It does appear to me, however, that if achievements of the War on Poverty program are to be real and not spurious, certain basic facts must be recognized.

There is a certain urgency about the rapidity with which truly skillful managers of mass social schemes need to be created in increasing numbers. Also there must be a more generalized heightened appreciation of the role of social innovation in progress, particularly on the part of all too many communities who are reluctant to commit themselves or yet fail to realize that the capacity to innovate becomes a key ingredient in the capability to advance. And too, on the national scale, the relevance of social inventions to national survival must be admitted to a higher priority.

There is full appreciation of the valuable role that the dedicated amateur can play. Often he furthers needed innovations, and prompts social invention by daring to creatively attempt that which the traditional professional may lack the imaginativeness to perceive as being possible. Nevertheless, War on Poverty programs are large scale operations in large urban and rural areas. They are being implemented through a number and variety of components comprising the overall programs. There are numerous and different public and private agencies as well as citizens groups which need to be involved. All of this requires rather sophisticated management skills. Particular experience and sensitivity is needed in the understanding of the fundamental nature of social processes. There must be a skilled capability to act and to organize action. This must be done within the framework of a functional knowledge and insight into the nature of a community as a socio-economic and political unit.

The technological thresholds on which we and the rest of the world now stand are no doubt beyond the imaginings of most of us. Further advances are sure to occur with an accelerated pace. The human imagination quickens with awareness of the marvels of mechanical inventions and technological or scientific advance.

The call for further innovations in technology is correct and necessary. These changes will make necessary further social changes. New kinds of social concepts will be needed. Changing social worlds and social situations will require frequent

redefinition. The intelligent and skilled handling of social crises, or the avoidance of crises whether in settings of silent revolutions or hot revolutions, will require skills yet to be discovered. Yet social inventions, even when they occur, are rarely recognized in the public image to be the inventions that they are. Even when they awaken great public debate or interest their relevance to national survival is less clear in public minds.

The War on Poverty and the program of Foreign Aid may be judged by social historians of the future as being among the most pervasive of the social experiments launched by the United States in the decades since World War II. The social and economic problems towards which these activities are oriented, are now embryonic in scale and complexity compared with their future dimensions by whatever name they may be called in the tomorrows.

The problem is not that progress is bad. The United States is fortunate because it can anticipate that needed social changes can take place in the framework of democratic processes. In far too many developing nations, the real prospects are that necessary changes will be incident to or occur through blood baths. As concepts, Foreign Aid and War on Poverty programs, regardless of their real or assumed limitations, do perfectly or imperfectly enhance the capabilities of our own society and those of developing nations to make further moves toward progress. The capabilities of societies to innovate will need to be enhanced immeasurably. These United States efforts do increase the frequency of instances within which the whole of mankind moves ahead a notch. This is in essence the challenge of the Great Society.

PART I

BACKGROUND TO UNDERSTANDING

APPROACHES TO POVERTY'S PEOPLE

Chapter 1. Introduction

There seems to be something of an image in the public mind which reveals an expectation that those engaged in the wagings of wars on poverty should be miracle workers. So many things have been expected, direct and indirect, of our Foreign Aid efforts that someone has suggested that only God has been called upon to do more in the achievement of our national purposes overseas. Certainly some of the disillusionment already expressed, in some quarters, by critics of the War on Poverty efforts, as well as certain aspects of the program's achievement selected for praise does reveal that the social experiment is expected to perform miracles in a hurry. The American public is becoming to have, and will certainly acquire with its wider involvement in the various domestic activities of War on Poverty programs, a more realistic and sympathetic view of what Poverty Workers can be expected to accomplish.

The reflections on waging wars on poverty at home and abroad, about which this paper seeks to report, are organized under three headings: 1) Some ideas from past experience on getting to know Poverty's people and some fundamentals on how to approach their problems; 2) observations on the Nation's current experience in waging its war on poverty; and, 3) generalizations about the relevance of the domestic experience for U.S. efforts at waging wars on poverty abroad. Thus, the scope of this paper proves to be broader than originally conceived when I first started on the observation and study tours of American communities waging war on poverty.

The paper started out to be--The War on Poverty, an Evaluation of Its Lines of Action with a View to Their Application to U.S. Foreign Assistance Programs. The fact that it is and it is not just that, but came to be something more, even to including me, perhaps needs to be explained.

(A)

When I set out on my visiting to learn something of the current American experience in Waging War on Poverty, the controversy over the failure of programs in various communities to have a proper involvement of the poor in the planning and implementation of poverty programs was being reported by the news media with considerable attention. This particular controversy brought to mind my first professional involvement with Poverty's People, and my first attempt at being a Poverty Worker. My instructions were: not to hold any office, not to do for the people, not to count on outside financing. And with regards to the progress which was the objective of the exercise, when it occurred, one was to ensure that it would be the people who made it and not me.

This experiment took place in the worlds of people like Mandy Bally--a two hundred pound, slightly gray haired, brown-skinned, snuff-tainted snaggle-toothed woman who, at the time of our first meeting, as the head of a plantation family stood with body clothed in rags on eroded washed-out cotton land before a shack where when it rained, there was more rain inside than outside. She described quite succinctly her poverty which with variations on a theme was the general plight of all families within the community by simply saying:

"Man, I'm having it hard. I take these two hands and plow like a man. All the responsibility is on me. My son say, 'Ma, you look so bad, I'm going to Florida where I can make something and help us out.' He's been gone a year. I haven't heard from him. Don't know who he's helping out, but it's not me. Yes sir, all the care is still on me. Man, I'm having it hard.

"Can't even lay down in my house. If I lay still, I freeze to death. And when it rain, it's raining inside as much as its raining out. Catch a tub of water inside the house. Have to move my beds next to the fireplace to keep from being drowned out. Rain coming in from the top. Rain coming in from the side. That house ain't good for nothing.

"I rents this land. Supposed to be twenty-five acres, and that's what I'm paying for, but it's not more than likely fifteen. I borrows money from the bank. They let me have $50.000 on account for the year, and I goes there and draws a bit this time, and a little bit next time. Has to buy seed, and you grows nothing without fertilizer. And all I raised was one bale of cotton which went for rent, and for myself there was less than 500 pounds of lint which didn't even pay off my debt. And me was left without a dime. The foxes ate up all my chickens. The water washed out all my corn. And the man shot down all my hogs. And fore the man shot down my hogs, the hogs had eat up all my greens. Man, I'm having it hard.

"Then my gals got squatted by boys that wasn't no good. And bringing those babies here cost me $35.00. Their man's been gone and from one of them I never hears.

"The teachers call the children poor, and call us backwards and they abuse the children. They act like they so up. I know this they are mighty fussy teachers. They just buke the children and they so overbearing. 'Cause they got a dollar they buke me 'cause we ain't got no dollar. Maybe my day come later, but don't buke me now. Don't buke me. The teachers talk so much, say everything; everything ugly about the child and the parents, and I don't like that way. I haven't anything to do with them. My little old girl was up to the school lunch room, and they told her 'Eat that spinach!' They slapped her down 'cause she wouldn't eat it. That stuff might be good for the body, but ain't no point in buking a body so bad that you hurt it when you supposed to be trying to help it. I just don't feel those teachers feel no interest in me and my children.

"Sometimes I feels so bad 'bout my children and that school. I remembers at Christmas my little boys come to me and say, 'Mamma, got to have a bag to put my Christmas in.' We washed and washed a ten pound flour sack all pretty and clean. Then went up there to the school, and all they gives them was a orange. They come back and I says, 'Boys, where is your Christmas?' One of them say 'I done et mine.' And they had stuck the bags in their pockets. But I guess that's all right."

(B)

Thus the controversy over the participation of the poor in war on poverty programs brought to mind a body of past experience and involvement with problems of poverty. The details of much of it

had been forgotten. Certainly up to now, there had been little opportunity to reflect on this chain of past experience.

The attempt to evaluate certain War on Poverty doctrines as well as the attempt to evaluate the appropriateness of particular anti-poverty measures in communities for which they were being planned caused further reflection on my part. This extended beyond my remembrances of past involvement in anti-poverty programs at home. It awakened memories of experiences of working with South-East Asian and with African countries on their development problems. This occurred with particular frequency when assessments were being made of the relevance of the domestic experience in waging war on poverty for United States foreign assistance efforts abroad.

A kind of dialogue occurred. This was a dialogue between current observations on the one hand, and thoughts about past experiences on the other hand. Things seen and heard during my visit of anti-poverty projects began to play themselves against notions I already had. This process set me to reminiscing more systematically about my own involvement in efforts at community action both at home and abroad.

There were occasions, during the course of my community visits, to share from my experience observations on: ways of using one's own ignorance as a device for educating submerged peoples; the designing of administrative structures and management concepts which do not preclude one's accomplishment of program goals; ways of educating without schools, and how one gets education to a community which, given the kind of community that it is--has just about all the

education that it can stand; the pitfalls and tragic consequences which may arise from well-meaning social action unaccompanied by a rather sophisticated perceptiveness as just what it is that one is doing; the potential and the role of the "question" as a device for sparking educational and developmental activity; ways for discerning that which is true about Poverty's people or the sifting of fact from fiction or myth.

(C)

This paper, as it is now organized, is a result of the dialogue which occurred when current observations prompted remembrances. It represents an effort to fit things learned about waging wars on poverty during my recent visit of programs of American communities, into the total spectrum of my experiences and thoughts on the matter.

The paper as now conceived represents the beginning, of what is intended to be subsequently, a more thorough, succinct, and continuing effort to systematically document or at least put on paper a total experience. Then it fits the personal and professional in remembrances about anti-poverty efforts in the rural south and urban areas, South-East Asia, Africa, observations of current domestic War on Poverty programs, and my future involvement in overseas development activities into some coherent scheme.

This effort to distill from the ensemble of remembrances, current observations, and future activities that appear to be relevant will clarify my own thinking about essentials to be considered in waging wars on poverty. The exercise should then contribute to my own effectiveness. It may in some small way add to the total thought

and the body of our learning about approaches to problems of poverty and development. Then it may be useful to others engaged in such efforts domestically and abroad.

To further clarify for the reader or to make more explicit the nature of the ensemble of experiences from which this paper derives the observations it seeks to make, the following comments are made.

(D)

Now for some years Poverty's People have been my main concern. My awareness of it as a problem began at my parents knees. Out of the effort to escape from it, a career has emerged. This career has brought me face to face with poverty's problems in the regions of Mississippi Delta plantations, the Alabama Black-Belt's cotton and cattle farms, the tobacco farms of North Carolina, in the urban and rural worlds of parts of Tennessee, Georgia, East Texas, and subsequently in South East Asia and Africa. My living, learning, and working has been enmeshed in the affairs of these people; sometimes attempting to educate, sometimes attempting to make their worlds intelligible, and more recently, to assist with programs which seek to further the social and economic development of less developed nations.

Quite early I became increasingly aware that within this fantastic range of circumstances in the world of Man and Society, innumerable persons are busily engaged in doing things such as formulating policies, initiating action or encouraging others to act. Many act intuitively on the basis of "By God, By Chance." Some act

with foresight and matters turn out more or less as intended. More often things may happen that were not intended. Too, persons may think they are accomplishing one thing when in fact they are accomplishing something quite different. Sometimes they may set in motion processes that can only complicate or make more complex and hazardous the environment in which they are working. In their anxiety to do something about a problem, people often seek solutions and initiate activities without relevant ideas about the nature of the worlds they seek to change, encourage, persuade, or re-orient. Are they the worlds of tigers or pussy-cats? In doing this paper, it became necessary to ask myself, what is it that I believe needs to be considered by those who would be engaged in helping individuals, societies, or nations to advance.

(E)

My experience and concern with these aspects of the poverty problem began with the opportunity to visit a community which had a school, the sponsors of which anticipated fostering an enlightened land-owning citizenry. The school had been in the valley for 86 years. The windows of time and civilization seemed to have never opened. The people were very much on the outer margins of the culture common to most of America. One could more than figuratively speak of them as being truly the forgotten men of the 20th century.

Corn was planted with a pronged stick. Patterns of marriage and divorce, instead of reflecting Christian ethics, were simply adaptations to their own worlds. A little girl told me what it was like to listen to the angels sing all day. There was a classic

simplicity of folk imagery used. The poetry of her words was amazingly beautiful. But, such themes were not characteristic of the worlds of nine year old girls in American society. However, here it was common. It happened to everybody. It was a prelude to the rites of passage. Similarly a boy spoke of his seat in the church being fixed with the blood of a mad snake.

This community was part of an area where the shadow of the plantation had weighed most oppre ssingly. With few exceptions, corn cribs were more substantial than school houses. The agents of change in this rural south circumstance, were the school teachers. Dutifully, they came daily to teach school in a beautiful facility whose history in the community went back some 86 years. It had never occurred to them that the function of their facility in the community was not a school at all. If it was a school, it was a school without education.

The teachers were of the same race. They spoke the same language. They had come from similar backgrounds. Their value orientation, however, had become so upper middle-class, that they could not communicate with the culture. Moreover, their mobility patterns did not require sponsorship from the people that they were to serve. The people to them were stupid, lazy, immoral. Often the teachers seemed to find greater excitement in wondering which one of the school girls would next become pregnant, than over the lesson they taught.

Here the school house had been more substantial than the corn crib. Surely, there was a principal, teachers, school equipment and the village people who had been in contact with all these things.

Yet, in 86 years an enlightened community of landowners had not emerged. Instead one found one of the most poverty stricken areas in the United States. The careers of it's people were undisputably chronologies of hard times. In their world, they say their souls hung by spidery webs over fiery furnaces and hobgoblins flapping all around. In their minds, the patronage that the people gave the school had nothing to do with it being a school.

Tons of old clothes, shoes, came from the outside every year to be given to the villagers. The school had been a welfare center in the minds of the people--a place to get old clothes, to get wooden crates, in order to repair falling down houses, a place to borrow a bit of money, to use the telephone in times of distress, to summon distant kin at times of death. The teachers were the agents of this benevolence. Their popularity or lack of popularity was more related to their largesse than to any knowledge they dispensed. The tragedy was not that the school rendered such services, but that the teachers had not recognized what they were doing. Instead of fostering self-reliance, a community with the "Give me, give me," had evolved.

Parents exhorted children to be good in school, or themselves participated in parent-teacher meetings under incentive that the teachers who felt themselves to be in a "perverse" world, were more likely to reward obliging and cooperative families. Formal education to their minds was useless. As one man put it, "The cotton patch was sure to claim you in the end."

Out of a reporting of these observations, a research and action opportunity opened for work at the problem of more effective methods of helping people help themselves.

If one is to develop schools that educate, if one is to pacify areas of unrest, if one is to assist the ill-housed, and the ill-fed, how does one approach the task? How might one go about awakening or activating a lethargic rural peasant community in its own behalf without telling the people what to do, without forcing them to do it, or without doing it for them? How may individuals, communities, or nations now living outside the mainstreams, be moved onward toward modernization? What kind of administrative structures serve best as vehicles for certain kinds of operations in various social, economic, and political worlds? Under certain circumstances, in areas of war and unrest, what are the essentials to be known by those who are going to act militarily, i.e., dropping bombs or engaging in psychological warfare; or by those who are going to act benevolently, such as treating trachoma, building model villages, or giving away soap--if the social ends sought are to be accomplished best? How may the impetus of a social movement whether it be the push for education, the pressures of nationalism, or the crises of tribal or race relations conflicts be used to further social and economic growth? For a government of an underdeveloped country which has X amount of money and Y amount of human resources in technical talent and a vast sea of need in terms of villages requiring better health, education, and agricultural development, what advice is relevant about where within that vast sea of needs and geographic space they might begin?

(F)

These kinds of questions have been foremost in my mind now for many years. The desire to learn about lines of action which

characterize the current domestic effort to wage war on poverty, has been a further effort to decipher that which United States efforts might do to set in motion processes which promote the Great Society at home and abroad.

It is only with regard to certain essentials that one may realistically assume that actions undertaken in one part of the world may have relevance for what others desire to accomplish in another part of the world. This observation would apply not only to two different countries, but also to different situations within a single country. On matters of cultural and social change, the respective social systems of two communities or two nations may be oriented in different cultures. The incidents and definitions of the situation, whether in routine or crises type behavior may differ greatly. Yet when one comes to observe the fundamental or basic social processes, more similarities than differences become apparent.

Quite obviously the economic environment of the United States is not the same as that of the developing countries of Latin America, Asia or Africa. Nevertheless, concepts have evolved which make economic worlds, wherever they may be, more intelligible than they would be otherwise. Things which men do, seek to do, or think about doing, in waging wars on poverty, wherever in the world such actions occur, may be deciphered into concepts. Concepts reveal things which those who act feel to be true about the fundamental nature of man and society. In seeking to understand the relevance of the domestic experiment for U.S. efforts abroad, one may turn to an examination of the appropriateness of concepts to locales in

either context. Moreover, concepts are made manifest through an actor who, for want of a more generic term, is here referred to as the Poverty Worker. Whether he be soldier, diplomat, teacher, preacher, administrator, or be among the poor himself, he becomes the key to whatever it is that societies do or seek to do about Waging Wars on Poverty.

This paper becomes something of an excursion on the pages which follow. It extends across a body of prior experience and involvement with poverty, and includes comments or thoughts which came to mind while observing for some three weeks the current experience of American communities waging a war on poverty. This procedure allows me, prior to my next overseas assignment, to have some familiarity with the most significant of our current efforts to do something about poverty at home.

By attempting to functionally link this awareness into the body of past experiences in some coherent fashion, I have reflected on what it is that I now believe to be true and of value among various approaches to waging war on poverty. This exercise should enable me to more readily perceive, sense, and know in what ways my past experience can best serve the needs of a new assignment. When confronted with the realities and complexities of the new assignment, to the extent that perceptiveness about past experience can be relevant in new circumstances, the possibility of imaginativeness should be greater.

(G)

Any attempt to evaluate the lines of actions of War on Poverty activities with a view to their application to U.S. Foreign

Assistance Programs must necessarily start out with certain assumptions about what one regards to be true about Poverty's People, domestically and abroad. And too, such an evaluation, necessarily involves some views about what the problems in approach are and how difficult overcoming them is for effectiveness to occur. This section seeks, through a kind of meandering over several landscapes both at home and abroad, to make certain assumptions clear which appear to me to be relevant.

Since part of my objective, in attempting to write this paper, has been to promote reflection on my own past involvement in activities amongst Poverty's People, the illustrations and documentation come almost exclusively from my past experience. They are situations within which, faced by the need to know whether the world of my assignment was figuratively one of pussycats or tigers, someway was found for doing it. When problems of approach existed, some solutions were found.

There has been an effort made to place the particulars from activities in the various situations described into a framework from which more generalized insights may be derived. In this way, the reporting of an experience at conducting an action program which attempted to create awareness in an Alabama blackbelt community becomes part of the background to the subsequent sections of this paper which deal in particular with aspects of the current War on Poverty as observed.

Some of the case material, rather than other illustrative material which might have appeared, does appear purely by chance.

When the effort to document and reflect on past experience was begun, it was done chronologically, thus the illustrations from domestic experience is most complete. My first overseas assignments, i.e., examples from Indo-China, figure more in the examples than does Africa the region of my most recent assignments. The documenting of this most recent experience is less far along, and it was not deemed necessary to delay submitting the paper until more instances from African experience could be included. Since, this paper is to be only the beginning of a continuing effort, subsequent versions will be more complete in this regard.

The headings under which the illustrative materials appear have been in part suggested by conversations with persons already involved in the implementation of anti-poverty measures or who are planning to become involved. For example, the headings "The Obvious Rarely Explain the Realities About Poverty's People and Their Worlds" and "The Importance of Correctly Reading the Barometer of Poverty Situations", are focused principally on The Problem of Getting to Know Poverty's People. The other documentary materials are intended to call attention to: 1. Problems of Perceiving Poverty Worlds as Social Processes; 2. Problems of Relating Public Policy and Administration to Education, Culture, and Technical Skill; and 3. Problems of Establishing New Relationships Among Poverty's People and Between Poverty's People and the Wider Society.

Chapter 2. Getting to Know Poverty's People

There was a time when Poverty and "Being Poor" were not in vogue. Neither individual men, nor did nations, chose to define themselves as poor. Now the "Poor Nations" in their state of less development, and in so defining themselves as "Poor", lay their claims, with genuine wider support, for more developmental assistance and special terms of trade from the more developed "Rich Nations." And now, here at home, through the provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act, the individual poor can insist upon their rights as poor men to be represented by anti-poverty councils. Nevertheless, getting to know poverty's people remains as difficult, if not more so, as it ever was.

It is not that Poverty's People are not identifiable. Rather, the problems are that social worlds, of whatever groups they consist, pose certain difficulties in being fully comprehended. Moreover, the culture of Poverty's People, tends to be one with which the members of the affluent society tend to be less familiar. Poverty tends to recruit its people from groups who for a variety of reasons tend to be outside the mainstreams of American life.

In a general way, the worlds of the poor, wherever they are to be found share one certain common fact--poverty is no longer a comfortable world. At one time, though it may not have been thought of as having been so, it was. This was before individuals, societies, and nations came to know that life doesn't have to be that way. This was a time when one could reasonably count upon traditional routines persisting. The frequency with which exigencies of life destroyed routines--which related men to each other, to the means of production,

to the gods of the unknown, and the physical environment--were somewhat infrequent. Now routines are destroyed in the twinkling of an eye. Men, societies, nations stand buffeted by change. No man, no society, no nation is so isolated that it excapes; all virtually stand shivering in the high winds of change. Some societies try to live--consciously and unconsciously--reinforcing their archaisms. Great masses of people, particularly within the so-called third world, can't do much about it except to anticipate more violent buffeting because they are the less-developed and the poorer amongst the nations. For the richer nations the change brings progress, and more wealth except for those parts of the society whether it be individual, regional, ethnic grouping, or particular pockets within cities which can not or do not for a variety of reasons participate in the advance. As it was in the case of disaster, earthquake, famine, poverty is grossly irrelevant to survival in any human circumstance. Where opportunities to make comparison of differences in life chances arise, and such circumstances do now exist virtually everywhere, poverty loses the last bit of comforts it ever afforded--breeding hate, dispair, frustration.

The poor may be in the midst of silent or even hot revolutions, technological revolutions, widescale unrest or living in deepest apathy, be rebellious spirits or be in a state of anomie, commit crimes or exhibit a whole gamut of asocial behavior, without recognizing or defining the roots of their behavior in the circumstance that they are poor.

The people furthest down, whether in the United States or in the lands farthest from us, traditionally rarely used the word "poor"

to define their state of affairs. The traditional folk literature of the poor in "society" as contrasted with the "lonely" poor of the blues include a few instances of individuals and certainly not total societies recognizing themselves as being poor. Very rarely in traipsing over the rural south, were instances heard in the folk literature. One instance occurred, and this was a man all alone, walking under a viaduct or railroad trestle.

He was a tall man wearing brogan shoes, a faded blue jumper suit, and a flip-flop old black hat. As he walked along, he strummed a cigar box guitar, and sang to himself:

I'm just po' and cold
Me and the "Man" and the boll weevil
All living off of cotton
The "Man" and the boll weevil
All getting fat
And here's po' me
I ain't got a dime
I'm just po' and cold.

Done worked all the summer
Done worked all the fall
And here comes Christmas
And I ain't got nothing at all
I'm just po' and cold.

More frequently, the folk literature of the poor reflects guile, hope for heaven, includes recitation of chronologies of hardship

and even dispair at times, but when they define themselves as poor, it is invariably an expression of protest.

When a Delta plantation hand sang:

"When I was lying in Clarksdale jail
I seen a louse as long as a rail
Cut off his head nine feet from his tail
And still he was long as a ten foot rail
Hard times, po' boy
Hard times, po' boy."

this was just as much an expression of protest, as was the speech of the African head of state who preceded his remark to the effect that "We are a nation condemned to succeed," by stating "We are a poor nation par excellence."

The substantive and important point that these remarks are intended to emphasize are: the understandings that Poverty's People have of the things they do or do not do are rarely defined in their thinking as being rooted in their poverty; and, seldom do they define themselves as "poor" except fundamentally, in protest.

In our society, figuratively, the "Man" looms large in their explanation for the way they act and for defining the roots of their poverty; hence, the policeMan, the rentMan, the governmentMan, etc. For poverty's people overseas in former colonial territories, the "Man" has been the British, the French, or the Americans. Included now, with greater frequency than before are the peoples of the communist bloc, principally the Russians and the Chinese.

Thus, rather fundamentally, among the first difficulties to be overcome in getting to know Poverty's People rests in differences in perception generally held by the poor whether they be individuals, communities or nations, foreign or domestic, as contrasted with the perceptions of those who would be poverty workers. These differences in perceptions can lead to collision courses, sterile efforts, or opportunities being missed for mankind being moved ahead a notch.

Most often, the poverty worker lacks skills which would make the worlds of Poverty's People intelligible. Understandings, which very early are construed doctrinarily to be facts, are at best collections of individual isolated facts tied together by imagination. More than often, understandings consist of many common sense notions, stereotypes, and complete ignorance. Generally these "facts" tend to be weighted more toward the anecdotal and exotic side. That which one comes to know about peoples in pockets of poverty at home or less developed nations abroad, and the way that it becomes know, occurs much like pebble picking.

The kind of pebble picking, to which I refer, has been part of the experience of all of us. Getting to know Poverty's People, for all too many poverty workers, is just like walking along a beach where one picks up on "fact" and then another--similar to picking up one stone and then another, and so on.

Generally the poverty workers move more frenetically and hurriedly than characteristically one moves along beaches. This too can be a handicap, particularly, when one's sense of devotion, dedication, or "pride" in the dispatch with which one can move, limits one's perceptiveness. When one walks along the beaches of poverty's many

and varied worlds, picking up one stone and then another, in the absence of a conceptual framework within the limits of which one may have hunches about the nature of the relationships which exist among elements comprising beaches, all that one can intelligently conclude is that the beach has many colored stones.

Each individual item of observation, interesting though it may be in the absence of skills for fitting observations into relevant concepts or into framework for understanding, is doomed to stand by itself. In such cases, one's knowledge about, and insight into the nature of the world of beaches and stones become relatively insignificant. This is particularly true, should one desire to be busily doing things or acting in so far as the world of beaches and stones are concerned. Similarly, the same principles apply, but more excruciatingly so, to human worlds.

Even more of a problem than "pebble picking" in getting to know Poverty's People, is the fact that some poverty workers, figuratively walk along beaches and perceive not even the pebbles. They unfortunately see nothing.

Chapter 3. Being in Communication

My reflections have often been on the particular kinds of problems that the technician on assignment in the less developed countries faces. Similarly, the same kind of concern occupies my thoughts about the poverty worker here at home--whether he is teacher, social worker, community organization advisor, agricultural agent, or race relations consultant.

The most crucial problem is one about which often there is not an awareness. The technician may go overseas "do his job" and return home perhaps as blind to the problem to which I refer as when he started out. For all too many poverty workers for what they "see" and "know" about the situations in which they are busily involved, may just as well have never left home. Strangely enough, for this to happen is relatively easy and commonplace. The problem is one of really knowing what is going on or becoming effectively in communication with the situation.

In the overseas situation, problems of language, differences in culture, the mental baggage of attitudes, values and supposed knowledge about things, get in the way and prevent one from "seeing". And too, not to be overlooked, is the fact of being a "stranger" in the setting. Had I written anything at all about my first days in Indo-China, my comments would have centered on the problem of being in communication with the situation.

On the day of my arrival, as part of the panorama of things which met my eyes were the shop signs in Vietnamese, Chinese, and

French. People were getting haircuts, teeth pulled, and fortunes told along the sidewalks. The street vendors sold brightly colored balloons, lottery tickets, and sugar cane juice. The thing which intrigued me most was the chanting sing-song sounds made by a little boy as he walked along the street with a box perched on a stick. I wondered what it was. Was he selling something? Was it part of a game? Was there a bird, a toad, or candy inside the box? I followed behind the little boy for blocks, hoping that something would happen that would reveal the mystery. I was a stranger. The sounds, the sights, the things that people were doing were unfamiliar.

Shortly thereafter in Hanoi, I saw a man walking rather rapidly down the street--moving first on one side and then the other--beating two short bamboo sticks. Sometimes he stopped, but more often he appeared to be continuously moving. The rhythm of the sounds, the movement from one side of the street to the other, the people around who appeared to only occasionally take notice, all of this awakened my curiosity. What was I to think? This was the orient. There was a war going on. I had heard that at one time in the past, Frenchmen walking along the streets had been taken by surprise and their throats were cut. Hanoi was rumored to be overrun by the Vietminh at any moment. What was I to think of a man walking down the street beating two bamboo sticks? Certainly, I thought, it must be a secret message; perhaps a transmission of the bamboo telegraph. Later, I learned the rhythmic sound of the bamboo sticks was announcing nothing more ominous than the fact that the man's soup wagon was nearby and he was bidding you to buy a bowl of Chinese soup. I was blind as to the meanings of things in this society.

Getting to know the secrets of what is to be found in boxes perched on sticks carried by little boys, and the solving of the mysteries relative to the variety of new sounds like those of the staccato rhythms of clacking bamboo sticks are understanding of an order which are relatively easy to come by. Yet, even with a multitude of facts of this kind, one's communication with the situation has hardly begun, and one's awareness as to what is really going on is relatively superficial. One still does not know whether in terms of factors and forces operating--the world is figuratively one of tigers or pussycats.

I learned of a further hindrance to the "doer" who for the purpose of this paper is being called the Poverty Worker, being in effective communication with the situation. The late Dr. Robert E. Park told a story of a man who prided himself upon the expertness of his knowledge about tigers. He had spent long hours in his preparation. He had knowledge of taxonomic classifications and considerable experience with the literature published in a variety of languages. He was regarded as knowing more about tigers than anyone else. One day, he went out to the jungle. He saw a four legged animal, striped, and completely conforming and coinciding with his expert knowledge. He concluded that the animal was indeed a tiger. He proceeded to walk over, intending to pat it, and say nice kitty. The moral of the story was that the expert had great knowledge about tigers, but lacked awareness of the most elementary fundamental insight into the nature of tigers. One of the first things that one needed to know about tigers is that one does not go over, attempt to pat them and say nice kitty.

All too frequently "knowledge about a situation" is mistaken for "insight into the nature of a situation" as a justification for action or inaction. Opportunities for progress may be missed, or conversely false starts may lead to disastrous consequences. The apparent generally provides few relevant clues about whether the social world that one is dealing with is a world of tigers or pussycats.

Chapter 4. The Obvious and the Reality

Though the illustrations through which this section attempts to communicate are drawn from observations about the meaning of the clamor for educational advance in less developed countries, the section has meaning for any setting where submerged people are aspiring to a different kind of life chance than they have known before.

Regardless of how dimly conscious one may be of peasant worlds, the squatting Asian or African peasant with a book in his hand has now been pictured often enough to virtually symbolize for people everywhere a recognized current fact about peasant worlds. The picture of groups of them being exposed for the first time to the magic of the printed page is likewise a symbol to the people themselves.

What accounts for the vitality of this phenomenon since World War II? What kind of magic is it for them? What kinds of hopes? What kinds of things do the people anticipate this writing and reading will lead to?

Twelve classrooms which stood in an open field of a rural community in a less developed country, in part, tell the story. Each classroom with walls of bamboo and roofed with palm fronds, stood as individual huts. Four of the huts were sufficient to contain all the children of school age in the village. The people had built the classrooms two years earlier without assurance that there would be a teacher. At the time of my visit, the little classrooms were there. The teachers had not yet come.

Someone observed, how stupid these people are having built more classrooms than they needed, and without any prospects of getting

a teacher. To dismiss the scene, by simply saying that they should have spent their time in more constructive ways is to miss the essential that the huts could tell one about this community. The classrooms were symbolic. A whole scenario could be written about what these twelve lonely classrooms meant. The apparent would not really tell the story.

> "Reactions to centuries of Western influence and dominance."
>
> "They associate the European's literacy skills with his power."
>
> "They are now independent peoples conducting their own affairs."
>
> "They are an awakened people anxious to move hurriedly into the twentieth century."
>
> "Their masses are sick, ill-fed, ill-housed, and they have come to recognize illiteracy as being part of this tragic circle."

All these quotations reflect the range and type of explanations generally used to account for the phenomenon of, and increased interest in, the expansions of educational opportunity in developing nations.

As explanations viewed collectively, true though they may be in answering the why for the wave of children or the clamor for education, such statements tell very little of the drama of the situation. Moreover, insights which stop at this level of understanding, apart from the general knowledge they provide, are of limited usefulness.

When parents in million of villages started their children towards school for the first time, did they anticipate that the rice fields would claim their educated ones in the end?; or that they

would grow more and better crops; or that they would no longer be sick, ill-fed, ill-housed, and ill-clothed? More fundamentally, one needs simply to ask questions which reveal a view of peasant worlds comprising living, interacting social beings whose expectations, obligations, felt rights and claims are changing. Thus, analysis would reveal or should make apparent that the magic of education was not just a case of people wanting more knowledge, more rice, or better health and housing.

One's curiosity alone, it is quite obvious whether overseas or at home, may not necessarily provide one with the relevant clues to allow one to be in communication with poverty situations. However, it appears likely that more "not seeing" has occurred from a basic lack of curiosity than from "too much" curiosity. This certainly appears to be the case, for example, on the domestic scene.

Teachers may teach in the midst of a silent revolution and may not notice it. Communities may be so unaware of the irrelevance of the archaisms in tradition that they seek to perpetuate for the kind of economic reorganization of production that must take place for survival. One may assume that Indians on a reservation want nothing, totally overlooking the fact that there are stores on the reservations which sell things and continue to add to the stock they carry.

That which this paper desires to suggest about being in a place and not seeing can be made more readily clear by referring to one of my early experiences in the Mississippi Delta.

I had been sent to collect folk tales and folk songs in a community that had been traditionally particularly rich in this form of expression. After two weeks, I returned and reported to my sponsors simply that the kinds of folk songs and folk takes we expected to find, no longer existed. When asked what did this tell me about the situation, I replied nothing other than the fact that the people no longer sang these kinds of songs or told these kinds of tales.

When asked what had I seen, my reply was, "Nothing, but a lot of men leaning on PWA shovels; nothing but juke boxes playing the blues in the cotton fields; nothing but gang labor being replaced by a man on a tractor; nothing but a spank brand new highway running through the plantation; nothing but flameweeders and cotton picking machines doing the work of the former hoe hands; nothing but hearing a woman tell me that she liked the burial association better than the church; nothing but listening to the youth 'play the dozens' with great delight; nothing but seeing a former plantation hand stand lonely on a city street corner singing 'I'm just a po' cold Nigger'."

The full drama of this world had passed before my eyes, but I had seen nothing. It had not occurred to me that the things I had seen bore a particular relevance for explaining the status of folk tales and folk songs in that community. My curiosity had not been awakened. Fortunately, I had great teachers who kept throwing me back into such situations until I learned how to be curious, and learned how to be in communication with such situations.

Chapter 5. Reading the Barometer

To not be able to correctly read the barometer of the poverty situation whether it be in a community at home or in a nation abroad is one of the most critical of the handicaps the Poverty Worker may experience.

Poverty situations are generally ones where routines do not characterize behavior. Even when Poverty's People behave in the framework of the imperatives of their own worlds, such behavior is likely to be at variance with the wider society or established authority. Thus knowing how a society orchestrates its crises as well as its routines becomes an imperative for the Poverty Worker. It appears that in this arena of understanding, the pitfalls are greatest and the most complicated.

Here, the illustrations are drawn from the only crisis situation with which I have had somewhat a sustained and intimate awareness. The observations are dated by a 1952 experience, and are in no way intended to relate to our current Vietnam policies. My views are those as made explicit by official statements of policy.

Back in 1952, it then appeared to me that Indo-China was a land whose people were in the midst of a war. Agents of policy, military and psychological warfare advisors, specialists in diplomacy, and technicians in fields ranging from education, relief and rehabilitation, agriculture, public health, engineering--both host country and international were plagued by a lack of systematic coherent ideas about the nature of the world of the peasant. Yet this was the world towards which they were trying to minister, act upon, and influence.

There was hardly a single decision which did not involve assumptions of a most fundamental nature about the peasant and what he was like on the Nationalist side and the Rebel side.

There was a vast sea of human misery, largely illiterate, and in revolt that could be seen. There were general assumptions that there was some relationship between ill health, poor housing, low production, ignorance, and the state of unrest.

In the areas of relative control, which changed quite frequently, efforts were made to make it possible for everybody to produce more so that they could have more to eat. Concurrently efforts were made to try to treat everyone who had trachoma so that his health would be better. Model villages were created so populations could be better housed. Schools were opened and classes were set up for those who felt that they had been deprived of an education and wanted to learn to read and write.

Regardless of the validity of the assumed relationships between situations of crisis and unrest, and ill-health, illiteracy, poor housing, etc., the administrator of such efforts comes face to face in short order with a very serious and practical problem. This problem is generic to any situation whether it be a crisis circumstance or not. In a crisis situation the assessment of the barometer of the situation becomes more critical, particularly where actions are desired to have some bearing on conditions of stability.

Part of the administrator's dilemma is solved by the fact that unless he has all the money in the world, or phenomenal resources in materiel and trained manpower, any views about attempting to

blanket every available village with services, and the same combination of services becomes irrelevant. His resources just will not cover all the geographical area. The truth of the matter may be, that he may not really need to do so for the direct bearing that these actions can have on achieving the outcome that the program operation seeks to accomplish. Other things may be more relevant.

This section has tried to suggest that crisis situations pose certain management and programming problems. The standard pat prescriptions for inducing stability are not values in and of themselves. They must serve as vehicles for channeling the particular responses that would be relevant to the situation. The crisis situation is one of ambivalence in loyalities, social erosion and rot, dislocation and tragedies, and reasonably familiar worlds becoming unfamiliar. In certain circumstances, the maximizing and legitimization of roles that people can play may be more relevant than the standard prescriptions for crisis situations or incipient crisis.

The reading of the barometer of poverty situations of crisis and incipient crisis is really part of the larger problem of knowing how to use the meanings that one acquires in particular poverty situations in service of that which one seeks to accomplish. The illustrative materials which follow, in the form of three abreviated case studies, attempts to show ways in which knowledge about situations was acquired, how the knowledge became the basis for action or more precisely a tool for defining goals for accomplishment.

PART II

CASE STUDIES OF APPROACHES TO POVERTY

Chapter 6. Using Knowledge to Promote Action
A Case Study of Creating Awareness in the Rural South

We sought neither to tell the people what to do, to push them into anything, nor to do for them. Rather, attempts were made to reduce barriers of isolation through suggestions. These were aimed at enlargement of basic attitudes and habits connected with personality, citizenship, and homemaking. Hence, the concept of community centers that we had in mind was one in which the center was to be viewed as a means through which a people could become aware of "a way of life" and would discover the art of interrogating the tradition, so that the force of traditions would not be merely things impinging upon folk mentalities uncritically, but might become things from which secrets might be deduced--or a setting in which worlds might be revealed. The purpose of the program was not that of indoctrination, and neither were utopias and economic panaceas promised.

Essentially, the program was an experiment in fundamental education attempting the demonstration of a more enlightened technique for educating submerged people, by letting the education come from within them, rather than down on top of them. We sought to demonstrate that a program of "self-help" can come from increasing local awareness of social problems or from "getting people to think", and was generic to larger philanthropic or government programs aimed at the improvement of the social conditions of disadvantaged peoples. Also we were not geared toward having to accomplish "a specified number of things each month." We hoped that certain things would get going, but we had no time schedule. We could only move as fast as the people moved. As

my employers constantly advised, "We know that if anything happens too soon, it will be you and not the people who will be doing it." We felt that if the people themselves fully realized the necessity of doing certain things, we might be able to avoid the experiences of some efforts which build elaborate programs and the moment that the financing or sponsoring agency pulls out, the program collapses. Another thing that made it impossible to gear efforts toward accomplishing something overnight was the fact that I was not to become president or hold office in any organization.

(A)

I call this a story of living, for I lived amongst them for three years walking as they walked, talking to the people to whom they talked, participating in the same things they participated in, observing the same scenes, and more or less responding to the same moods that the people responded to. Rain no longer was just rain to me. I came to think of rain in terms of crops, land, and what the elements meant to a farmer trying to raise a little cotton and corn on a steep gullied hillside. I came to think of the whole pattern of relationships between whites and blacks, the growth or death pangs of institutions, and the stability or instability of social systems and structures that are positively or negatively influenced by the rains.

It was not that the rains descend from above that may allow them to exert such a catyclysmic shadow of influence on ways of life, but too much rain at cotton growing season would give boll weevils sway, give poor men on poor land no cotton to pick and no money to pay the white man for his production advances. Children may leave home.

Churches may die. Ways of life may become precarious. Yes, I call it living amongst them for I witnessed birth and death time and again, sang the songs, shared the lore, shared in their gossip and their secrets, and identified my role in terms of their roles.

When I speak of this as an account of working with a people one might ask well what did you do? Were you a county agent? I would say, no. But during my stay in the area I walked behind a plow, and knew what it was to say "gee and haw" to a mule all day in the business of trying to plant this bit of cotton and corn. Too, in contrast with the county agricultural agent, I had neither the sanctions of the whites nor theoretically the controls which bound him. I could dare to be a little bit more independent in my action, even though my niche was more precarious than his. Were you a school teacher? If one means in the traditional sense of having a school with buildings and scheduled classrooms, my answer would still be, no. Well, what was your role? My answer would be to drop an idea here and there amongst a people. To enter every area of their lives, attempting to sow seeds of awareness. In other words my job assignment was "to get the people to think."

Next one might readily ask, "Thing about what?" That is where the matter of learning with a people came into being. This involved letting the people teach me about the culture, as an integrated unit, in which they lived. From them, I learned what things they should think about. It was really I who was the student in their midst. It was my task and my problem to try to discover. "What goes on behind the faces of these men? What makes life dull or thrilling?

What are the things which give zest to life? What were the personal secrets of these people in an area where observedly and figuratively, the harvest seasons were ending for a way of life based on cotton production and plantations, where the curious and intricate system which had grown up to define their relations to white folks were being subjected to impersonal competitive ecological forces associated with the former cotton lands now being grass lands for cattle as well as to the broader and more encompassing processes by which civilizations come into being in the sense that urbanizing forces were drawing the people and the community into its ever widening circle of influence.

(B)

The program was basically a two-fold project; namely a research phase and a visiting phase. The research phase, which sought to utilize the tools and frameworks of sociological and anthropological investigation, enabled the director of the program to know what things the people's awareness needed to be heightened on, and also furnished the information needed which served as the content of "suggestions for enlightenment."

I was continuously conducting experiments to test assumptions. There was a need to see the community's career and the roles of institutions, associations, and personalities within it in terms of an economy shifting from cotton to cattle. I needed to see the range in social structures existing within the society and within the framework of these settings viewed not segmentally but as parts of the total community giving attention to understanding of the kinds of people who have left, the way trouble is handled, how one becomes a farmer, tenant

or owner, school teacher, the kinds of things that make for gossip, unrest, how one gets ahead.

These kinds of questions had a particular relevance to the practical problem. The chief problem was to relate the ongoing processes within the rural community to the present circumstances of its existence in the setting of a changing economy. How groups persist, become transformed, and what the transitional periods are. These considerations in anticipation of practical application governed the nature of the experiments. Some were experiments I initiated. Others were experiments in which I participated in to assist other agencies. In each instance the experiments were used to sharpen insights.

In an effort to further my understanding of processes, I decided to carry on an experiment which would involve reflection and lead to a measure of objectivity. Since I was interested in recording the cultural life of the area, I chose a rural church about 20 miles from town as the area for observation. This church was noted for its "real old fashioned religion." After listening to and recording many rural sermons delivered by semi-literate folk preachers, I had wondered in the peoples' response to the sermon whether they were responding to the form and emotional appeal of the sermon rather than to the context and meaning of what was said. I had often observed folk religious services and had noted that when the religious fervor was at its peak the minister's utterings were just mumbo-jumbo expressions having no intelligible word content whatsoever. So I decided to make

a wire recording of a church service. Therefore, one Sunday I asked a minister in a fundamentalist setting to allow me to record his sermon. This request was made just before the beginning of the sermon so there would be no major alteration in his preparation. No one in the audience except the minister knew that the recording was being made. The service was a very spirited one, with all the usual moans, shouts, and urging of the preacher. The minister had their souls "hanging by a spider web out over a fiery furnace with the hobgoblins just flapping around." The people were caught up so very much in the enthusiasm of the occasion that they were telling the minister, "Come on now, yes, yes, come on now." The recording was made of the full length of the church service including all activities, moans, shouts, etc.

Immediately after the service, the minister announced that a recording had been made and if the congregation desired, "We can have the whole service all over again." The congregation was anxious that this be done. However, contrary to the minister's expectations the very things which moments earlier had produced shouting, religious ecstacy and fervor now caused laughing. The people did not seem to believe that what they heard represented their behavior. They commented, "Well, don't tell me this is us?" Also they were able to realize that for 40 minutes the minister had really said nothing. The full implications were not realized, but the awareness which was subtly felt was well expressed by one man who remarked, "You know, old Bosun wasn't saying nothing." The significant aspect of this experience lay in the fact that here were evidences of awarenesses that had arisen which were more shockingly real than any lecture could have possibly been.

More or less, attempts were made to utilize the insights gained as possible approaches to the larger social problems of the community. It is very difficult to describe what went on because the work was intangible and subtle, and too, the project was a day to day thing, having as many facets as there were people, groups, and kinds of problems that we came into contact with.

It was necessary too, that I gain some insights into the fundamental educational processes in this kind of situation. Professor Redfield, as I recalled, has described a scene rather illuminating of this point. He told of a small boy sitting in the presence of the men of the village. The boy asked one of them what happens when a snake is cut in two. The men talking among themselves and in response to the little boy's questions revealed the whole body of lore, fact, and fiction existing in their minds about the world of snakes and what happens to them when men kill them by cutting them in two. One tells of having seen a snake rejoin itself. Another says this is impossible. This leads to a discussion of all kinds of snakes, their habits, and the danger of handling snakes. In short one sees in essence, in such a circumstance, the most elemental form of the educational process.

Utilizing or adopting the philosophy that real education comes from within and is not imposed from without, we experimented with improvement of techniques and sought to discover sounder procedures. For example, we used documentary photography as a medium through which a community might get a look at itself. Skillful photography, viewed in an enlargement, in the sense that it isolates

from the total environment or field of observation a segment of the whole, has the possibility of inducing reflection and objectivity. A good photograph lifts common observations out of their context, focuses attention, reveals a mood, and tells a story in a way that it would be virtually impossible to do otherwise. Further, we experimented with the idea of using farmers out of one setting to educate others in another setting, with the educational process being reciprocal in nature.

In pursuit of attempting to create awareness, understanding the function of tradtion led to examination of the traditional within the social and economic system. I had wondered why with all the efforts made to get the farmers to diversify nobody changed. The books had even promised such glorious things. Rather than make 10 bushels of corn, one could make 100 on the same land. Still no one changed. Was there a risk factor involved? A three-way experiment was conducted. I took a small plot of land--well chosen because most of the community passed by the spot at one time or another every day. On this spot, I attempted to grow a bit of everything that they grew. The purpose being to allow me to know the stock of lore, fact and fiction concerning agricultural practices. I would be planting cabbages, and everybody who had ever grown a cabbage gave me advice.

Concurrently, to examine the agricultural practices in the presence and dynamics of the functioning social system, I asked two farmers to grow crops following the letter of the Agricultural Experiment Station recommendations. One was to grow hybrid corn and the other to raise a poultry farm. We discovered in their decision-making

process the risk factor had not been an overriding consideration at all. We learned that the farmer's acceptance of a new idea was a social thing. How his neighbors viewed the innovator was a more crucial factor than the mere learning of a new idea. The circumstances were almost traumatic. Moreover, some of the Experiment Station recommendations involved alterations in the social relationships, i.e., they would require, in some instances, realignment in the division of labor between man work, woman work and children work, and often a requirement of borrowing a mule from one's neighbor. There were no patterns for doing these things. Moreover, the appeal promising rewards of more money were not relevant because most of the people were just sitting on the farms, not necessarily trying to make money, but holding the farm until their sons could return from the army.

We examined another circumstance where, in a desire to do good, there was the introduction of a recreation program with skilled specialists. After a rather extensive effort in distributing brochures and pamphlets, and following the standard view that one must use the traditional leaders to activate social action, the program failed with only 19 persons participating. Analysis of the social structure revealed that in these circumstances use of persons anxious to be mobile in the structure would be more effective and resulted in a participation of over two thousand persons at the next try of the venture.

Out of our research came not only answer to the initial question but also suggestions of new techniques, for example, the idea of educating a community through a demonstration family, etc.

(c)

Here was a land where in the heart and core of its existence there were echoes of plantation heritage, cotton county, poor county, black belt, low plane of living index,high rates of tenancy, great migration, no industry, isolation, changing economy; the ways of the old south.

This was an area of dying churches, overcrowded and inadequate public schools, and a minimum of other organizations or institutions aimed at meeting community needs. Within the county seat one found businesses, county and city offices, government agencies which seem to be not yet part of the culture, but more a part of the things adopted from the outside. For in the manner of the officials, the lack of care of buildings, and the fact that most of the offices are held by lower middle class individuals is indicative of the decadence and general unconcern with the local government characteristic of isolated rural communities. The ceremonial or form exists with only enough efficiency to get by.

Through political, economic and social subordination it is in the area of race relations that the forceful binding effect of the role of tradition can be most clearly seen. In spite of increased technology which has brought the area more and more into the orbit of civilization, the institutionalized procedures, which define situations and through which people must act in striving for goals, tend to resist change. Hence, one finds increasing deviant behavior on the part of both negroes and whites, creating dilemmas particularly for the Negro.

It is a setting, in brief, in which Negroes appear to be losing out. Negro landowners, oftimes, seem to be in equally as precarious a state as Negro tenants. The people are not actually cognizant of the dynamics of what is taking place. More often, they are not even perplexed, being sure of only one thing--"Man I'm having it hard!"

We wanted this farmer to become awakened to the fact that Negro farmers, in terms of the valuation of their farms, were worth a million dollars less in 1945 than during the depression, while the white farms had increased in value by $800,000.00. We sought to have him know that dairy cows and beef cattle brought in more income to the county than did anything else during 1949; with income from timber and lumbering enterprises second; and the thing that the mass of Negroes were tied to, namely cotton, brought the least income into the county.

(D)

The visiting aspects of the project provided the medium for entering into the people's world and at the same time the point of contact with families. From the very beginning it was realized that some way of really entering into their worlds was needed. For to see the situation from the vantage point of a "sociological stranger" alone would make for misinterpretation of a people who, even though they are part of the American scene, exist outside the mainstreams of life common to most of us in the United States. To really know how far they had moved along the continuum from the typical folk society towards the civilization of the city, "one had to know what it felt

like to walk all day behind a mule and a rickety old piece of a plow." There had to be time to live in a land and learn that to sit day by day in front of a fireplace and just rocking and looking into the fire was not complacency and shiftlessness as they saw it, but rather an element of the culture in which they lived. There had to be time to listen to "hells a-biling and eyeballs a-dripping sermons"; time to acquaint oneself with the lore and superstitions; time to let the earth's black canopy of darkness slowly envelop one as nights approach a barren countryside, before one could possibly sense the moods that dominated their thinking.

While Mr. Jones taught me how to shoot a squirrel or "lay-off a straight furrow" with a plow, I was subtly striving to introduce questions, trying to awaken his curiosity in a silent revolution that was going on right under his nose; a silent struggle of socio-economic and competitive ecological forces involving increasing numbers of cows standing on johnson grass and crimson clover existing side by side with fields worked by black men with "cotton hands" and "cotton hearts". He saw his white neighbor just across his fields with extended pastures filled with white faced cows, a nice comfortable home; while he was from sun up to sun down walking between rows of cotton stalks with a flour sack filled with poison in his hands "trying to dust off a few of these dad-blamed boll weevils."

Further, in contrast to general prevailing techniques of community work the program was not to be centered around me, nor necessarily centered, especially, around the existing leadership. This does not mean that the existing leadership was ignored; quite to the contrary; but we were not interested in assisting any particular

person in maintaining dominance. Rather, we were interested in increasing the leadership potential in the community at large. Thus traditional leaders were treated as any one else. This decision was not the result of a whim or mere fancy, but was based on research on the social structure of this changing community. There were sufficient evidences that with the collapse of traditional plantation control, owing to the Negro relationship to the white authority structure being increasingly of a different order, there would arise within the Negro community significant lines of power.

Even though these persons professed to be "race leaders" the pressures which they exerted on the mass of Negroes were equally, if not more so, repressive than the dominance exerted by whites. White dominance in this setting was tempered by paternalism. The mass of Negroes were caught in between a three way pincer movement.

On the one hand, there were the whites, who were experimenting with new forms of social control. For example, the village officials during the course of my stay in the community, decided that in spite of the fact that there were fewer Negroes in the county than ever before, the county needed three policemen rather than one. The existing policeman, who was more of a symbol of the law than anything else, was dismissed. His enforcement of the law had been personal. The three new policemen were symbols of formal law. In the course of a month, it virtually proved to be against the law for the mass of Negroes to walk down the street with their hands in their pockets or to have a general concept of being a "man". In three months, more Negores were shot, arrested, and corrected for not saying "yes sir and no sir" in the right tone" than in the two years before.

This was one point in the pincer movement.

Another point is symbolized by the wealthy Negro leader who boastingly says "I hold 19,000 Negroes in the palm of my hand." His was a kind of indigenous leadership which was essentially exploitive and repressive.

The other prong in this movement were the Negroes placed in sanctioned status roles by whites either as teachers, preachers, agricultural agents, or persons whom whites set up in business. This group is symbolized by the following incident. One day a Negro leader was giving a lecture to a group of Negroes on "improvement and uplift" and all at once he abruptly changed the theme of his discourse, saying "I want all of you to pray for me. Just want you to pray for me. I've got to go into court on Monday because I had a car accident with a white man. I know that he is in the wrong, but I just pray that he wins the case. I've got a wife, a home, and a job here. I just can't afford to have no trouble." This kind of expression could have come from any one of the Negro leaders in this category. This group must constantly express white value attitude systems, if it wants to maintain sanctioned positions of leadership.

Thus, with the mass of Negroes caught in between these forces, none of which they could ignore, it seemed as though the Negro farm owner probably supplied the best base from which we might attempt to increase or broaden Negro leadership.

(E)

Hence, for 11 months we did not try to get anything going, but mostly spent the time trying to widen the cultural base of the

mass of the people, mostly just through conversation while hunting or fishing, or while talking to a farm mother about her child, or by leading the "pray service" in church. In fact, in every conceivable area of contact I took what they told me about their worlds, and told them more or less about my world--setting it all in a larger framework of findings from research on the local community in terms of Negro life in the United States. I also attempted to pass on ideas on things in literature, agriculture, science, history, simple facts of economics and social studies, and more often primarily news. Also small groups were taken on visits outside the county.

When I said that this was the kind of thing that was mostly attempted during the first eleven months, it was not that we arbitrarily said that we shall do this for eleven months, but we were waiting for the people to move. It was eleven months before a small group of farmers experienced a problem that was seriously acute to all the Negro farmers in the county. They decided that they wanted to do something about it, and wanted to know what they could do. Owing to a fertilizer shortage and racial factors which determined the distribution of the available local supply, Negro landowners were not able to get commercial fertilizer. Several alternatives were presented to the group. They could attempt to discover ways of growing crops without the use of commercial fertilizer. They could change to crops that did not require large amounts of nitrate of soda. They could investigate the possibility of purchasing fertilizer cooperatively from manufacturing concerns outside the community. The group came to be organized into a study club.

The third alternative appealed to the group. The group faced a problem however, because they needed further information from other groups of Negroes who, when faced with a similar problem, had been successful in the purchasing of fertilizer on a wholesale cooperative basis. A letter had to be written and for persons who were only semi-literate this posed a major difficulty. The letter was written, but the man to whom it was sent was never able to clearly understand what they wanted to know, and his reply stated this fact. In the group discussions that followed, these persons came face to face with an awareness of their functional education inadequacies in a way which was quite real to them. This experience had added meaning for them, because it was almost time for crops to be planted, and there was, as yet no solution to problem.

The most immediate possibility seemed to be one of making a trip to the manufacturing plant in another city to ask the manager as to whether or not they could buy a carload of fertilizer. A committee of five persons volunteered. During the week prior to the trip, word kept coming in from different members of the group stating that they would not be able to make the trip. On the morning of the trip no one showed up. In order to satisfy my own curiosity concerning the matter, I decided to make the trip alone. The crux of my findings were presented to the group with emphasis being placed on the fact that I had violated the basic principle under which we were trying to operate by doing something for them. They learned that the fertilizer manufacturer said that he was in the fertilizer business and his only concern was "Do you have any money?" Likewise,

his comments that, "I don't know how Uncle Don, the local fertilizer dealer down there, would like it if a bunch of Negroes brought a carload of fertilizer in there", was related. At this point, the meeting was thrown open to discussion, and from this point on, most of the talking was done in the form of folk tales.

These tales, used to explain why individual members of the committee "had backed down", subtly and fascinatingly revealed a world of inner ambiguities and contradictions permeated and dominated by fears. The tales told of a "strange friendship" in which black men who were barely subsisting on barren hillsides would rather take a chance on not making any kind of crop, rather than take a chance on displeasing whites.

I really don't thing that they realized just how much fear was a part of their lives for if someone had asked Mr. X, "Are you afraid down here?" He would have flatly denied it. After this night he could not have denied it anymore. The group came into an awareness and realized that they were so dependent upon whites for loans and economic favors that they dared not do anything that threatened their positions. A question was raised as to how this problem could be met. Thus the idea of a savings club, farm improvement, mechanization, diversification, the importance of organized cooperative effort, etc. came to be discussed, and the process continued on and on. We conceived of this as being fundamental education.

Again we see a series of awarenesses of social problems resulting among the people, which could not have been "lectured" into the people. They learned more about fertilizer than they had

known before. They had made the first step in coming together to discuss a common problem, which in the course of their concern with its solution led to a realization of the functional need for being able to communicate in writing, to keep records, to handle finances safely, to evaluate their niches in a changing socio-economic structure, etc. They had come into an admitted awareness that they were afraid of whites, and also they had come into an understanding of the basic why for their fears. This development of awarenesses did not come about as quickly as I have described it, for in fact, it took nearly a year for it to develop.

Fully realizing the possibility of a certain professional charlatanism which may creep in when one seeks to realte results of a program, I wish to state that ours was an experimental effort with many inadequacies, but at least it suggests the possibility of other than traditional procedures for dealing with the traditional heritages which cloak and plague submerged peoples. It is in this spirit that the following facts are related.

Chapter 7. Seeing Poverty Worlds as Social Processes
A Case Study of the Use of Educational Structures for Different Purposes

When one is capable or has the skill to perceive the incidents of events of the society only as individual incidents and is not able to perceive in terms of processes, he is not in communication with the circumstance. Often the concepts that one has learned may have no relevance to the kind of problems and the kinds of relationship that you need answers on. You may need to formulate new concepts or use old concepts in new and experimental ways. Also figuratively speaking one needs to learn how to listen with the third ear.

To illustrate what is meant by seeing things as processes I shall use the educational situation in Indo-China. Here one may observe rather clearly the ends which education and school traditionally served in the normal functioning of the village. One starts with the villages using the appartus of the educational system as the vehicle for the perpetuation of a tradition. The arrival of the French made for alterations in the process, for as we shall note, significant changes in the machinery for "educating" began under their authority. This resulted in processes where the people very soon desired to use this apparatus to serve ends which were not intended by the French, culminating in the movements towards liberation. We see how they were able to make it serve their ends without substantially modifying the French official program of the schools and indicated no desire to rush ahead towards doing so, but did press towards expansion of the system.

(A)

Traditionally, the "schools" in Cambodia and Laos were the pagodas, and the "teachers" were the bonzes. And in Vietnam, the "lettered man" as a member of the village taught the children of a family or of a group of families how to read the Chinese characters. Education, school, and the ends to which these activities were to serve were those related to the normal functioning of the village. Whether it was the memorizing of Chinese characters or the recitation of the Buddhist creed, these activities were integral parts in the same scheme of things as rituals, ceremonies, festivities, and the traditional pattern of relationships between children and their elders, and the individual with the wider community.

Inward-facing villages of extended families or groups of kin were the core of the societies. There was an attachment to the village, and for most individuals there was little desire to leave one's village for a better life elsewhere. A network of reciprocal relationships bound the individual members. The villages were, for the most part, self governing. The village elders or notables, as members of the village, were responsible for its administration, and were the representatives of the village in its relation with the outside authority. The conceivable range in careers or the kinds of roles that one could expect to play were essentially those which had a relevance in village life. School and education were similarly oriented. Many persons were "literate" in terms of what a villager needed to read and write in his community life, and for the more ambitious the village "learning" was the prelude to becoming a

scholar in the Buddhist order, a position in the village administration, or as was particularly true of Vietnam, the village schools were the first step towards more advanced schools and the passing of examinations for the civil service. The resulting benefits from an appointment as a government official were not of advantage to the individual alone, but to his family, to his wider kin, and to his village.

The essential characteristic of the educational system, limited though it was in the sense that the village school provided literacy skills for most males hardly beyond the alphabet, was that it was a part of the pattern of village life. Education was something of "value", the village itself provided it, and its content was identical with the religious creeds and values preparing one for participation in the existing system of social rights, expectations, and obligations that constituted the pattern of village behavior. Thus during the pre-European era, one may think of the villages as using the apparatus or the machinery of the educational system, i.e., the school, the teacher, the pupil, the learning as the vehicle for the perpetuation of a tradition; a way of life.

Now, the institution for "educating" or the "machinery" for educating has been considerably altered, and the personnel, i.e., the ones in the society whose roles are that of imparting the "education" belong predominantly to a different category than before. The kind of world, in terms of values and expectations as to the ends to which education should serve is fundamentally not the same even though the people of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia are yet predominantly village populations.

(B)

Significant changes in the apparatus or the machinery for "educating" began with the establishment of French authority in Indo-China. Alterations in the traditional form were deemed necessary to the process of economic development that was envisaged. The apparatus for educating was intended to serve new ends.

Through the years, the educational system was reorganized to serve ends ranging from that of "promoting assimilation", "the linking of native culture to the modernisms of the West", "the spread of French culture or the creation of a new France in Asia", "the training of native assistants and interpreters for the French administration and commercial interests", "the development of primary and technical instruction", too, from the native view, particularly Vietnam, the new structure came to be thought of as a vehicle for liberation. Where the culture contact situation was most intense, the initial local reaction was indifference, hostility, which gradually gave way to the "new" being recognized as a value with the net result that the traditional system disappeared or lost much of its vitality. The effects were experienced most in Vietnam and least in Laos.

The new apparatus for educating required a teacher that had to be trained. The relevant skills and learning of the new system were to be acquired through the vehicle of a foreign language. With its secular functions, the physical location of the school was dictated less by the complex that was the world of the pagoda and the family, but most by the necessity for proper administrative supervision. The content of the new system was not identical with the religious creeds

and values nor did it prepare one for participation in the existing system of social rights, expectations, and obligations that constituted the pattern of village behavior. Whereas, the Bonzes and lettered men as teachers, and the pupils, the parents, and the families were bound by a pattern of reciprocal relationships which in essence was the village, the clients of the new form of the institution were bound in relationships focused away from the village. Becoming a teacher, the getting of an education, the employment in a job or the beginning of a career, the opportunity for further study in France, and advancement in the newly developing social and economic structure. All of this was determined not by a sensitivity or responsiveness to the traditional imperatives of the local culture but to the requisites that the controlling and directing group valued. Perforce, one could become "educated" and be profoundly ignorant of the local culture and the history of his own country.

It was not singularly the school that was affected in the culture contact situation, but the total social, economic, and political fabric. Though the growth of cities, the exploitation of mines, the development of rubber plantations, the provision of communication facilities, the organization of the local markets for the export of rice and other products, took place with the populations of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos remaining predominantly village peoples using muddy lanes and tracks as their means of communication, living in unhealthy huts, and performing home industry and farming in traditional ways; their horizons were not as limited. Wants increased. Old satisfactions were less rewarding. The new school system hardly touched the problem of mass education.

(c)

Since the coup de force of March 1945, during the Indo-China War, and the years following the achievement of independence, one of the most striking developments has been the movement towards the expansion of education.

Actual school enrollments increased in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos and more adults were participants in some kind of educational activity during the war than at any prior point in the history of the area.

It was not uncommon in Vietnam to see classes not only in schools, but in market places, private homes, pagodas, garages, bamboo huts, or even on rice paddy dikes--each filled to overflowing. In addition to the "regular" school children, at noon and at night, at one time over one hundred thousand persons were participating daily in some three thousand literacy classes. In one single year, a million people reportedly learned to read and write. At noon, departing from the symphony of activity that working in the rice fields seemed to be--with some plowing, fishing, planting--people would come together, and on slates each would imitate the teacher as he traced letters on the board. The paths along the dikes of the rice fields on many nights were illuminated with dots of flickering flames as participants came to classes; each bringing his little petrol lamp to sit on chairs brought from homes, and at times on improvised ones made of bamboo.

The most spectacular aspect of the Cambodian situation was the building of classrooms by the villagers at a rate which tended to

double each year, i.e. from 400 in one year to 750, and then to 1,300. The peasant villagers and the Government moved to expand school enrollments at the end of the Protectorate. Adult education began in areas previously thought to be static, but where people cut new roadways and built bamboo community meeting halls so that the basic education activities could reach their villages.

Laotion school enrollment at the primary level increased. Government authorities focused attention on the training of persons intended to be the "vanguards" of eventual expanded public services in the villages to undertake improvements in agriculture, education, and health practices.

The significant fact is that the "movement" towards the expansion of education in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos was begun through the use of fundamentally the same apparatus or machinery for educating that had been established under French direction. The new found vitality that the system manifested may be attributed to the fact that the people were making use of the apparatus to serve different purposes. The coup de force of 1945 and subsequent events only quickened tendencies already existing.

When we look at this phenomenon, particularly during the years of the Indo_China War, it is apparent that the machinery for educating had become a vehicle through which nationalistic aspirations could be expressed. Individuals who had lived in rather "low ceiling" settings, could now aspire to wider spheres of legitimate roles. For the "educated" and the near educated who sought emancipation from the rice fields, the chances for entry into the civil service increased

considerably. Moreover, the expansion of the educational activity had a morale function. It symbolized new kinds of claims, anticipations, and expectations of what ought to be life chances.

(D)

The use of education as a vehicle for nationalism did not begin with the "War". The popular education movement of the early 1900's in Vietnam was virtually identical with the emergent nationalism. Strikes in the official schools, and the rise of numerous associations urging on the one hand the extension of Western education and on the other use of the national language were expressions of the force of the movement. The University of Hanoi after being opened for a year was closed in 1908 and vigorous efforts were made to repress the nationalism. The popular education activities faded under the pressures and the circumstances of French policy with the scheme feebly continuing through the secret societies.

During the War, the popular education program was vigorously pursued in both the Vietminh (rebel) zones and in the Vietnam (national government zones). There was an evident competitiveness between the two sides in the promotion of the activity in the respective zones. Though millions of pieces of printed paper destined for the consumption of the peasants were distributed, any possibility of communicating by the printed pages was only a small part of the contribution of this activity to desired ends. The classes were ritualistic in character, prophetic in promise, and the involvement of people was intended to further a spirit of psychological and material support of "national" causes.

The Vietminh reportedly used the activity directly as a political measure by adding to the felt compulsiveness--the element of imposed obligation to participate. Under the authority of an "imbecility tax" people who did not participate had to pay. They could not leave their villages to go to markets, use the roads, ride the ferries unless they could pass a prescribed test. Furthermore, where time permitted and if political or psychological domination of a province was deemed necessary as a prelude to the intensification of sabotage, harrassment of government, or full military control, popular education activities were intensified to a maximum in the locality. Major efforts were made to create village schools and to organize cadres of teachers. Propaganda made use of themes and ideas which were traditional concepts in Vietnamese education.

The inherent spontaneity in the popular education movement could be more clearly observed in the Vietnam government zones. Forced participation was not required. The compulsion to participate arose from an identification with the national cause, social contagion, or from the social interaction between members of the family, kinship groups, or villages. Yet, there was a "wave" which the government could, only with difficulty, satisfy. Similarly, there was a push to establish schools or to reestablish schools damaged or destroyed by the war. In certain villages, the nexus between the school and the total web of social relationships was so intertwined that the lack of a school or its loss constituted not only a shameful disgrace or catastrophe, but materially affected the village's zest for existence. One of the most characteristic features of all the education activity

was the singing of national songs and the recalling of heroes almost forgotten.

Though there were rebel bands of dissidents and the overflow of Vietminh units into certain provinces, the populations of Cambodia and Laos were not as tragically involved and dislocated by war as were the people of Vietnam. Nevertheless, a functional relationship existed between their expanded educational activity and nationalism. The demands of their leadership for independence, and the promises made that with independence there would be more schools were related ideas. Moreover, the leadership certainly associated the development of education with national desires to hurriedly move from the ox-cart era to twentieth century modern nationhood. Furthermore, the maintaining of schools in certain regions was regarded as being an essential of village stability. In provinces subjected to harrassment by rebel or dissident bands, school teachers were often the only representatives of the national government allowed freedom of movement. And in certain areas where teachers were accused of collaboration with the rebels, the removal of the teachers and the closing of the schools was regarded as being so potentially disastrous to national causes that such action was rarely taken.

Throughout Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, during this era, anyone who could read and write, i.e. who was literate in the national languages, became someone of value. Potentially, one could play a variety of roles based on this fact. The expanding educational activities provided the widest arenas within which individuals, formerly living within more limited frameworks for mobility could now aspire

to wider spheres of legitimate roles. In the preceding years, under French administration rather low occupational ceilings characterized the opportunities opened to native aspirants. The ability to speak, read, and write French was of greater significance than facility with the local languages in determining the roles one might play.

Substantially more than in the past, once the control of the educational systems were in the hands of the local governments, associations and committees for the development of education grew. Village elders had additional functions and responsibilities. The need for paid and volunteer teachers increased tremendously. Lay persons who were not normally involved in educational matters became active participants in the discussion of such matters as the use of the national languages as the vehicles of instruction. Thus the movement towards the expansion of education increased the number of organizational roles within the structure of normal social relationships. It led to the creation of new niches for leadership expression. And too, a sensitivity or responsiveness to the imperatives of the local culture, and the claims and expectations of the villagers was a necessity.

Not only was the "ceiling" lifted in the realm of informal activity, but for the "educated" and the near educated who sought emancipation from the rice fields, the chances for entry into the official administration increased considerably. Becoming a functionaire was a valued role, and generally an expected end result of education was the achievement of the status of civil servant.

In view of the current critical shortages of trained personnel in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, it is a paradox that during the preceding era, even with the heavy eliminations of the examination system, there were more people who had been "educated" in the system than there were niches to be filled. A considerable number of persons who had received advance training in France chose to remain there. The army or other occupations, with which they were not satisfied, received many persons that the administration could not absorb. The problems of those persons who had advanced to the upper rungs of the educational ladder, was not nearly so acute as it was for persons who had received only three or five years of schooling. They had been taught in French, which was not the language of village life, learned a history that was not their own, and received training based on the requisites for living in the metropole rather than in a peasant rice cultivating society.

The expanding educational activity made use of all these persons who desired to participate. Several thousands worked as volunteers. Others received a small daily gratuity during a brief period of training lasting from a month to six weeks, but rarely as long as a year, followed by official employment with a regular salary afterwards. Moreover, once a person had become established on the government roles he could anticipate career status. And if desired, a future prospect was the possibility of requesting to transfer to other government departments outside the ministry of education. In contrast with other government services, education, because of the vastness of its demand, provided the greatest number of opportunities for entry into the bureauracracy.

Not to be overlooked is the morale function that the expansion of educational activities provided. During the war, the classes were legitimate occasions for gathering, for the sharing of news, gossip, rumor. And too, with the people having defined themselves as persons who had been oppressed or denied something, education was sought as an elevator to equality not simply in terms of literacy skills, but as a gateway to a less miserable existence. A complex of felt inferiority and related sensitivities had been created. The effects of this mentality contributed to the generally compulsive nature of efforts.

(E)

Thus, it should be apparent that the magic of education was not simply that people wanted more knowledge, or even just better health or houses or more rice. Surely they did want these things, and they still do, but these wants are not isolates in a vacuum. To understand the extraordinary vitality of their efforts, and the variations in the manner with which expression took place in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, the "wants" must be viewed in terms of the system of social rights, expectations, and obligations characterizing the pattern of the peoples' existence. In this context, and in the circumstance of Monsoon Asia where the expansion of education expresses itself in the form of a social movement, when the villagers build classrooms and classrooms often with no assurance of teachers, or when tousands of adults leave their plows at noon and come to classes to draw their A,B,C's; these acts are symbolic or symptoms of something quite fundamental. These acts are expressions of patterns

of beliefs and expectations of what will be or what ought to be. The ends sought, though the group may not be able to define them or the claims which they express except in vague terms, are not simply ones of "learning to read and write" or to provide "book learning" for their children. Governments, or foreign technicians who assist them, who are not aware of these possibilities may fail to fully utilize the potential that these social movements towards education offer in promoting social and economic growth.

Chapter 8. Influence of Culture, Educational Level, Technical Skill on Public Policy
A Case Study of Compromise Prompted by Political Imperatives

The Poverty Worker is, among many other things, the manager or administrator of social experiments. These operations are increasingly operations of scale. In his role as administrator, the Poverty Worker cannot be insensitive to factors of culture, educational level, and technical skill. These elements do have influence on matters of policy. The complexities are not often appreciated. Culture, educational level, and technical skill do prescribe, to a great degree, the limits within which public policy must be devised as well as the appropriateness of the administrative structures for achieving program goals. Some administrators exhibit a remarkable adeptness, skill, and imaginativeness relative to the "variations on a theme" they can invent or orchestrate within the boundaries of culture, education level, technical skill, and public policy. The range within which an administrator can be creative and imaginative within these limits is obviously in part a function of appropriate management skills, intelligence, drive, and a kind of mentality that thrives on insights. The business of having insights as we have suggested earlier is a function of the breadth of relevant operational experience from which the individual has learned something and been perceptive.

The administrator of social schemes faces imperatives which push policy and action beyond the frontiers that considerations of culture, educational level, and technical skill suggest as being prudent. This case study suggests that there are at least three orders of questions, with which the administrator, in a situation like Cambodia may proceed to examine these dilemmas.

(A)

First, what does the administrator-executive want for the society, or more specifically what does the government want for the peasant? Though at times statements are vague or ill defined, generally the "values" of a better life and a higher standard of living are expressed. There is the hope that they will become modern, educated, more productive, and that they and the country will escape from the effects of the tragic circle of poverty, etc.

Secondly, what does the government want from the peasant? Surely the peasant's cooperation is the most important thing. The peasant may not know just what is required of him for most often he is not involved in the planning discussion. The "plan" may have come to the peasant as law, a decree, or he was told about it by people charged with the responsibility for the activity who came out giving orders or encouraging him to "want to do." And too, the government wants the peasant to be grateful--and his vote.

Thirdly, what does the peasant want from the government? He may assume that the government has bags of money and he wants his share in schools, hospitals, roads, etc. And for other things, he may just want to be left alone, freedom from petty officials, economic justice, employment for their educated children. He may not be interested in "development" when working on a community project, but in the prestige symbols.

Now, when we look at the administrator-executive we often find that the assumed need to get something done, and so much of it done by a particular time, and within the limits of certain costs, is

characteristic of his outlook. However, though he recognizes and stresses the importance of sound administrative practices as being not only highly desirable but as imperatives in the achievement of policy goals, he needs be consciously aware of what the real function and "ethos" surrounding the idea of planning is taken to be in the outlook that has arisen in emergent and newly independent countries. The need to plan arises on three different, yet interrelated grounds in the minds of these countries. First, there are the economic grounds: the factors of population pressures, low productivity per person, unfavorable balances between imports and exports, stagnation of sectors of the economy, limitations of resources, an overall poverty hampering economic growth, a felt desire or awareness of the necessity of raising the standard living. Secondly, there is the realm of social problems: masses ill-fed, ill-housed, in ill-health, and illiterate. Comparisons between the relatively higher living levels of the more advanced countries and the submarginal existences of the underdeveloped and concern with the effects of the generally low standard of living--tie the economic and social problems together. And thirdly, there are the political grounds with implications: local, national, and international. Stability and evolution rather than revolution are desired. Yet, problems of awakening peoples, village rivalries, and the reorganization of balances of power on a national basis, compete with views about the image the country should project abroad.

The <u>wants</u> in terms of the different perspectives of the peasant and the administrator-executive are not necessarily compatible. Neither perspective can be ignored. How can they be integrated? How

does one make for an effective nexus between these "wants" representing the interests of government and peasantry, and the "needs" as reflected by the economic, social, and political problem? It is particularly in this sphere that the influence of culture, educational level, and technical skill on public policy and administration, with regards to the overseas technical assistance operations, are of great relevance.

(B)

Unless one has all the money in the world and an unlimited reservoir of available talent and resources, the administrator-executive is faced with the problem of how can the resources in money and talent be best used to accomplish the ends which he seeks. Immediately this concern leads him into considerations of culture, educational level, and technical skill.

First, there must be a clarification of just what it is that one really seeks to accomplish, the purpose of the policy, and the why for the thing to be administered. He needs to examine the values which underlie what he says he wants to accomplish, and the generalized aims must be broken down into concrete discernible indices so that all along assessments can be made as to whether, and to what extent, one is doing what he set out to do.

When we look at the general aim of "improvement of education" it might appear that the values are explicit in the statement of the aim. But when a government decides to improve education it may be a response primarily to political ends so that at the time of next elections the people can be reminded to look what the government has

done; or they may really mean that they seek to improve the quality of village life. Furthermore, an expanding network of schools and teachers may be seen as an effective way of maintaining the status quo; or it may be thought of as primarily being symbolic indices of progressive modernism; an element of national pride useful in comparisons with other countries. Moreover, "improvement of education" may be seen as a means of welding a more effective national unit--a vehicle of nationalism or as a means of creating a reservoir of personnel to meet the requirements of an army, or to provide personnel needed for particular kinds of development schemes. Once the values are made explicit, one can ask, "How much of what needs to be accomplished, by when, and at what costs?"

Part and parcel of the task of concretizing of aims is the examination of the "terrain." Should the approach be one of trying to cover all the geographic area immediately, blanketing by stages, or have a patterning of activity based on different principles altogether.

Another concern in the initial conceptualizaing of the task is an examination of requisite administrative structures. Do you use the "official structure" regarding it as the only valid existing structure, or seek to discover relevant more "natural" functioning mechanisms?

In the Cambodian circumstance the generalized aim was to improve education. The hard cold fact was that expansion of the educational system was a political necessity. One year there were some 1300 classrooms, built by villagers, without teachers. The

government tried partially to meet the need by providing accelerated training for 750 candidates. When the school term began with around half the 1300 classrooms without teachers, the clamor, the vitality and the urgency of the demands coming in from the provinces to the capital, the government and the King resulted in 750 additional persons being engaged without any teacher training, and without there being any money in the national budget to pay them. Funds were raised through readjustments in the national budget and through a mass drive for public contributions.

The Government faced a problem. Demands for satisfaction of "wants" and claims and expectations of "what ought to be" were accelerating faster than any real increase in production out-put per capita. Some officials argued that the educational expansion or in fact the meeting of the "popular clamor" was at the expense of other sectors of the economy. It was not in harmony with generally sound principles of educational development. The primary school system was expanding, but the secondary education level which was the vital channel providing persons to be trained for technical roles was only a pin-point on the education scene. The educational expansion had been almost singularly quantitative and was sorely lacking in quality. Recognizing that there was "some good" in engaging school graduates as rural teachers, i.e., talent that would have been lost from the rural areas was being thrown back to work in the villages, but teachers with barely more than six grades of schooling were limited in what they could do with problems of reorganization of the school program to meet the needs of a newly independent country. And moreover, there

was deep concern over the increasing number of rural teachers who not only "taught" but were speechmakers, fledgling politicians. In the capital, there was also the problem of the "educated" who appeared in increasing numbers at the King's public audiences--claiming positions as "government functionaires." Educational expansion had two potentials: 1) without proper guidance and focus it would only add to the social erosion of the country and bankruptcy; and 2) with proper focus it could be the most dynamic force in a movement toward social and econmic growth.

The government faced a problem either they needed to clamp down on this natural propensity to build classrooms, i.e. tell the population that they had to stop demanding teachers; and by so doing risk the effects of possible growing dissatisfaction in the rural areas; or they had to seek ways of focusing this movement into schemes of rural development through education.

There was the additional problem raised by the fact that though the government in drawing up its two year plan of economic development had apparently tried to take an overall balanced view, a most apparent limitation lay in the fact that even if everything proposed was accomplished, the results would not in and of themselves, make for increased productivity, alter the actual economic organization of the society in a material way, or lead immediately to the mass of the population experiencing any felt benefits of desired social and economic growth. Construction of facilities was a major element in the two year plan, i.e., facilities to house the expanding bureauracracy of technical services or to broaden the scope of public services, and also the training of persons received a certain emphasis. In a shaky

political climate, the struggle for balances of power, no government could have failed to take note of the pressures.

(c)

My acquaintance with the Cambodian situation, and my first awareness of the influence of culture, educational level, and technical skill on public policy and administration in this context began with an extended field trip organized by a Cambodian official to show us "what the real Cambodia was like." I recall arriving at the Phnom Penh airport and meeting a foreign technician who was supposed to go on the trip, but now angry and in a huff he was "through with them". Revealing his expertise on Cambodian cultural patterns and national character, which included every stereotype imaginable, he explained that he was to have had a conference, but had seen no one, and felt moreover that everybody had been avoiding him.

From the airport towards the city, we learned a bit of what these "perverse" Cambodians were thinking about: the then King Sihanouk's speech in New York and what had happened back in Cambodia because he had said that the Cambodians were not yet free. A Cambodian official explained: "The French had disarmed all the Cambodian troops in Phnom Penh. There had been a rebel attack on villages near the city. The Cambodian soldiers had no arms, and the French did nothing." Everyone was incensed.

The city appeared tranquil. Hundreds of little shopkeepers, mostly Chinese, some Indian, and a few Cambodians went about trying to sell their wares. The French military, teachers, businessmen, and government officials unobstrusively went their ways. Bullock carts

and busses overladen with human beings, produce, and bicycles--kept the country and town in contact by day. By night, things were even quieter. Yet beneath this facade of the routine, on this day, the news and the talk was of Sihanouk's speech, Cambodian independence, and the Indo-China war. This was a land of latent ferment.

The next morning, loaded into five jeeps, we and the Cambodians representing various departments of government began our journey accompanied by a military radio car and a troop truck loaded with soldiers. The world of the countryside and the peasant with its sugar palm trees, the rice paddies, the water buffaloes, the bullock carts, the rural market areas, and the rhythm of the activities of people working and living, with joys and sadness unfolded before us. We travelled over road and trail, crossed streams by ferry and raft, moved through areas of rice fields, rain forests, and jungle.

We noticed the web of existence that was the village with the pagoda serving as its center, and learned something of the force of the sacred and its adaptation to the profane and the increasing secularizing forces within the society. One could observe in the interaction between the villager and the government official the respective patterns of expectations and obligations characterizing the traditional in relationships. One could listen to comments of the "elites" view of the peasant. The peasant no doubt grew rice in the same way as had his father. Though not persistently menaced by famine, he was as subject as generations before to forces of nature, drought and flood. He could not read and write, but this man was not the peasant

of yesterday. His conception of himself was changing. Though he still bowed, he bowed now with less conviction. We saw misery in sick bodies and noticed the welcome with which medicines were received. We noticed the enthusiasm evident in the presence of hundreds of little bamboo rooms, and at times rooms of brick and cement, built by villagers as schools. They were making claims of the government for teachers of their children.

We visited the huge areas of rubber plantations and saw to what a very limited degree the major development schemes of the past had involved the local populations, but instead functioned with imported la bor. We heard that at one place there was supposed to be an iron mine, but the real extent of the mineral resources was unknown. We watched men at another location where a few grams of gold were being exploited with extremely crude techniques. We saw some of the problems of money and trained personnel that the government faced in improving provincial administrative services, the extension of hospitals, schools, and agricultural services to the rural areas.

The root of the problem of all that we saw appeared to be symbolized in a scene that we observed of the building of a huge extended irrigation dike. Here, above the general landscape along a high mound of earth, there seemed to be hundreds of men and women with bamboo poles across their shoulders from which hung baskets of dirt; one at each end of the pole. Nearby, there were three heavy draglines; the most modern in earth moving equipment. In movement across the top of the dike the swaying bodies of the men and their earth laden baskets silhouetted against the sky was like a scene from a

modern ballet. The tremendous gap between the technology symbolized by draglines in contrast with that of men with baskets on their shoulders was in essence the crux of the problem, not only in the building of the dike, but in all the host of other kinds of things that Cambodians desired to do in their movement out of the ox-cart era into twentieth century modernism. One wondered, thinking of the gap between the worlds and the technologies, if there were not certain elements of the Cambodian technology which might be adapted to new uses, in combination with certain elements of modern technology in ways so that the building of the "dikes" might in reality be occasions for the training and the building of men as well.

(D)

If a government of an underdeveloped country has X amount of money and Y amount of human resources in technical talent, and Z amount of the requisites for economic growth and a vast sea of needs in terms of villages requiring better health, education and agricultural development, etc. perforce the advice given or action taken involves the existence of concepts concerning what the country is; some notions concerning its structure and organization. How one attacks ones task will depend upon the underlying scheme representing the world that one wants to be in interaction with. This world becomes endowed perfectly or imperfectly, correctly or incorrectly with certain kinds of character which will exercise a direction and coercion upon the way it is acted upon. Thus, one must know the commodity that one is dealing with, i.e., its nature and capacities. There must be at least a working definition of the situation. What is the focus of the society? What are the factors operative in the circumstance? What are

the natural forces which are in movement? How is the society organized and structured economically, socially, politically, and ideologically? It is most important that there be sufficient congruence between the conceptions which form the mental baggage of the administrator-executive and the world to which he seeks to apply it. The elements of culture, educational level, and technical skill must necessarily influence public policy and administration for only then can an assessment be made as to whether what one says one wants to do is possible or impossible, or how much is possible and with what costs. It is the examination or consideration of the factors of culture, educational level, and technical skill which places objectives against the realities of the circumstance or social situation.

The felt political realities and the fact that persons even with a minimum of training and skill were at such a premium, caused the Cambodian Government to allocate up to 30 per cent of the National Budget for educational development. A compelling aspect was the building of classrooms by the villagers at a rate which tended to double each year, i.e. from 400 in one year to 750, and then to 1300. The peasantry was actually pushing the Government into action. They were faced in fact with a social movement. The fundamental task of social engineering required was the intelligent use of the existence of this social movement, i.e. mass village efforts to provide more education, as an occasion for promoting rural development. The classrooms built by villagers were evidences of the energy and the potential for organization or organized efforts of certain localities or regions. The compulsiveness, the enthusiasm, and most important the energy that

went into the building of classrooms given the proper direction could lead to the undertaking of many kinds of development activities. The resulting prospects for social and economic growth would in fact give fundamental satisfaction to the expectations and claims that the social movement was a symptom of, and of which the building of classrooms and other activities are symbolic.

A national policy of reorganizing the educational system, and of reorienting youths towards careers in agriculture, trade, and commerce was adopted. As frameworks, the national education activities were organized into programs of Rural Development Through Education, and Vocational Industrial Education for Economic Development. Therein, the plan sought to use the interest of the masses and their insistence on education as something of a vehicle for nation building or development. There were 8,000 school teachers, with a prospect of five thousand more being engaged over the next five years. Villagers were active enough to be building on the average around a thousand classrooms a year. Most of the schools already existing in the rural areas had been built by them. In virtually every area there were lay organizations existing called the Associations for the Development of Education. These elements were the plan's resources. A qualitative improvement in the schools, the villages, and the economy among the people in the geographic areas covered by the project was anticipated.

The country was divided into regions, i.e., the grouping of provinces which in terms of the configuration of culture, economy, social organization, and level of technology tended to cluster. Groups of provinces with similar characteristics and similar problems were

thought of as representing a unit. Though the country was one political unit consisting of fourteen provinces, the kinds of problems and the social organization which characterized, for example, Stung Treng with half its population isolated --tribal and nomadic--were not the same circumstances as existed in Battambang, the rice granary of Cambodia with a relatively "well to do" stable Cambodian peasantry, nor Kampot which was the highly specialized pepper growing area with a large Chinese population.

Viewing these constellations of provinces as regions, one distinguishable from the other, the country was regarded as consisting of some five socio-economic or cultural regions. We then sought to determine locations within the regions which could serve as locales or points of adaptation, i.e., places where each of the regions could conceptualize, experiment, and adapt national policies to the peculiar exigencies of the region. Within the regions or any geographic area, certain localities, villages or market areas, because of varying complexes of cultural, ecological, economic, social and technological and political factors are more disposed towards being effective "program carriers" or beginning points than are other localities. All villages do not have the same propensities for change. Some social groupings function more effectively as mechanisms of social contagion, and the spread of ideas and techniques than do other localities. The matter of the organizing a nationwide pattern of locations with "natural propensities" for the implementation of goals was particularly important because most of what the program envisaged accomplishing and the processes which we desired to set into motion depended almost solely on the cooperation of the village population.

The task now was one of conceptualizing a program structure which would allow functional relationships between the regions and at the same time allow for training, demonstration, and experimentation and have inherent in it a function of general rural development. Citing the case of the Rural Development Through Education project in particular, it was realized that in one of the regions there were National institutions in the process of development: A Rural Education Demonstration and Training Center (teacher training for rural primary school teachers); A Fundamental Education Center (training of educators for work with adults and at the village level); A Village Improvement Center (revitalization of village artisan activity, improvement of quality of village life, tools, housing, etc.);and A Rural Health Demonstration and Training Center (field experience and training for rural medical workers.) Rather than allow each institution to continue a separate development, they were linked through defining the composite geographic area as a National Training Ground. Thus the specific geographic area encompassing the four national training institutions, became a National training ground within one of the regions. The area is the training ground; the communities became the school. The National training facilities, the families, the pagodas, the farms, the existing primary schools, the formal and informal associations, in fact, the entire institutional structure and the human and natural resources are integrated into vehicles for training educators and the community as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible. The total web of life becomes involved in the achievement of goals. The fundamental concept of the project is that of "self help"

carried out in such a way so as to contribute to people having an opportunity to learn new skills, changes in thinking, and the improvement of living conditions by means of education.

In short, the research, training, school development, and village improvement aspects of the education program were so organized that each aspect was focused on the one hand to goals of concrete rural development, and on the other hand towards requisites for a qualitative improvement in the formal school system. Concurrently with the development of the National Training Ground as a nucleus, provincial points of adaptation were being developed based on principles of "self help" and the involvement of the total web of existence to train educator and villager, and to improve school and village life.

(E)

Upon looking at the technical assistance scene one is impressed by the fact of a tremendous amount of superstition and myth that exists about what makes people good farmers, about education, about the ways of introducing changes in health practices. Often part of the naivite in these matters rests in an insensitivity to the factors of culture, educational level, and technical skill and the kinds of influence these elements need exert as signposts in matters of policy and administration. When one looks at the things which governments are trying to do or what they think their measures are intended to do, and what in fact happens, one does observe apparent successes, but much too often one sees the results of the "blindness" of the myth--that there is no need for a pioneering in the development of techniques specifically for the development of underdeveloped countries.

Chapter 9. Problems of Establishing New Relationships A Case Study of the Problems of Cooperation Where Race Relations Change

There is all too often a tendency for the Poverty Worker to lack real understanding of the nexus of relationships characterizing the moral order of expectations and obligations within Poverty Worlds and between such worlds and the wider society. The dimensions of the interaction between poverty's people is often overlooked, as is the relationship that such interaction bears for the kind of interaction that occurs between the poor and the dominant authority outside. When relationships with the world outside are referred to as being a "cool, cool world" the analogy is most appropriate. The only "wider society" that submerged peoples come to know are dominance and authority. At one time, dominance and authority tended to be tempered more so than now by personal loyalties or at least something akin to a human experience even though it may have been paternalistic or one may have been exploited. For most of poverty's people in urbanized settings, such opportunities hardly exist at all outside an institutionalized framework, e.g., the settlement house. The rapidity with which this process now characterizes rural worlds has already reached crisis dimensions as is evidenced in the flow of poor whites, ill-equipped Negroes, Mexicans, and reservation Indians who, cut loose from their traditional moorings, have no alternative than to move. The worlds to which they go, as well as the worlds they leave behind are not static. Their traditional views of social relationships are irrelevant and lack meaning for either context. The arena where crisis related to this process are exhibited most frequently is in

the sphere of race relations. This is natural for it is yet in the sphere of race relations that more rigidities and archaisms persist than perhaps any other sphere of human contact or social interaction.

The Poverty Worker needs to be particularly well schooled in his understanding of race relations processes. If he is a white American working in less developed countries or amongst poverty's people who wear a racial hall mark at home no where are his assumptions and perceptiveness more likely to be regarded as lacking credibility than in the sphere of race relations. And too, pragmatically, further sense yet needs to be made in this field for substantive progress to really be made in waging wars on poverty both at home and abroad. And again, on the side of pragmatism, understanding of race relations processes can contribute to a heightened sensitivity to the very different ways in which race relations may pattern themselves in the future in the way of intra-minority conflicts and tensions. Needless to say minority groups themselves need better understanding of inter-minority or inter-group social processes.

The following account attempts to document in brief a bit of the interaction within a submerged rural Negro community as it interacted with the white community of a changing race relations scene. By focusing upon the changing moral order of expectations and obligations, it attempts to call attention in particular to ways in which well-intentioned efforts at promoting economic or social advance may be complicated by the problems of relationships between Poverty's People.

(A)

Traditionally, in this deep South rural black belt community, the moral order of expectations and obligations in both its private and public aspects had been essentially personal. Though a peculiarly intricate system had evolved defining the nature of Negro-white relationships and the nature of Negro relationships with one another, a tradition came into being. The relationships and the tradition had evolved principally as adaptations to the exigencies of survival.

Everyone came to know what he could expect of others, and what his obligations to them were. Even poverty, at times, had been a "comfort" because it was set in a "familiar" world bound together by personal ties.

The earliest and most widespread pronouncements of the "good" to the masses were the "hell's-a-boiling" and "eyeballs-a-dripping" sermons of the old folk preachers. The imagery with which they described their own "conversions" reveal much about the kinds of sermons they preached.

"My heart broke down and water overflowed down my cheeks. Everybody asked me 'What you crying about?' I would say to them, I'm not crying, but the water is streaming out of my eyes...I went out on the farm to plow one evening and it was light n ing seemingly three miles away chilling herself down even with the mule's head. And the light n ing come wobbling through the air, lit in the mule's bangs, wobbled on down his back and come on down the mule's tail. Even the bush of the mule's tail looked like red hot wire. Leapt off the mule's tail and boarded on the plow beam, and split when it came on up each

arm and tied a bouquet in my chest. It shook me so, until I told God, if you just spare me, I'll do what I told you I'd do.

"As time rolled...I was called to preach and I wasn't sleep. I was sleep at first, but He called me by my name and woke me up and said to me, 'Come to the door, Willie.' I got up and walked to the door. Opened the door. The door was in the North. I heard a voice say, 'Look East.' I looked in the East and a wheel turned in the East with three spokes. Throwed out enough light I could see the ants crawling on the ground. I looked across my daddy's field, and I could see the crops further in the night than I could in the day. And I want to tell you brother, out of the wheel there come a voice, 'Go preach my gospel, and preach the twentieth chapter of Revelations. I'm with you till the world shall end."

Though the old folk preachers deserve credit for the encouragement that some gave to landownership, education, and for "opening up eyes that was closed" against "sexual looseness, drunkeness, and crime;" they were at the same time a most potent force in adapting Negro expectations to the vicissitudes of plantation life.

Schools contributed to "lifting us up" especially the one founded by the New England missionaries which contributed most to the cultural advance of Negroes in this community--emphasizing a puritan ethic, church going, etc.; the general effect of what was education was negligible. As late as 1905 country school terms were only three months.

"Back in those times, children went to school until they got to be twenty-one. We really didn't have no grades. The school

had seventeen students, and was a log school that the colored established. The Negro landowners gave the land, and they called it the Silver Streak. This was the first school I taught at. Back in them times, children would always start in their books where they had left off before. Whenever they and their teacher got to a place that they couldn't work, they would turn back. So each year, the farther you got up, the more you turned back. On the first day, when the children went home, they could tell their parents that they had turned a new leaf. Right then everybody began to say that the school was doing fine. All the talk was that daughter turned a new page that she had never turned before."

But with teachers operating under the imperatives of "tell everything (to the whites) and "don't teach too much so as to disturb things." Where school buildings were worse than the most delapidated corn cribs before 1947, the evolving folk order of expectations and obligations was much more pervasive as a force in the community than the schools.

A relatively static equilibrium was maintained in social relationships. The community never had riots, or major periods of tensions. There were some "bad niggers," and "bad crackers" but even their "badness" was part of the routine of the system. Hardly anyone ever got put in jail. The community was a "sleepy little place of sleepy little people."

Change, however, did come to this community. Men who had grown up in the community found it rapidly becoming an alien world in which many had no place. For some this awareness came quite

suddenly, as it had for a man who had passed by me one day along a paved highway which passed through this community.

The man sitting astride a mule appeared docile and weather-worn, his mule grayish, old and decrepit. Both reflected the small worlds of mules and men in a world where mules and men, each teamed to the other had labored since the very beginnings when the plow was first put to the soil in this community.

The man and the mule were part of a system that had called cotton, king. The symbol of this system, it seemed, had been pairs of hands. Hands gripping wooden plows and hoes. Hands picking fleecy white fluffs of cotton from opening bolls. Against the horizons, stood cotton gins. They had been the lone signs of modern technology in production. This day, this man with cotton habits, cotton hands, a low cotton mentality, and a cotton-plowing mule had learned that he and his mule were expendable.

Five tractor driven combines harvested clover seeds in fields along side the road on which the man and his mule moved. Thousands of acres which were only a few years before white with cotton now were carpets of red of crimson clover in bloom. The road passed through a cotton plantation with tractors, flameweeders and mechanical cotton pickers. Now acres of cotton were planted, cultivated, and harvested without human hands touching it until the cotton was taken off the baling rack. As revolutionary as these changes were, even more noticeable were the evidences of cattle marketing barns, the milking sheds, the cattle fences, and the hundreds of herds of beef cattle and dairy cows grazing on lands formerly producing cotton.

The few houses of the old order yet left standing in the fields no longer housed people, but stored hay instead. At times one observed only chimneys standing in the fields like grave markers for the era when tenant shacks with cotton growing up to the door had characterized such rural scenes ad infinitum. Churches which served this passing agricultural population were dead or dying. Old associations had lost their membership. Persons who had gone and those who yet remained, ill-equipped were caught up in the throes of change.

(B)

With the coming of cattle and the instruments of modern mechanized agriculture, the interpersonal relationships between Whites and Negroes experienced strains.

Cattle production involved a greater cash outlay than had cotton. A different kind of knowledge was required. Children ceased to be a labor or production asset. Profit became more of a matter of immediate concern. Whites were heard to remark that one white-faced bull on his place was worth more than 40 blackfaced Negroes. A cotton plantation farm turned dairy farm could be handled by one married couple looking after 100 cows and provide a gross receipt of $3,000 a month. Workers were to be paid wages. The old "furnishing" relationships of the plantation store were now burdensome to the plantation owner, now cattle rancher and dairyman. The old Negro mother with lots of children or even the old Negro father who had "a big gang of a family" had lost their bargaining position and importance. The young adult without children was in the better competitive niche.

The community's world of cotton and plantations came nearer its end with the opening of the stockyards. Plans were for a gala day, with barbecues and a visit from the Secretary of Agriculture. The reluctance of the past to give way to the new seemed to be symbolized by drizzling rain and skies so cloudy that the shiny new aluminum roof of the stockyard barn was cloaked with only faint glitter. Yet thousands of people, on foot, in cars, trucks, wagons, and on horseback made their way through the dampness to watch the truck loads of cattle and hogs drive up to the chutes. The drone of hoof beats and the constant mooing of stock made human voices inaudible. The opening of the stockyear began with the presentation of sacks of flour, electric irons, etc., to holders of tickets, which merchants of the town had given with recent purchases.

Negroes could be heard mumbling, "Know they aren't going to give no Negro nothing." Seats had been provided for Whites, but Negroes, after entering the barn at a separate "colored" door, had to stand on some boards up and above the cattle stalls. One Negro did win an electric lamp, but ironically he had no electricity in his home.

No Negro was encouraged or invited to buy stock in the stockyards' association. The view, by many Negroes of the opening of the stockyard was reflected in comments, "Just another way that these White Folks is rigging up to take advantage of colored folks." Many expected the stockyard venture to collapse, saying, "Hasn't nothing new ever come here yet and stayed alive."

(c)

Now, the increasing impersonal relationships which accompany alterations in the economy, and as a result of forces which break down the community's former isolation and move it more into contact with the ways of urban civilization, the familiar world is now becoming an alien world. The Negro's consciousness of himself increases and more areas of his life are characterized by anxieties.

When he looks at his own group, he tends to be critical. The Negro community does not feel that it really has any leaders. The prerogatives of dominance and influence that inhere in designated roles and institutional offices are recognized as being expressed by certain persons, but the community does not see its preachers, teachers, businessmen, agricultural agents, and school supervisors as coming up to their expectations of what a leader in the Negro community should be. The two main criticisms leveled at such persons are:

1. They do not have any "backbone", and are afraid "to put the Negroes up to anything good" unless they feel that the white people will not mind. The only action they initiate in the Negro community is that required by white directives.

2. Those who are independent enough financially to have "some backbone" are all out for themselves.

"The biggest trouble around here is we haven't got no leaders. That is leaders who are not all out for themselves, or who is stout enough and willing enough to tell the Whites what the Negro needs around here."

The phrase "stout enough" refers to persons who "handle their own business" and who have accumulated enough money and wealth to not be dependent upon Whites so that they need not play roles of "white folks' niggers."

Part of the reason why the Negro community tolerates its leadership is a reflection of the pressures of its interaction with the white world. The community recognizes the pursuit of self interest as being a survival value:

"Brother professor, let me tell you one thing, and this comes from Paul in the book of the bread of life. And Paul says, that when you is among wise men, speak like a wise man. When you is among fools, speak like a fool. And I'm adding one to it, when you want to be wise yourself, whether you is talking to fools or wise men, speak like a fool. And let me tell you one thing, whenever you speaking to Negroes in the south living under the White Folks like we is, it's always best to speak like a fool who is among fools. The folks will like you just as much. And I'm tell you there's bank accounts and real estate in acting that way."

Most of the Negro leaders in the community are not nearly so candid, and are not able to recognize the operation of the values expressed above in themselves, but they see them very clearly in others. Each individual will contrast himself with the rest by saying:

"I'm not like some folks here out to get all the money I can." One would think that where the ratio of leaders to the mass of the population is so exceedingly small that there would be no competition among persons of influence. Yet informants say that this is not the case.

"The trouble here is that each Negro who's kind of a leader has a separate following. The preacher used to have him a little group, but they left him and has gone up to Fess Jones so that now he's got a bigger group. Then Sam's got a group. Tom's got a group. And there's a streak of jealousy cause Will's got the biggest group." All the Negro leaders within the community are devaluated by one another:

"X really would have been a leader, but his morals got so bad that there's just nothing to him. J is not friendly enough to carry much of the public with him. None of the ministers line up with nobody else's program or anything for the good of the people. Folks that you think ought to be leaders, just ain't nothing to them. One of the little old preachers come in here that you'd expect to be something, and he went out last weekend with a school teacher, and didn't even get back in time to preach. Long as he has been here, he has never been one to set the colored up to anything that was good for them, if he figured the Whites wouldn't like it. X wants me to help him put over his program. All he wants is power, and there's nothing in it for me to help him get it. I'm one of the most civic minded Negroes round here, but if Y is having anything to do with the lead of it, that mean I'm left out of the effort. He's nothing but an exploiter. The more securely established persons think of themselves as 'race men'. I'm race conscious and for the black man. I was born a black man. The black man helped me to get up where I am. And I'm going to die a black. Oftentimes, being a 'race man' in a black-belt plantation community may be in reality only a myth, but the

crucial factor is that other Negroes define the persons as being 'a man who feels the Negro's cause."

(D)

Part of the problem is that the Negro is noticing more of the discrepencies between what is, and what he thinks ought to be. The leadership lacks skills in effectuating Negro aspirations and is itself torn by internal discords. In one instance, for years Negroes had been dying themselves and watching their children die, attributing ill health simply to God's will. Now they feel that doctors can offset this. They wanted to bring a Negro doctor into the community, and were prepared to grant $2,500 to his establishment, when certain limiting dilemmas arose. There was some questions as to whether a Negro pharmacist would be needed, because of fears that the white druggist might attempt to discredit a Negro doctor by putting poison in precriptions. Other questions centered around whether they should operate independent of Whites, or should they go and tell the Whites and try to get the Whites to help. The latter framework was the safest, but then nobody knew how the Whites might take it, if dissatisfaction with the way the white doctors were treating Negroes was offered as reasons justifying their desire for a Negro doctor in the community. Also since the very topmost functionaires in the Negro community did not cooperate; the community could not expect any joint endorsement by the community's leaders. The money was finally raised, but the plan failed because none of the leadership wanted it to be known publically that they were having anything to do with it. Everyone was afraid to try to find out if they could interest a Negro doctor in coming.

Another instance when the Negro was confused as to how the White people might regard a move in his own self interest can be seen in the following. The local supply of fertilizer was very limited. Whites, especially the large plantation owners met the problem by buying fertilizer in carload lots, and exercising the privilege of taking over all local stocks. In terms of his developing conception of himself, the Negro saw in the purchase of carloads of fertilizer a solution to their problem. The Negro landowners had been complaining about not being able to get commercial fertilizer. They learned however, that they too, as a group, could buy fertilizer in a distant city in a carload lot. In the same way as the large planters. But the dealer in the distant city had informed them. "I don't know how Uncle John, the local white fertilizer dealer down there, would like it if a bunch of Negroes brought a carload of fertilizer in there." Such action would have been outside the framework or the ways in which Negroes traditionally solved their problems. They began to wonder what it would mean if they got the fertilizer, but did not continue to have access to other things which they needed. At a meeting to discuss this problem, most of the talking was done in the form of folk tales. These tales subtly revealed a world of inner ambiguities and contradictions, permeated and dominated by fears. The tales told of a "strange friendship" in which black men, who were barely subsisting on barren hillsides, would rather take a chance on not making any kind of crop than risk the possibility of displeasing whites. One of the tales was as follows:

"A white woman was combing her hair, and as she ran the comb through her hair, she sang 'Nearer my God to Thee'. When she started singing with the comb parting her hair at the top of her head, she would reach the end strand of her hair by the time she got to the last word in the song. The Negro maid used to be standing there looking at the white woman combing her hair, and one day she decided she was going to try to do the same thing. She tried to do it, and she ran out of hair before she finished the word 'Nearer... .

Basically, these Negroes were afraid of white men, and they were poor men with no money in an economy which was increasingly demanding greater expenditures if one were to adjust adequately to changes. The fact is for the total Negro community, all segments are under going the impact of new influences.

Tenants who thought that they could stay on the plantations till they died saw finally that they could not. They had not anticipated overlord's preferences for "white-faced Herefords". Tenants who were schooled in the tradition that they could go the plantation commissary and get "advanced" not only seed for planting, "fat back and corn meal" for eating, and everything from "baby shoes to tacks for your coffin when you were dead", find that now nobody wants to "advance nothing". Owners even in poverty felt secure "because the land is mine," find that it is "no consequence when you own one hundred acres sitting in the middle of a white landlord's 30,000 acre ranch. The "having of no money" to pay taxes and debts became worse because the money had to be borrowed from an impersonal bank. His children wanted to go to school. The family was ashamed

of the old house. A day laborer, if successful would earn more annually than a poor owner. The community was becoming inhabited by a "new kind of white man". All Negroes are less immune to getting arrested and put in jail. The relationships between an individual Negro and an individual white are being replaced by many more "orders" coming down through the Negro school teacher, the Negro county agricultural agent, and other representatives of federal, county government officialdom. With each change of the agricultural season fewer Negroes remain as farmers. In the realm of Negro business, heavily commercialized white urban firms are taking over "even the burying of the dead".

(E)

The personal ties which have traditionally characterized Negro-white relationships are evidences of the inconsistencies in the society. The social definitions of what white and Negro relations should be, i.e., the patterns of the society's orientations, are not consistent with what individual personalities do, or what the behavior of the society is.

When the society is in transition, obviously, there is a change in both the orientation of the society and the patterns of personal behavior. But since much of the interaction between whites and Negroes has occurred outside institutional structures, the pattern of personal behavior is likely to change more rapidly than is the orientation of the culture. Circumstances reducing the access of whites and Negroes to each other, decreasing the extensiveness of personal relationships are more a part of the present situation than

forces altering white supremacist attitudes. In this process there will be less and less opportunity for the effects of white dominance to be tempered by personal loyalties.

Some of the Negroes of the community feel that whites are intentionally trying to reduce the arena of personal loyalties through the use of sponsored Negro leadership. They think that when a particular Negro is "set up by whites" there is the idea of not only his general usefulness to the white community, but that he serve a more positive function for the individual white which is in keeping with the changing nature of the relationships between the two groups. In the absences of the sponsored leader, the number of involvements and obligations that an individual white might have with Negroes requiring individual favors would be unlimited. But with the sponsored leader, the number of involvements and correspondingly the number of individual obligations are minimized. This serves to divorce the Negro community further from the white community, and to increase the arenas of anxieties. Once when the Negro principals and teachers were ordered to support the white superintendent of schools, with his "order" being communicated through the Negro supervisor, certain teachers felt that if the superintendent really wanted them to do something in his behalf, he should have made the request personally.

"By getting her to get us to do things, he doesn't have to be obligated to us. He is only obligated to her. If I'm going to do him a favor, it's got to be so he'll feel obligated to me. He can't deal with me through somebody else."

(F)

Whereas the Negro is experiencing a reduction in the arenas of inter-personal individual contacts with whites, he is at the same time becoming aware of a greater wave of formal law than he has ever known before. The organization of authority is becoming more institutionalized. In the town, for the town and the country Negro, informal law is becoming formal law. In 1952, the policeman semireverently referred to as Mr. Win was removed from his post. He was more a symbol, than really the law, for he seldom went into the Negro section and largely walked along the main street. Hardly anyone ever got put in jail, because his first approach was to send a drunken person home. He knew the "good niggers" and the rigidity of his enforcement of the law was more determined by personal concept than by the rightness or wrongness of certain acts. Early in 1947, this person was replaced by three young policemen, formerly "poor white trash", who were "foreigners" to the peculiar circumstances of relationships which existed between certain types, classes, groups of Negroes and whites. They were the avant garde of an experiment in new ways of controlling Negro behavior. The symbol of their approach was the drawn gun and the first week they arrested most of the Negroes who had been immune to arrest. They would walk up to a man, in many instances from behind, have their pistols already drawn, tell the "boy to wait, that they wanted to talk with him". At the particular moment, the person may have been violating no sanction of the community other than walking down the street, and feeling that he was a "man". He would be searched immediately, and often released. A fist fight

was settled by the policemen shooting the offenders first, and then asking questions. At other times arrests were made by walking up behind the person and hitting him over the head with night stick. The pool rooms, the barbershops, cafes, and dance joints in the Negro sections were invaded by the policemen making raids here and there. On Saturdays, Negroes were told to "move along" and not stand and congregate in front of the stores. This was an affront to the rural folkways of persons who came to town to shop a little bit and gossip a lot. Also there was an increased emphasis on the ceremonials of "yes sir" and "no sir".

Over a short period, Negroes became more acutely conscious of their status in the community than previously. The Negroes began to feel that the "white folks don't wnat us in town", and an unplanned organized boycott of the town resulted. Some planters let Negroes on their plantations use trucks to go to other nearby small towns to trade. Other Negroes not on plantations traded elsewhere. Store sales declined considerably, and on Saturdays in the abandoned stores, clerks who usually were busy "barking" at Negroes had time on their hands. The three policemen were removed, a new policeman was hired and was given a new police car in which to ride. The law, though not remaining as harsh, at least became motorized.

The effects of these changing orientations on personal lives and individual expectations are clearly revealed in the following account. Will Buggers, a sixty year old Negro, whose relationships with whites were initiated in the old order states:

"It used to be that a nigger didn't hardly get put in jail excepting for the convenience of the white folks. Like when they needing labor on the plantations, and they arrest you and a man come up there and buy your fine out, and then he work you as long as he wants to. And another thing, when they built that new jail, and all of them other county buildings they put enough niggers in jail to pay for it. But now they arrest you whether they got anything on foot or not. I guess this is a different day. I guess them other days belong to the time when a nigger could believe a white man if he told him, 'you can stay with me as long as you live.'

"I guess it must be just a change in the kinds of folks we got here now. I used to know all the white families around town, real well. Me and their boys just about growed up together. But now lots of them are dead, and their children have gone away. I remember the first time I got put in jail. It was for fighting on the street. My girl and her husband come got in a ruckus and he blacked her eye. He came up to me, and I crossed him with a short cut in the chest, and knocked him clean off the sidewalk without him touching the ground till he landed in the street. The policeman rested me and took me to the caliboose. I sent word to the man that used to be the old mayor. He was from one of the old white families. I say Mr. Glen you remember when us was boys, and how we come up and fought with one another. You remember how when I used to could call you by your first name and now I have to put a handle on it, while you still calls me by mine. Now what would you do if some man took your youngun and beat her all up. He say, why I'd kill the bastard.

I say, I didn't do that, I just pushed him once. He laughed and said, aw hell I'll get you out, and asked me did I want any supper. I didn't pay one dime to get out. He did the same thing, when I got a ticket for parking my car in the same place too long. But it's mighty hard to get anything like that done now.

"These little old highway patrols they got now, they don't know you. I was driving along the highway one day, and one of them come wheezing up to me. I pulled over and he said, 'You not going to get out?' I told him that all I understands about what you do when the sireens blow is that you supposed to stop. There's nothing about no sireen that say 'Get out!' He say, 'Come on get out anyway.' He started sniffing all around, and asking me if I was drunk. He said that he saw me cross the yellow highway line. I told him, man didn't you see them children all dressed up in their sunday clothes? They was walking along side that puddle of water. So just to stay on my side of the yellow line, I got to just splash them children up because I could? Man I'm a preacher, and I got to be on bout my Father's business. He looked at me and said, 'Didn't know you was a preacher.'"

The Negro is spoken to as a group by whites more now than ever before. The appeals often sincerely made, have just the opposite of the intended effect. At a Race Relations program sponsored by the Negro Methodist Church on Race Relations Sunday, a representative of the traditional authority structure told the Negroes:

"There is no point in your being concerned about all this racial question. Because as you know, we don't need to think about no race problem here. I know all of you and you know me. Old mammy

Lucy Stevens looked after me when I was little. And Ben Denny used to go with me hunting and fishing, when I was growing up. And we always got along fine.

"We don't want anybody coming in here stirring up nothing. Like a few smart people ganging up together. Think about these things the way we look at it. You know that if you do the right thing you will get along fine.

"The main thing you need is not voting, but education. Education is the thing. Lot of you don't want an education. You'll start reading, and get sleepy. Then you'll throw the book out the window. We are doing everything we can to get you education. The main thing is don't let them outsiders come down here telling you what to do.

"I don't know why it is, but the white people have been the most advanced in civilization every since the world began. But there are some people in this world, who are not capable of controlling themselves. All the time, I am asking Denny if he knows some of you all that wants a job. You could have a job all your life with me if you would work hard and not drink too much.

"Look at the people in China with not even tin roofs over their heads, and you've got better houses than they have. And you are getting along better, and have more food than lots of them over there. You are living in the best country in all the world. All Europe and Asia has to be getting money and food from us over here. The main thing for you to do is to get more education. And it seems that people not able to think for themselves, just have to be led. Now, for my final word. I say count your blessings."

The amens were plentiful, yet a considerable number of persons were amused, and others were quite indignant. In general they commented, "You know we must have these white folks worried."

On the occasion of a "Good Will Day" a local white lady who was a member of the Southern Regional Council wanted to express to the Negro women of the community her "spirit of good will". She got her maid to get some Negro women to be present for a program. This was resented by some Negro women, yet a considerable number of them came to the meeting which was held at a Negro church on a week day afternoon. The first white person appearing on the program was a young white girl preparing to go to Africa to "Christianize the heathen souls". Her pronouncements of being so filled with the Bible that she just had to spread the gospel all over the world seemed trite and jingoistic, though she spoke with apparently sincere convictions. The next speaker, the sponsor of the program, began her speech in a gracious, genteel and human way, but she did not need to say more after her opening words, "My mammy was a Methodist, and my mother was Presbyterian..." A white minister followed, and while he stood, he told all "about how I love nigras..."

"I even had some come over to my house one day to work. And I really treated them good. But after they had left, I looked in my closets and I noticed that all of my BVD's were gone, and some of my shirts..."

The Negroes sensed that he was painting a stereotype, and the extent to which he was so doing made even the whites wince. After several other speakers of the same order, various ones of the Negro

women arose to thank "the good white women for such good words and things." There were five white persons present; all of whom could have classified as coming from the upper class in the community. They shook hands with the Negroes. When the Negroes were on the way home, there was disagreement among them. Some felt that the program had served a good purpose, while others felt that "It wasn't nothing." A few persons joked, "Oh, my didn't we fool them." But they could not be sure that they had "fooled" the whites by acting like they sanctioned all that was said, because "even with shaking hands," the whites still did not recognize them to be equals.

In the spring of 1950 a Bankers Association and Chamber of Commerce called a meeting of all the Negro leaders in agriculture to make plans for an all Negro Dairy Calf Show to be held in the fall. Even though the year was 1950, the occasion resembled one in 1860 where all the Negro lead men on the plantation were called to the "Big House" for the overlord to tell them what he expected them to do in getting the general field hands to follow through on a program the planter deemed worthwhile. The program, in this instance, was indeed a worthy one aimed at encouraging more Negroes to go into dairying.

"Our motive ain't nothing but good ones. I'm just sick and tired of hearing all this talk about civil rights. And about the nigger in the South being opporessed, and being down under. We always been doing things for the nigger. Darkies haven't been in nothing but the cotton field all their life, and now we trying to get them out. "

The whites planned the nature of the program and every activity. The only part the Negroes had in the meeting was when they were asked as to how many animals they could bring to participate in

the show. During the entire meeting, the word Negro was never used. It was either "darky", "boy", "nigger", or "nigra". One of the white speakers in presenting his instructions to the Negroes began by saying:

"I want you all to get them boys to have their calves well groomed. Get some clippers and have them trim the animals. Polish the horns. I knew one of youall's group, Dr. Lum who used to be head of the nigger extension work. I was telling Dr. Lum about doing something, and I told him, 'Doctor, I've always heard that a nigger show can sing and he show will steal.' And he told me, 'I don't know, but I do know I show can't sing.'"

After the meeting, the feeling among the Negroes was revealed rather candidly by one person who told a joke about a poor white family that had never owned a slave. He said:

"After much sacrifice, these white folks finally bought a slave. The father brought the slave home at night, and put him in the barn with the other animals. His little boy asked him, 'Daddy, what's a slave?' To which the father replied, 'Oh a slave is nothing but a nigger.' The curiosity of the little boy was not satisfied, so he decided to go out to the barn to find out what a 'nigger' was. He looked into the barn through the cracks, but he couldn't see anything...For some reason, he said 'Hi', and the slave answered back, 'Hi'. He rushed back into the house, shouting 'Daddy, Daddy, I know one thing. A nigger is not a dog, or cat, mule or a hog. A nigger is a man.'"

From the point of the views of the Negroes at the meeting, these whites sponsoring the good will effort had not come to the

awareness that regardless of whatever else a "nigger" might be, he was a man. There were heated stiff arguments and bitterness over why no one at the meeting had risen to tell these men that "Negroes resent being referred to as darkies."

In looking at the patterns of Negro expectancies of whites, one can note that Negroes expect whites to try to have "pet Negroes" as one way of avoiding the necessity of admitting that the Negro is a man, by either sponsoring favored Negroes or by being paternalistic. The Negro community is more critical of the Negro who has risen upward and continues to be a pet Negro, than they are of the Negro who is still a folk Negro. In general there is developing a feeling that Negroes should not be white folks pets. At the other extreme, there is the core feeling of Negroes expecting that "white people are always out to get you." The expectancies that Negroes have of whites constitute polarities in the framework of which there exists a "strange kind of friendship." The Negro does not want to be a pet Negro, but he is afraid not to act like a pet Negro.

In their relationships, neither whites nor Negroes are prepared to enter into the spirit and demands of the emergent order. The dilemmas resulting from the curious mixture of old persisting patterns, and the requisite pressures of a developing economy intensify anxieties. In the past, the Negro was able to survive because there was a continuing tendency for the legally defined relationship to remain one thing, with the moral order of expectations and obligations continuing to be quite another. However, with the organization of authority becoming moreinstitutionalized and less personal, the

strength of the moral order is weakened and areas of personal expectations and obligations become confused. The problem is when the Negro attempts to follow the routine of the past, he finds that he is not known. When he attempts to do things which are new, like voting, he likewise finds that he is not known. After fifty years of residence in the community, a Negro farmer in his efforts to register to vote had to search to find someone white who would admit that they knew him. Upon going to the courthouse to register, the clerk asked, "Well Sam, what do you want?" "Mr. Green, I've decided that I would like to register to vote." "Sam, where'd you get that fool notion in your head?" "I understand that as a citizen, a property owner, and as a veteran of World War I, that voting was one of my rights." The clerk shoved some papers at him, saying "Before I can register you, you've got to get somebody to identify you." "Well, you've known me all of my life." The registrar replied quite angrily, "No I don't know you. I don't know nothing about you. Go and get out of here and get somebody to identify you." He had to find somebody "white" who knew him. Quite surprised, the Negro farmer went out on the street to find somebody white who would admit in this circumstance that they knew him. As he moved down the street, he asked several white persons to identify him. First, they said "Oh sure, for what?" When he explained that it was because he wanted to register to vote, the reply was generally, "Think you'd better get someone else."

Here, there has been an attempt to introduce the reader to the particular "personal secrets" of a rural Negro community; the things which give meaning to life; the things which make for joy or sorrow; the things which make living unbearable or give hope to life.

To the extent that the documentation has revealed some dimension of that which is true about the process of race relations that has relevance for War on Poverty efforts, the exercise has served its purpose.

PART III

OBSERVATIONS ON

CURRENT WAR ON POVERTY EFFORTS

Chapter 10. An Overall View

The President urges We the People of the United States of America to become The Great Society. Wherein, how, and by doing what does the already Great Nation, the most powerful nation, and the wealthiest nation in the world become the Great Society? The rhetoric of a new administration? A pious hope? A millineum? A challenge meriting the most dedicated thoughtful concern and imaginative effort of all Americans? The majority of Americans say "Yes". Yet many citizens, whether looking inwardly at the domestic scene or outwardly toward the nature of the nation's involvement with things foreign, see the answer yet dimly as to wherein, how, and by doing what does the great nation become the great society.

The American public knows that the nation's experience in seeking to insure the well being of its citizens is unequalled by any country in the world. They know that it is more a part of the cultural esprit of the nation (than elsewhere) to emphasize and place high value upon success. Nowhere on the globe is there wider evidence of the rewards crowning individual aspiration and effort. Nowhere has the general population experienced greater achievement. Similarly, when looking out on the whole panorama of developed as well as developing nations, the American, perhaps, feels that in the whole history of mankind, no nation has been more generous than his in seeking to promote the general well being for mankind everywhere.

Doubter or believer that the concept of the Great Society remains yet to be defined, the citizens of the United States have an acute consciousness that all at home and abroad is not well. There is yet more to do.

On the domestic scene, the nation is concerned with race relations, crime, unemployment, the blight of cities, the creeping ugliness of the physical domain of rivers now polluted and eroded lands wastefully exploited. Occupying the nation's attention as never before is the plight of its less fortunate members of society: the ill-fed, the ill-clothed, the ill-housed, and the ill-motivated residing in rural and urban pockets of poverty.

Some see the profusion of domestic legislation on Civil Rights, Voting, the War on Poverty, the War on Crime, the Housing bill, the Education bill, Medicare, and the Provisions for Natural Beauty, as being within themselves, the blueprint of the Great Society. These would see it as principally an admixture of certain ingredients. Such individuals, with an"instinct for solutions", have ways of giving a simple coloring to very complex problems. They operate on a level of expectation that We the People "can fix everything" by a particular date. They would have doubts about a goal not yet defined as achievable in a time span corresponding with the Nation's goal of putting a man on the moon by 1970.

Other persons see the profusion of current efforts on the domestic scene simply as the recognition of the need to do more about domestic problems. More correctly, it is assumed, the willingness to do more and to make domestic problems figure more largely in our preoccupations, are American reactions to the frustrations felt over U.S. efforts at promoting well being abroad. The "ungratefulness" of the Sukarno's, the Nasser's, the NKruhmah's or even the behavior of a DeGaulle lowered levels of expectations in public minds about the kinds of results likely to follow expenditures of American bounty

abroad. Now in "looking homeward angel", the society rationalizes that national bounty can best be spent at home. Here again it would appear a simple coloring is being given to a very complex problem.

(A)

The Great Society concept recognizes the continuously changing dimensions and ordering of complexities, many of which were completely unforeseen a decade ago and perhaps now are beyond our imaginings. Within the decades to come, a great nation must discover a"New World" in social problem management skills so as to be capable of insuring the maximum well being for its own citizens, and to project meaningfully and effectively beyond its shores, conditions for human well being compatible with a peaceful world order. Thus the concept of the Great Society is not a result. It is essentially a process.

Legislative programs of the current Administration are not a blueprint of the Great Society. Rather the programs are means by which the nation can rid itself, or more correctly set in motion processes by which all impediments to progress are continually eliminated. A world without problems, No. A nation constantly in the process of becoming, Yes.

The concept of the Great Society is one which the United States can share with the rest of the world. It does not depend upon the packaging of certain elements in a particular way. It is neither exclusively inward looking or outward looking. It neither rules out individual initiative, nor in the case of the United States, assures every citizen that it will make of him a doctor, lawyer, merchant, baker, or candlestick maker. It does offer a way of life through which

a society sets in motion processes by which a nation rids itself of the impedimenta which wast its human and natural resources, which limit the benefits of the society being shared in a manner less than that which the nation is capable.

It is a kind of society which seeks to assure that the opportunity for a person having good housing will neither be the lack of sufficient adequate housing, inability to pay for housing, nor the color of skin, race, belief, or national origin. It says that the impediments to a person enjoying life and property will not be the risk of vandalism, the effects of crime, the ugliness of places of natural beauty or their inaccessibility. It is a kind of society in which the impediments to national growth are neither the poor quality of the education that its citizens receive, or the inability of the nations institutions to make the necessary innovations. For all of this there is no blueprint.

Much depends upon the capacity and willingness of the society to innovate. The goals however, are quite achievable. The nation is currently engaged in many efforts at innovation. Some are quiet and unannounced. Others are national in scope.

One of the nationwide experiments in innovation--The War on Poverty--is focused on ills which are not new. The nation's concern, however, is now more immediate and urgent than before. The implications of poverty's ills for the future of the nation are becoming increasingly felt more critically than before. Significant additional inputs of talent are now involved in finding solutions to the problems, or in asking the relevant questions, out of which solutions to an age old

problem may be found. Should valid solutions to poverty be found, they will have relevance for both our domestic and foreign efforts.

(B)

Americans have come to know that the nation wages its War on Poverty in many ways. There is hardly any domestic program that now operates or that is being proposed that does not conceivably bear directly or indirectly upon the problem of poverty even when such programs serve the total needs of the American society. In addition to the host of individuals normally involved in working with the poor and in the pockets of poverty, a whole host of person--lawyers, educators, administrators, business officials, writers, publicists--whose prior concerns are not likely to have been focused on poverty per se, now become poverty workers. Moreover, teachers in model schools, social workers in demonstration areas, forest rangers in rural job corps camps, were now in special ways focused on problems of poverty. Certainly one of the more specific accomplishments of the launching of the War on Poverty to date lies in the fact that more so than ever before in the history of the nation, more high quality talent is now engaged in thinking about the problems of poverty and organizing programs aimed to resolve it.

The current emphasis on problems of poverty, relates to a trend of increasing complexities in modern society. The rapidity with which dislocations and malfunctions within a society can become so serious and aggravated in such relatively short spans of time, means that a nation in ignoring or in failing to invest significantly in finding solutions to its societal and human problems does so at its

own peril. The "doing of things" within a society as complex as our own, with its innumerable variables, only heightens the problem of sensing with certainty the appropriateness of actions. The relationships which need to be known are so numerous and extensive as to require techniques of computerized analyses. The inventiveness of the American mind is now in greater amounts including the design of social innovations as an exciting and necessary concern.

Certainly, the rapidity with which the Office of Economic Opportunity set up its operation, and approves projects of anti-poverty measures has been impressive. This has meant that a considerable amount of the program's doctrine yet lies in various people's heads. The intensity of effort and what would appear to be enthusiastic devotion hints at a rather high level of commitment about what they are doing for many persons. Upon occasions of visiting an office, it appeared to have almost been a crime to take someone's time to ask a question about what they were doing, so frenetic was the activity. In one instance the pressures of organization was so great that the only moment a worker appeared to suggest that he could spare time to tell me about what he was doing was between hurried bites on a sandwich at a delayed lunch time. Another was so busy that instead of affording an appointment to discuss his program, he could only spend about two minutes to tell me about it over the telephone. To avoid complete frustration in attempts at understanding the program, I have depended very heavily on press releases, newspaper accounts, and other documentation. Also I followed quite literally the advice of one person, who suggested that if I really wanted to understand what the program was all about, I should concentrate upon seeing it in action in various communities. This I did do!

One can appreciate the deliberate speed and pressures under which people work. It is clearly evident that the launching of anti-poverty programs on a national scale is first and all a tremendous organizational effort even for an advanced society like our own. Certainly, if in the overseas situation I ever become prone to be impatient about not having access to host country government officials, I shall be reminded of the difficulties at home.

More specifically, the American people are coming to know that the War on Poverty means the Job Corps, the Work-Training Program, the Work-Study Program, the Community Action Programs. It means the VISTA Volunteers, Adult Basic Education Program, the Special Programs to Combat Poverty in Rural Areas, Assistance for Migrant Agricultural Workers and Their Families, an Employment and Investment Incentive Porgram, and a Work-Experience Program.

News about what the War on Poverty is and what the War on Poverty does or must yet do has come to have more direct meaning to communities through the variety of organizations which have been established across the nation to coordinate War on Poverty programs at the local level. Some 400 local anti-poverty programs in cities, rural areas, Indian Reservations, farm counties, and states have received funds to plan, to organize, and to implement programs that they have developed. Many of the communities will be aided by the over 3,500 VISTA Volunteers sent to serve in communities to work with the poor in activities where their special kind of devotion and skills are needed. Some 125,000 teen agers have been enrolled in Neighborhood

Youth Corps Centers. Small business activities have been stimulated by up to $5 million dollars in loans. The heads of households of approximately 6,000 families on welfare with some 25,000 children are getting work experience and training to become breadwinners. As of June, 25,000 youngsters will have begun their training in Job Corps Centers across the nation.

The Office of Economic Activity has prided itself upon the speed with which programs have been launched. A press release of December 9, 1964, after some 64 days in business announced: "in the first fifty days, working around and against the clock, we announced the first 119 grants establishing Job Corps Centers, funding local anti-poverty programs, launching work training programs for families receiving public assistance, initiating a Neighborhood Job Corps for youth who were out of school and out of work...and more." The press release for March 1, 1965 continued to report in the same vein: "Today the War Against Poverty has been in business for 144 days, just short of five months. And these are the results:...One thousand American communities have organized themselves into community action groups...over 500 of these have sent their ideas and plans to Washington and we have already provided financial support to 150 such local communities. By June, the total will exceed one thousand. And these will cover every city with a population of more than 50,000 in the entire U.S.A."

(c)

As even critics of the program observe, it is rather phenomenal that this much of "anything" got organized so rapidly. It was a management feat for the War on Poverty program to acquire such

an extensive organizational form in such a short time. Yet persons who are sympathetic to the program including officials of the Office of Economic Opportunity itself, as well as the program's critics do recognize that these accomplishments, as noteworthy as they are, do not uniformly mean the same thing as progress in eliminating poverty across the nation.

Thereis hardly a community across the nation that does not have its committee or organization to coordinate War on Poverty programs. Quite interestingly the names of the organizations either incorporate "poverty", "opportunity", "progress", "development", etc. in their titles or otherwise communicate their relationship to War on Poverty activities. To illustrate, there are: Detroit's Total Action Against Poverty, New Haven's Community Progress, Inc., Alabama's Advisory Committee for Economic Opportunity, Trenton's United Progress, Inc. Also there are the organizational titles which emphasize action: Operation Breakthrough, Inc; Total Community Action, Inc; Community Development, Inc. (CAN DO).

Though organizational titles portend unity and action, always this is not the fact. This is not necessarily because anyone wills it so. At times the peculiarities of state laws prove to be an impediment. Problems of segregation remain issues and roots of potential conflict. Participation of the poor in the planning process remains a thorny problem. There is the question also whether maximizing the participation of the poor excludes all other elements of the community or minority groups. The problem of coordination within other agencies and between other groups, brings the program into conflict, with the vested interest of job holders.

To surmount the problems of rigidities and potential conflict and to inspire a sense that in spite of difficulties solid achievement is possible, the War on Poverty administrators employ many concepts. The importance of action is emphasized with constant reminders that the War on Poverty is a "battle against time." Responsibility is urged upon communities by reminders that the "War" will not be won in Washington, but in communities throughout the nation. In recognition of the handicaps of adequate availabilities of skilled personnel, directors of community action are advised that the urgency to action is so immediate that programs can not wait to train enough doctors, social workers, teachers, lawyers to help every poor person. Decisions can not stand still while answers are being scientifically researched or be examined under the scrutiny of five-year studies about what is best. The "politics of service" and political action in service of the community are seen as alternative devices which have the particular advantage of "mustering the support of the affluent to help the disenfranchised, to enlist the educated to teach the ignorant, to give a bootstrap to the poor so that they can lift themselves to a life of meaning and dignity."

It appears that through a skillful use of concepts, the Office of Economic Opportunity has sought to educate the American society, to heighten awareness, and to target the system of values and creed of the American citizen around the problems of poverty. The affluent are urged to learn from the poor. Perhaps the boldest of the concepts are those which directly and indirectly link that which America proposes to achieve through its War on Poverty programs

to an image of social revolution. Social inventions are seen as doing "for the fabric of human goods and services, what the industrial revolution did for production, transportation, merchandising, and consumption."

(D)

A random sampling of project activities funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity reveals that: experimentation with several approaches simultaneously is encouraged; importance appears to be attached to the development of neighborhood groups and associations, block clubs, community councils as means of mobilizing the energies of the poor.

The following examples of sample project activities show something of the range and variety of efforts that have already been funded. Indications are also made as to whether the activity is being implemented through a private non-profit organization or a public agency.

Case No. 1., A rural private non-profit corporation received a grant for the setting up of home care, day nursery service, youth development, etc. This council has future plans to study ways to remedy poverty conditions, to develop remedial and adult education classes, course in maternal health and prenatal care, a mental health program, and a tutoring program at elementary and high school levels.

Case No. 2., By contrast operates through a Public Agency established by city and the county as a first step toward non-profit, private organization for a metropolitan area. The grant covers the development of programs and the initiating of neighborhood organization.

Priority is to be given to an expansion of existing neighborhood service centers, and to opening other centers in other areas. Seven such centers are planned as both a source of information and a place where residents of the poverty-stricken neighborhoods can play a role in mapping the kinds of programs they need. Some 80 percent of the people employed in the centers will be local residents. The program foresees development of an educational improvement program, vocational training for youth and adults, and as long range targets the provision of health services, legal aid, welfare services, personnel counselling, and homemaking and home management advisory services.

Admittedly the programs described by these two cases may be implemented in decidedly new and imaginative ways, but as to content they both include much that is "old stock". The significant new facet lies principally in the orientation of the programs specifically towards the peoples and the areas that normally benefit least from quality education or other public services commensurate with needs. Such needs existed prior to the launching of the War on Poverty, but which were largely unmet because of inadequate expenditures on development of human resources. Even where cities and rural areas found themselves having to augment their dependency and relief assistance dramatically each year, the school facilities serving such populations have tended to be the worst not only in terms of physical plant but in the quality of teaching that was being provided.

In continuing with our review of sample project activities, the following instances call attention to War on Poverty grants made to states rather than to city or county public or private non-profit

agencies. Funds were granted to a particular state to be used by the state office to furnish technical assistance to communities of the state that desire to plan local anti-poverty campaigns. The State agencies in this instance are to help smaller towns and rural communities by adding the resources of the state planning facilities to local ones. On occasion funds have been granted to states through the device of the interim grant so as to allow the states to proceed immediately in rendering technical assistance to local communities. The total funding needed to actually implement programs which grow out of the technical assistance effort will come later.

Though the American citizen is fully cognizant of the vastness of the nation and recognizes the scale of the War on Poverty program as a national undertaking, he may be prone to think that the activities which have been funded in particular communities to date as having been relatively small. Even when one thinks of the Job Corps Camps that communities come to know, a particular rural camp will consist of 2 to 300 youngsters, with the urban Centers ranging 2 to 3 thousand. Nevertheless, under the War on Poverty program, there are activities of scale in particular communities. The Urban Progress centers, of which one community proposes to develop six are intended to serve 50,000 persons each. In an instance of a different order, the state agency which received funds for the initial expenses of organizing a comprehensive anti-poverty program in 13 counties likewise has a task of considerable scale.

Chapter 11. Unresolved Dilemmas

Any new program faces problems in translating its concepts into action. Questions come to be raised about the validity of concepts, assumptions, the practicalness of the idealism, and at times some may ask whether the exercise is an enlightened or unenlightened effort of attempting to spin ones wheels constructively for what it can really do about solving problems which are the purpose of the exercise in the first place.

Among the dilemmas faced by the War on Poverty, nothing has received more attention than the controversy over the participation of the poor.

Some officials in various communities saw "the well meaning" philosophy of the participation of the poor in the planning of poverty programs as being principally a source of frustration.

Some saw the idea as having become perverted for political purposes by providing an opportunity for every mal-content just and unjust with an opportunity to make public his grievances against individuals or to draw public attention to assumed leadership roles.

Others, recognizing the dilemmas still existed in their minds as to how the wills, wisdom, needs, etc. of the poor could best be channeled into the program, felt that by employing as many of the poor in the actual implementation of programs, that had satisfied the requirements of the Office of Economic Opportunity about participation of the poor. These same persons saw limits in this approach as well as problems because agencies responsible for War on Poverty program operations could not use all the poor needing employment.

The view most generally held by officials was that the Office of Economic Opportunity will have to establish a more meaningful doctrine about the participation of the poor, and discover more meaningful ways in which this can be achieved, in addition to such programs providing employment for representatives of poverty groups. One informant suggested that to date there has been a classic oversimplification of the problem. He cited as an example those who reason: "Find out what the poor regard as their problem. Based upon what the poor cite as their most urgent problems, one should proceed to develop a project incorporating the wisdom of the poor. Then the kind of technical help needed to really set up the kinds of administrative structures required to carry out the project should be called in."

This person felt that the most fundamental participation that the poor needed to acquire was not exclusively on poverty councils. He suggested that most of the clamor and furor about the participation of thepoor in poverty programs, only rarely extended to a clammoring for the participation of the poor in the wider society. Public consciousness as well as the optic of the poor was being misdirected from the real problem.

Certainly the poor and their views need to be represented on poverty councils, but so few of the poverty councils are really operational units. More of the furor, now being directed at poverty councils, according to him really needs to be directed towards the operational institutional arrangements which limit or exclude the participation of the poor. He cited as examples: unions which deny

access to training and employment; firms which are obstensibly equal opportunity employers, but who do discriminate; realtors who gouge the poor through excessive rents or deny housing to certain groups, etc. So limited had been the normal participation of the poor in the wider community life, that many of the poor of Chicago slums for example, had never been down town to the Loop.

Those who were most enthusiastic and optimistic about ways in which the poor can be involved did tend to temper their remarks. They observed that admittedly the planner must not overlook, and indeed he must so structure plans to allow the poor maximum opportunity for the poor to participate. One thing that has become abundantly clear, and which prior to the launching of anti-poverty programs tended to not be recognized, there are many, many things which the poor can do, and do with distinctive talent, devotion and imaginativeness in the carrying out of social programs. There are areas of poverty operations which do not require the skills of professionals. It should be mandatory that talent from amongst poverty's people be employed to carry out these tasks. However, neither the idealist nor should the poor themselves be led to believe that the management of poverty operations do not require skills which the poor do not possess. Similarly, to judge the effectiveness of an anti-poverty operation simply by the number of poor it self-employs is charlantinism.

One person suggested that one of the most readily implementable ways out of the current dilemma about participation of the poor in poverty programs, would be for Poverty Councils of various communities to become vehicles for legitimate expression of protest and dissatisfaction

of the poor. Certainly Poverty Councils should employ whatever numbers of poor people possible in programs. They should be represented as adviaory members on planning boards. Poverty Councils, however, must be "partners in progress" with the poor.

It was pointed out that the poor have to learn how to deal with political authority and how to deal with officials, etc., in ways other than simply as objects of their frustration. The anti-poverty councils, by whatever names they are called in various communities, could officially serve as the bridge between the usually non-participating poor or submerged people of the community and the power structure, public and private officialdom. The anti-poverty councils could then become known to be, officially, the ally of poverty's peoples.

Among the criteria which the Office of Economic Opportunity now has in determining whether an anti-poverty organization shall be regarded as eligible for administering War on Poverty funds, might be added the requirement that such bodies must include in their concept of function that of being the bridge between the poor and officialdom. This idea, in my opinion has considerable merit if orchestrated in meaningful human terms. This is not impossible.

(A)

There are many officials administering war on poverty activities in communities across the nation who regard the inputs of talent, money and national concern as being yet too small for the elimination of poverty in the United States.

One poverty worker sees the variety of anti-poverty programs now operating as being at best, or possibly most optimistically, as

a"band-aid" on a societal cancer. He suggested that there is indeed a lot of lip-service and perhaps a greater intellectual awareness of poverty's people within the American scene than ever before. But, even in spite of the propaganda of calling programs "War on Poverty", it is clearly evident that the total society is not yet mobilizing itself for poverty's eradication. For the great majority of the society, "Business is as usual."

Particularly does he regard "the busines as usual" view to obtain for the proprietary and power relationships that must begin actions. When asked to clarify his views, this official suggested that yet too few communities are yet committed to progress for all their citizens. He cited instances of politicians who continue to use the poverty of certain groups as a way of manipulating political outcomes which they desire.

His views were no less critical about the"disturbing" lack of social consciousness amongst the "so-called elites" amongst the minority groups who create such wide gaps between the poor of their group and themselves, often psychologically much wider than between the poor of such groups and the wider dominant society. The emulative patterns which their more direct association with the poor could generate are not promoted, thus only compounding the frustration of the poor who recognizes no one or comes to know no one like himself who has achieved.

In a wider context, most individuals who commented that too little talent, funds, or national concern were being put into anti-poverty programs, had reference to the rapidity with which poverty now recruits increasingly higher percentages of the population. Their comments, in a

way, indicated that to some extent they were questioning the view as to how anti-poverty programs might more realistically deal with the problem of joblessness.

Some felt that the first step in creating dignity amongst the poor, or in offsetting the rot that makes people die even though they are yet breathing and walking around, is the matter of a job. For the young, and it is the increasingly high in-flow of youths into the labor market and into the ranks of the unemployed, some feel that any job has value that begins to move the individual into the realm of acquiring a work experience.

The problem is, however, that in introducing the individual into a work experience process, this "is at best just like putting a finger against a granite wall." Dislocations are occuring so rapidly that the validity of the job orientation given, may become outmoded even before the individual moves out of the stage of simply gaining work experience into the area of viable skilled employment. This is something like filling the chinks in the wall, but the wall is still there.

(B)

There are individuals, though very few, who raise questions about the doctrine of the multifaceted approach to poverty. They do not deny that poverty wears many faces and has many roots. They argue that unthinking persons take this observation for promoting many tertiary activities, or as an excuse for themselves acting and moving like "whirling dervishes". In short, they suggest that in trying to insure that all the faces of poverty are acted upon at the same time,

one is likely or at least more likely to overlook "the obvious". For example, simply the physical setting in which poverty abounds could serve as a vehicle through which the round and the core of the poverty problem might be attacked. Certainly without substantial changes taking place in the physical settings in which poverty abounds other progress may not really amount to progress. Changes in the physical setting can often be the forces around which one can organize the poor, readily involve the poor, employ the poor, educate the poor.

No doubt the person who raised the issue about the multifaceted approach was intending to be less a pleader for concentrating all programs in some form of physical rehabilitation activity than he was intending to suggest that much is virtuously frivilous, time consuming, and non-productive and may now enter or become components in poverty programs simply under the "magic" of the rationale of the multi-faceted approach. Poverty is not unique in being a "many-sided" thing. So is the process of growth. Growth as well as the elimination of poverty may be frustrated by a rash of disparate activities that do not mutually reinforce or complement one another. Moreover scarce high level talent may have its efforts so diffuse as to minimize its value as "high quality" talent. Where talent is poor, the unthinking and uncritical additions to a "many-sided" approach of management problem is compounded.

In response to the kinds of ideas and problems suggested by the previous paragraph, there are Poverty Workers who feel that one cannot have "too much" activity. Such creates an elan and a social consciousness in the community which really becomes the seeds of progress.

This person saw the poverty activities as being principally catalysts. In launching anti-poverty measures, the main thing is getting started, even if the getting started is simply diagnostic action. One has got to start from something. But, one has to be ready to scrap what one has started, and figuratively look from the other end of the telescope.

The essence of the dilemmas is not that persons lack confidence in what they are doing. Rather, it shows that they are thinking. There is a sensing that the real revolution that is occuring is the urbanization of the world. In the United States, the phenomenon of the megalopolis may change much of our traditional approaches. We already are beginning to see the ways in which the culture of poverty has been acquiring new dimensions. For the young, it is like a hothouse. The child is forced to grow up, become a man or a woman, before he has had a chance to learn how to be a child.

(c)

Most of the programs at the community level seek to be coordinated or interrelated projects for developing human resources.

The most difficult of the problems may not be that of relating themselves to the obvious needs of the poor as much as it is a problem of trying to discover ways in which that which is attempted can really be in interaction with the rather complicated social structures which characterize the mainstreams of community life so that the poor can really break out of their poverty.

Target areas are picked as the face for action, whether they are called neighborhood development areas or go by some other name, programs operate to bring to the poor of these areas a variety of

services and ranging from consumer education, credit unions, neighborhood legal services, public health nursing services, family counselling, pre-school programs literacy training, model schools, housing rehabilitation. In some areas so many services are being proposed that one wonders whether some of poverty's people may now experience a situation promoting almost a kind of schizophrenia of so much being thrown at them they have difficulty in trying to figure out upon which foot they should attempt to dance.

Breaking through the patterning of existing regulations, social or bureaucratic structures may be more formidible than getting the poor to alter their habits, get themselves trained, etc. In spite of the frequent references to the way that welfare programs, as they now operate, penalize or reinforce dependency by not allowing any sort of outside income for the wage earner--even if the wage is insufficient to live in the household. The encouragement that welfare inspections give to households not having a man in the house as a condition for drawing relief, destroys any initiative to earn some wage and thus forfeit relief compensation.

Can the entire battery of new services of youth workers, doctors, welfare workers, housing advisors, lawyers, credit advisors, neighborhood workers, etc. help a person to find some way out of dependency when initiative is penalized?

When there is basically an insufficiency of low rent housing, and when the amount of rent that welfare recipients can pay is below the going price of rents, how does one learn enough, become trained

enough, or become knowledgeable enough to really get himself out of substandard housing?

Allowing for the scale on which some of the pilot efforts must operate by renovating the housing on one block, can it be duplicated fast enough to really make a dent?

The whole problem of jobs, perhaps, is even more complicated, i.e., The task of discovering kinds of jobs for which training may be desirable.

Chapter 12. Lines of Action

Virtually every press release of the Office of Economic Opportunity emphasizes action. The names of the local anti-poverty organizations at the community level across the nation suggest that communities by the thousands have organized for action. Speakers on innumerable occasions in describing activities that have been funded, contracts that have been executed, the involvement of existing agencies or the creation of new ones, speak in dramatic terms of the manoeuvres of battlefield action. The instrument of the War on Poverty program, the Community Action Program, VISTA Volunteers, Job Corps Centers, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Adult Literacy programs, etc., have been described as the field pieces, the heavy artillery, or the ground and air-forces of the campaign to eliminate poverty.

The "doing of anything" on a national scale, as someone suggested is at best a very complicated business. Human beings and the societies into which they have organized themselves have "wills", "feelings of rights", a sense of what constitutes "obligations", traditional thoughts, and customary ideas about the ways in which things should be done. Also communities and individuals have a variety of pre-occupations which may be mutually exclusive. Add to these complexities the vagaries of politics, the trauma of changing race relations scene, and anxieties over a "confusing" international situation, then another dimension of the problem of "doing anything" on a national scale becomes apparent.

The War on Poverty program suffers an additional handicap to easy and simple lines of action. This handicap is at the same time

the program's virtue. Here reference is made to the concept of the many faceted approach which is at the very heart of the nation's strategy in combatting poverty. This approach, even if there were not problems of vested interests of individuals, bureaucracies, and institutions poses not only attitudinal problems which need to be overcome, but also certain management problems which are rather complex. The many faceted approach involves the cooperation of diverse agencies and institutions. Funding may come from several sources as a combined contribution to a single coordinated activity. The charters, legal authorities and powers under which the individual organisms act or are constituted came into being out of their needs as separate distinctive bodies and often have little relevance for the kinds of roles these organizations must play in coordinated efforts. These are handicaps which do not prevent action. They simply necessitate a higher level of organizational and mediation skill, and requires some astuteness or sense of politics of organization. Where these ingredients do exist, operations of scale are possible, and attacks on complex social problems are more likely to be effective.

The concept of the many faceted approach on poverty, takes particular cognizance of national policy goals of high employment, accelerated economic growth, rehabilitation of depressed regional economies, eradication of urban slums, uplifting of depressed rural areas, extending the elasticity of the labor market, increasing educational opportunity, greater employability of youths, meeting the health needs of the aged, training and retraining of the technologically displaced, and adequate social insurance for the aged and disabled. Directly and indirectly they all attack poverty.

It is through the War on Poverty program that certain of these goals are intended to be adapted to local circumstances through a coordinated attack at the local community level. Communities differ in their abilities to participate.

(A)

The opportunity to visit various communities around and across the United States and learn first hand of their experience in launching anti-poverty measures was indeed a very fortunate experience.

Letters had been sent to officials responsible for War on Poverty programs. The letters explained my participation in the Department of State's Seventh Session of the Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy. My interest in learning of the experience of selected American communities in launching anti-poverty measures was described. In calling attention to my own background and past involvement of some 12 years in U.S. Foreign Aid activities in South East Asia and Africa, the Directors of Anti-Poverty programs were told about my anticipation that the domestic experience might have relevance for United States efforts to assist developing nations abroad. My observations were to be focused principally upon lines of action.

I was particularly interested in knowing how communities had come to define their poverty problems. By learning about this process, it was expected that much would become known about the kinds of images that communities had in their minds about Poverty's People. Also it was felt that the kinds of Programs that communities had decided to undertake would reveal values. Most importantly, I was interested in learning how definitions of the situation and values had been translated into action.

All communities as well as directors of certain kinds of War on Poverty activities did not respond to my expression of interest in learning about their experiences. A certain patterning of observations had been planned which envisaged that when all the visits had been made, something of a mosaic of the whole round and various types of War on Poverty activities which are possible under the Economic Opportunity Act would constitute my experience.

This strategem had been decided upon to allow the maximum number and variety of communities to be visited, since the visiting was to be part of my rediscovery of America. Only in a few instances, was it intended that, I would seek to know everything that was a part of the community's total experience in waging War on Poverty.

For example, the visit to New York was focused exclusively upon three aspects of the program. I wanted to learn about the project which aimed at the rehabilitation of the housing and the people of the block of Harlem's 114th Street. In visiting the JOIN (Job Orientation in Neighborhood) Centers, the development of employability of school drop-outs occupied my attention. My interest in approaches to hard-to-get at youngsters and families led me to visit the Henry Street Settlement House.

To gain some idea of how the peculiar intracacies of race relations or minority problems influenced approaches to War on Poverty activities, Corpus Christi, Texas with its large Mexican population became part of the itinerary. Some insights into the problems of the American Indian were sought by visiting the Papago Indian Reservation at Sells, Arizona. In visiting the Southern Consumer's Cooperative at Lafayette, Louisiana, I was interested in learning how a Negro

organization in the South had been able to secure a small business loan to produce fruitcakes. This same area, provided some orientation to the complexities and problems of the Arcadia Neuf community in the context of a community of poor whites and poor Negroes.

In St. Louis, my eyes focused on Poverty Schools because St. Louis had received particular recognition for its creative approaches to motivating youth in slum area. Astoria, Oregon was visited principally so that I might know of the Northwestern United States and for the opportunity that it afforded for seeing a Job Corps Center operated by the University of Oregon assisted by the Philco Corporation.

Overall urban programs were viewed in New Haven, Connecticut; Martins Ferry, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; and Portland, Oregon. Martin's Ferry provided a glimpse of Appalachia, an area where coal mining had suffered its demise. Industry had come, but where steel production occurs under the most advanced automation. Martin's Ferry is also a community where one might observe the problems of a community with a significant proportion of its population aging. Though small as a community as compared to other areas visited, Martin's Ferry's leaders exhibited a special kind of vitality.

This group of urban centers which were visited provided a range in scale of anti-poverty operations. Regional influences as well as the influence of relative differences in the input of talent could be examined.

Through the very kind assistance of Southern Illinois University as initiated by its division of International Services, the approaches

to poverty in smaller towns and rural farming areas of the mid-western United States were observed. Southern Illinois University's very significant service to its extended community allowed me to see a variety of anti-poverty measures particularly in training fields. This included a visit to the Job Corps Center being readied at Camp Breckenridge. The herculean task of readying the center to receive students and the development and management of the training program was being carried out in the framework of the University's regular concept of operations.

The brevity of visits in most locales, as well as chances that lack of background or knowledge of particular situations may have limited my perceptiveness, makes me hesitant to link my comments to particular communities. Everyone received me so graciously that above all, I do not wish to err in any way that might be misconstrued or incorrectly ascribed to any community observations which do not apply. Thus my comments are reported here as "General Observations without reference to any community that was visited."

As a student of social processes, one of the things which struck me most--North, South, East and West--was the fact that virtually all the officials as well as the working personnel in War on Poverty programs had the "message" as to what the program was about. There could be observed a rather striking uniformity when persons articulated the "doctrine" as to what the program was about. Quite obviously differences existed in "understanding" and "insights" as to how this doctrine might be applicable to particular communities.

Whereas there appeared to be a certain uniformity in concepts and doctrines as to what the War on Poverty programs are about, it seems that one has difficulty in describing that which communities were actually doing and how they came to be doing it in a general framework.

(B)

Quite obviously the doctrine on War on Poverty activities had been provided to the communities by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Speeches by Mr. Shriver and other officials of OEO had reinforced statements of guidelines for activities. The press releases issued by OEO Public Information office, skillfully and repetitiously hammered home basic themse.

The official doctrine of the War on Poverty, the general statement of guidelines for participation by communities, and the particulars about preparation of applications and proposals for approval and funding by the Office of Economic Opportunity gave, and continue to give, a certain structuring of things which communities have undertaken as projects. In this regard, the influence and intent of Congress as reflected in the Economic Opportunity Act and the language of the specific titles of the Act, likewise strucutres the broad lines of action of what communities can do.

Interestingly enough, however, none of these influences resulted in rigidity of approach. The rapidity with which War on Poverty activities were launched despite the fact that the Office of Economic Opportunity was a new agency, fostered a certain flexibility.

Community Action programs operating under the agesis of War on Poverty funding is furthest along, as is natural, in communities which had already organized themselves to work on their social problems even before there was a launching of the War on Poverty. In general one can say that where real talent was available and had been attracted to the poverty activities, they made a significant difference. In areas where there was least talent, including least apparent familiarity with the Washington scene and notions as to how the Federal government operates, progress was minimal. Similarly programs appeared to be best, and the level of enthusiasm and sense of accomplishment was higher in settings where substantive numbers of the poor were engaged.

A favorable political climate appeared to be sine qua non for meaningful anti-poverty projects. In those communities where the political climate was least favorable, programs were either on the verge of disarray or stagnating. A favorable political climate seemed most often associated with the extent to which the community had committed itself to social innovation.

In several communities, and no doubt generally, progress of anti-poverty programs are handicapped by the lack of talent with organizational skills. Such talent is in short supply and costs more than perhaps the average community can afford.

Thus the range of activities likely to be initiated in a community is in part a function of the availability of talent. The key that talent becomes is easily noted in the fact that some communities have so few programs actively operating or even planned as projects.

Each new idea poses essentially a management problem, a task of mediation, and a sense of how action may be carried out or launched in a social setting. The planning of an operation like the Head Start program posed some very real problems for some communities. For some areas there was a problem of concept, but more fundamentally the problem of setting-up the operation so that it could function by the time it needed to begin has been observed to be virtually chaotic.

Whereas one community with quite good organizational and management capabilities was constantly enriching its anti-poverty program by adding one new component after another, ranging from community schools, store front libraries, a skills center, neighborhood employment centers, work training crews, pre-school training, etc., another community may have difficult in setting up a single anti-poverty measure.

Even should such a community have an idea about something it wants to do, it may lack skill in perceiving how the idea can be made operational.

(c)

Although there appeared to be numerous lines of action characterizing the various programs, the most relevant starting point for those communities making significant progress was the community's awareness that it had problems. There is a certain definition of problems required in the preparation of applications for OEO approval. It is not to these definitions that reference is made. When problems had become public issues for the citizenry of the community and not merely statistics and data submitted in an application for a project proposal, War on Poverty programs got off on a better start. This

was particularly true where the "public" included city officials, community leaders, business executives, educators, directors of public and private agencies, the press, and citizens in general.

Some communities had skilled research and planning units that provided data for further public awareness and which served as the basis for community programs. Other communities had contracted for such services. In some instances, universities had undertaken the task. One community in particular had sought to foster this type of awareness by involving the organizational strength of poverty's people; the process was very long. "There had been much talk and nothing was happening." This community faced the problem of timing in terms of arriving at a consensus of opinion on defining its problem and the most effective methods of how they should be met. Continued prolonged discussions with no meaningful solution would certainly have impeded its progress in meeting the Office of Economic Opportunity's deadline for project proposal submission, final approval, and funding.

Speaking further about lines of action characterizing the efforts of various communities, only rarely were there evidences of attempts by a community to develop a common strategy for all components of its War on Poverty program. Thus, instead of speaking of a community's line of action, one might more appropriately speak of a community's category of activities.

In one city, an official talked of the real merits he had found in furthering action through the somewhat ad-hoc operational working committees. These committees were relatively small and were composed of individuals whose interests and qualifications were

pertinent to the problem on hand. Such committees operated without formally designated chairmen, and sat with action being their principal objective.

Another community, by virtue of the scope of its War on Poverty operations, made considerable use of professional management consultant firms to develop effective ways of doing things, covering in some aspects the total program. The fiscal aspects of program components including the provision of data required for evaluation, payrolling, the needs for data retrieval were all handled by computer systems programmed for the special requirements of the ensemble of anti-poverty activities.

Some lines of action came into being principally by attempting to make an activity work, or in seeing whether an idea would be meaningful as an anti-poverty measure. The process was very close to trial and error. The concepts of the definition of the activity, as well as its operational framework, evolved from experience.

One community's exciting experimentation with Work Crews for providing job experience for school drop-outs, started out as an idea with relatively little structuring as an activity. A stable, reasonably well-adjusted adult, serving as the Work Crew's leader for a small group of boys engaged in meaningful work tasks could set in motion a process of rehabilitation leading to progress. Experience showed this idea to be valid. From such groups, some youngsters were sufficiently motivated to continue their education. Too, there have been some instances of individuals proceeding to college preparation.

Here a basic idea was launched and acquired appropriate extended rationale as the initiators of the idea learned from the

experiment. New dimensions to the concept could be added in this way. For example, it was discovered that the work crew leader was not just a boss to the boys. He became a friend, someone to whom they could turn when they became involved in difficulties. Adults, capable and desirous of becoming work crew foremen were not in short supply. Arrangements could be made so that the youths, in the esprit of the work crew, would gain additional educational experience.

The varied forms in which the idea of decentralizing, making available, or bringing services required by poverty's people directly into their neighborhoods, no doubt came into being in ways similar to that described about the work crews. Some Neighborhood Centers focus exclusively on employment; others include Credit Union Offices, legal advisors, consumer education advisors. Other establishments favor vocational counselling and remedial training in basic education skill. Extensions of this idea can be seen in the experiment at setting up "store front" libraries.

The library of this type that I saw was an excitingly different kind of library service and setting than one usually thinks about. There were books on shelves, but it was a place of activity. One came to not only be exposed to books but also to be exposed to learning by doing a whole variety of things.

(D)

Certain War on Poverty activities in communities have their lines of action quite structured by virtue of their being implemented through established institutions. In some instances, the traditional ways that institutions have for doing business explains

the lines of action of the anti-poverty activity they are implementing, more so than anything else. Though, at times this was not the case, there were situations in which institutions did follow their own particular lines of action which were not necessarily bad.

It must be recognized that prior to the enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act, there were many creative and imaginative experiments being carried out by a variety of social agencies, and civic groups. Often they were under-financed and under-staffed. War on Poverty financing now makes it possible for many worthwhile ventures to operate more effectively. Also, some good programs had been serving only a limited clientele. These programs are now being extended to poverty's people through the financing authorized by the Economic Opportunity Act. Pre-kindergarten programs, cultural and recreational experiences which the poor could not afford, are now being provided by agencies that formerly rendered such services only to those children whose parents could meet the cost of participation.

Amongst the established institutions now finding themselves becoming the arena for new experimentation, are the schools. The concept of the Community School has given some "old schools" rather exciting new careers.

All the schools in one slum district, operating under a concept of Poverty Schools, pride themselves upon the success achieved in motivating youngsters for whom achievement had not been deemed possible. Children, whose performance normally placed them in the bottom track of the city's school system, who have now had the opportunity of being influenced by the programs of the Poverty Schools, show capabilities to perform in the upper track.

The Poverty Schools' employing something akin to the revivalism of the "old time Religiou" preacher emphasizes and re-emphasizes challenge. The schools operate day and night and on Saturdays. They are centers for recreational activity. Students with particular aptitudes and interest in science can receive special tutoring. Students who need remedial assistance in subject matter areas or communication skills do find help.

The compulsiveness, drive, awakening that the schools push for the children is transmitted to their parents, through meetings, which are well attended, the horizons of parents are enlarged. Their horizons as well as those of the children are pressed into a recognition of the need for education and accomplishment. Parents are given responsibility for ensuring that the youngsters have done their home work.

Youth are provided new experiences. Eating in a downtown restaurant or cafeteria adds a new dimension to awareness of a world heretofore only dimly viewed. Such visits add a new dimension to aspirations as well. Selected youngsters have an opportunity to visit a University campus. Other visits are arranged within and outside the community to agencies, institutions, and public facilities about which youth know lettle or with which they have not had prior experience. Persons from the community who merit emulation are invited to speak to persons other than school teachers or preachers who have achieved, and in a variety of careers. The schools also give children an experience in recreation, the theater, music, crafts, etc.

Some critics of the Poverty Schools mention the "excessive" attention given by teachers to assure that the youngsters "test well". Does the"motivation" in "pressuring" to achieve really awaken within the student the fundamental fact that "learning" can be an exciting thing.

Other critics are not disturbed by what happens in the schools, but are concerned that the acclaim that the Poverty School program has received may cause city officials and school administrators to feel that certain improvements are less urgently needed. The slum settings in which the schools are located may absolutely anihilate any "education" done inside the schools. The lessons that a setting that more resembles a war ravaged fire bombed city than a place where an American might have to live may well be more pervasive over the long run than the lessons the schools teach. Should the acclaim that the Poverty Schools receive regarding the "wonders" they perform delay the further development of school training in marketable skills and vocational education, the critics rightly suggest that this would be tragic.

Regardless of how little or how much communities do in making their schools effective vehicles for innovation or instruments for implementation of anti-poverty measures, it is very clear that amongst the established institutions none surpasses the school in potential.

Some communities are learning how to use their schools in new ways. School plants in some locales were open day and evenings and on weekends. They were functioning as centers for adult training, public meetings, location for recreational activity.

In one community, where home living conditions of students were not adequate or suitable study situations, the schools provided study space not only during day-time study hall periods, but also in the evenings. Parents agree to the child preparing his home work after school hours under the supervision of a school official. The child upon leaving the school study setting in the evening receives a note for his parent indicating the time that he left school. At first the program was started principally for youth who were lagging behind in their studies and where such could be reasonably attributed to improper home study situations, or the need for study with a tutor. The idea became popular amongst all the students. For those who participate in the after-school hours study program, the school periodically arranges some kind of social activity which adds to the incentive that youngsters already feel to participate.

Even where communities have expanded the arena of services that their schools formerly rendered, not all have pushed the idea to the point that they have officially adopted the concept of the community school. In one community where this has occurred, schools so designated as community schools are staffed with the community functions in mind. The assistant principal focuses principally upon community affairs which includes the variety of ways in which the school relates itself to the community. In addition to regular classroom teachers who may be involved in implementation of an activity officed at the school, there may be a Neighborhood Programs Coordinator, Neighborhood workers, non-professionals recruited from

the community, recreational advisors responsible for athletic type activities and other types of recreation broadly conceived.

Even in a community that only to a very limited extent had instituted any of the ideas of the community school concept, tradition had been broken to allow for the recruitment of non-professionals from the poverty group who worked quite effectively as teachers aids with the kindergarten level classes.

Innovations that schools may undertake in the future may result not only from initiatives taken by educators teaching in public schools, but also are likely to be drawn from the educational activities of the Job Corps Camp training and other anti-poverty training programs.

For example the "on station" concept of the academic teacher as developed at one of the Job Corps Camps is rich in possibilities. Among youth who have a depreciatingly low idea about the value of formal education, and where past experience may lead the individual to be hostile to the regular classroom teacher and classroom situation, the teacher "on station" meets a real need.

The youths in the setting observed were receiving training in marketable skills. This kind of learning they liked. Frequently they were faced with times when they could not properly understand a written instruction or prepare a job order in writing. Maybe the interpretation of a blueprint or the cutting of a piece of sheet metal involved mathematical skills beyond those the individual possessed. The instructor of the vocational skill could recognize as did the

youngster when the particular gap in learning came to be known and needed to be corrected. More frequently, the youngster was encouraged to recognize these moments himself. Even if he was reluctant to do so, at certain moments he was completedly stymied. He then sought out the teacher who was skilled in his inadequacy. Such teachers are always on Station, to give help at the particular moment that the need for a particular kind of learning is felt or recognized.

(E)

It appears that in getting any anti-poverty measure launched in spite of the already vast numbers of individuals already involved in working with the poor, additional inputs of personnel focusing primarily on people appears to be a must. This would suggest that in human terms many areas of human needs within the city were just not being met.

Principally, there has been the recognition of the need for someone who can spend some time with the poor. The caseworker spends time with the poor, but his case load is so heavy that he acts less as an aid to the individual but as someone able to carry out various legal provisions. Traditionally, the case worker has never had time to erase the suspicions those needing help had about those who sought to help. Thus the appearance of the neighborhood worker as a concept has arisen.

The neighborhood worker is seen as being an individual who can talk the language of the poor. Principally such workers are recruited out of the world of the poor. They are intended to be someone out of the same background who can understand just what the problem is.

The idea of the neighborhood worker is not new. In fact programs have to a considerable extent, in the past made use of this concept. Such programs formerly employed professionals. Poverty programs in the past had so little to operate with. They could not have begun to employ the number of neighborhood workers that were needed.

Now Neighborhood workers are a reality. They are the "walkers and talkers" of the poverty program. They along with the job developers do the leg work of community action program. For both the neighborhood workers and the job developers, the level of training required is considerably less than that of the professional to whom such activities had been entrusted earlier.

The essence of these activities has been to highlight the importance of services being brought closer to the people who need to be served.

Where poverty programs do formally engage workers from the poverty group, a new image of their potential is being established as aids in programs. They are performing tasks that do not displace the need for the professional. Instead they do some things in the establishing personal links of communication with the poor that the overburdened case work social worker could not nor would not likely do as well. The neighborhood aids recruited from amongst the poor not only improve the communication links between the poor and authority, they also free the professional to do the kinds of things for which he is prepared by training to do. Greater elasticity in

the employment field may arise from an awareness of job functions as well as job categories which can be created, and in which persons with training less than that of the professional or the specifically skilled can perform.

For these program areas and management functions requiring professionals, one can very clearly observe what happens when real talent is available and when it is not.

Some persons talked the "doctrine", and quite sincerely, but had no working view, except in a very limited way of the whole range of meaningful social innovations of relevance for eliminating poverty that the "doctrine" could set in motion.

Here were individuals (reflecting no doubt their social settings) with a concept of great potential, and even about which they spoke with enthusiasm, but so pedestrian in habit and thought that the activities selected as anti-poverty measures could not possible have any meaningful impact. They might do some "limited" good. The good done however, might be so minimal that it could hardly be called even constructively spinning one's wheels.

At the other extreme, there were a few "guerrilla fighters", the would-be rebel, or the highly tuned individual who prided himself upon being able to be more machivellian than Machievelli himself. These persons were more "liberal" than the liberal, and operated quite dedicatedly with a penchant for causes. Often due to a very limited perceptiveness about social processes characterizing the settings in which they worked, it was suggestive of Don Quixote. From this particular type of worker may come some "Lions"in the street. More

than often such individuals, like those accustomed to moving in pedestrian ways, more frequently knew of 50 billion reasons why nothing could be done.

Most impressive were the highly skilled, politically sensitive, soundly motivated professionals. Similarly, one could not help but be impressed, in observing individuals recruited from among the poverty group, by many evidences of exceptional talent which the War on Poverty programs bring to the fore.

No doubt one of the most meaningful added benefits that will result from the program lies in the fact that more high level talent is now being focused on major social problems than the nation normally engages in such activities. The War on Poverty programs appear to have attracted an exceptional amount of high quality talent. One can see most strikingly, however, that much, much more of the nation's brain power will be needed to develop the systems, the management devices, and relevant operational techniques to really wage War on Poverty now, and in the future. Such talent must assist the nation and its communities to engineer the kinds of social innovations that will allow social advance commensurate with and necessitated by future technological advance.

With its emphasis upon creativity, the War on Poverty program as a social experiment has meaning for the nation which goes considerably beyond that which is now set as the principal objectives of the program.

As poverty workers many teachers will learn to teach more imaginatively. Many social workers, public health workers, directors

of other private and public assistance agencies, are learning through their participation in the many faceted attack on poverty, new ways of working with the poor.

Chapter 13. Implications for Technical Assistance

Much of what the Economic Opportunity Act proposes to do at home may be likened to that which Technical Assistance efforts of our Foreign Aid programs seek to accomplish abroad. Both programs aim to engineer opportunities by which persons, now outside the mainstreams of the modern world, may acquire skills needed for participation. Our domestic pockets of poverty more closely resemble the situations of developing nations than they do the rest of the United States. The national effort to eliminate these pockets of poverty has been launched during a period when the nation has been experiencing its longest era of sustained high level economic health and growth. By contrast, the current progress of the less developed world reflects a general process where the gap between the "developed" rich worlds and the poor "less developed" worlds widens. Though the War on Poverty program may suggest little in the way of relevant response to the concerns expressed by the 77 developing nations at the UNCTAD Conference at Geneva, it may point the way toward new ideas about: 1. Development of employment opportunities, 2. Education and training to enable submerged people to break out of their old ways of life, 3. Approaching problems of poverty in a many sided coordinated way.

(A)

Technical assistance programs in the technologically less advanced nations have built up considerable experience in the use of non-professionals to perform a variety of development tasks. More than often trained manpower has not been, and is not, yet available.

The lack of educated cadres is acute. It is a principal handicap to development. Yet elementary school graduates have been trained to teach in primary schools. They have been taught to become para-medical aides, agricultural agents, village development workers, etc. Our domestic war on poverty program, out of its concern with participation and the involvement of the poor in programs may well suggest additional directions toward which governments of developing countries may look for new ways to involve the poor in a wider range of development tasks than now occurs. Further thinking on our parts regarding more significant ways for involving people in our programs needs to be encouraged.

When one thinks about the kinds of work being done in underdeveloped countries, it is in many respects a simple routine affair. Yet this work is part of a total round of life. Though the system of farming is simple and perhaps the productivity per head is low, the family at work in the field had consciously or unconsciously made many decisions.

They had decided whether to work or to do something else. Then or at some other time they had decided what crops to grow, the seasonality of work, the scale of operations, the use of the land through time, and what to sell or what to retain. The choices were somewhat numerous and complex. The decisions are related to health, religion, education, system of values, the organization of the village, and in fact the total web of existence. In looking at peasant worlds in this framework, one is more likely to be perceptive about ways in which they may more readily become participants in the development

tasks of less developed countries. Opportunities, other than becoming additions to the bureaucracy, need to exist for the increased outpourings of educated and partially educated youths to join in some new productive enterprise, entrepreneurship, or related development activity.

Projects, in seeking achievements of goals of peoples becoming less ill, better fed, and better housed, should do so in ways which maximize involvement of peoples and allow for their active participation in development tasks.

One of the lessons of situations of insurgency and subversion is that "wars of national liberation" do owe a major portion of their force to their capability to recruit masses. Either through persuasion. coercion, or simply in the wake of the chaos purposely created, individuals acquire new roles that bear different relationships to traditional authority, and create new relationships between themselves.

In a changing society, people do want to be better fed, better housed, better educated, and be less ill. They desire even more so to find some rationalization or sense for the changing relationships arising from altered routines. Fundamentally, there is a push to be mobile within the society. There is a desire for some legitimization of new niches, or at least something which gives current relevance to life chances.

This is only natural. Change is very devastating on social relationships in traditional societies. Less developed countries, not only are handicapped by lack of advanced technology, they also

lack the mechanisms that advanced societies with democratic practices have for restructuring social relationships and the whole repatterning of the system of social obligations, expectations, and sanctions.

Schooling gives some persons the options of simulating new niches as school teachers. Others become functionnaires of government. And some become the elites of the military establishment. New niches in productive enterprises are fewer. New roles are particularly difficulty to come by when the economic life is stagnating or deteriorating. More persons get educated or partially educated than can find places in the altered scheme of social relationships. There are those, much more numerous, who have not had opportunities for schooling, but who nevertheless are out loose from their traditional moorings, and likewise find themselves increasingly in an alien world.

When authority, whether it be king, dictator, foreign power, or traditional social and economic elite, lacks the will, power, or ability to orchestrate social, political and economic roles to allow those most anxious to be mobile the opportunity to do so. Then the potential for trouble in the setting is very high. When sentiments of disillusionment, confusion are felt or sensed by the mass, or any part of it in substantial numbers, whether articulated or not, the situation is very susceptible to subversion. Where the social and economic life would appear to be virtually stagnant, even if the processes of change and the loosening of peoples from their cultural moorings, traditional loyalties, customary social controls seems almost imperceptible, the people are ready recruits for subversion which communism fosters.

Communists, both domestic and foreign to the setting, tend to be active in such groups. Under many guises, they frequently heighten local awareness of individuals to the irrelevance of existing social relationships to the changing circumstance. The changing circumstance generally leaves those who can not participate in the advance more disadvantaged than before. The disadvantage is more easily felt because poverty has lost its former traditional comforts. To persons substantively with weak or no loyalties to the existing social structure, and limited views of their life chances in general, comes a vision of a new role and office with significant meaning, that of the revolutionary.

Normally the "market" for persons with limited training tends to be quite narrow in developing nations. Traditional authority or elites have a very limited optic about new participants, from so-called lower classes finding new roles within the society. Limited economic development, entrepreneur ship or the lack of it, makes for few new roles. Aspirations of masses tend to be viewed with suspicion by oligarchies or ruling elites. Quite early, there tends to be the emphasis, formerly described by leaders of these developing countries as a handicap when applied to them by colonial administrators, on standards, qualifications, etc. The new nations should aspire to higher quality of training and service, but by comparison with the few which will be able to pursue such advanced skills and professionalism, there will be a continuingly wider wave of youngsters graduating from primary schools and secondary schools. They will need employment, and the opportunity to participate in the development tasks of the developing countries.

Though our domestic programs have not begun to solve all of the problems of employment of out-of-school youth, or undertrained youth seeking employment in our U.S. society, a variety of experimental efforts have already demonstrated the value of attacking the problem in a many faceted way.

The role of a "job developer" is pregnant with possibilities. In some communities jobs which had not been publicized as existing were turned up. The ways for directly linking the person with perhaps only one job with an individual seeking a job, benefits both. Perhaps in some of the underdeveloped countries, it may be relevant to experiment or find adaptations of the ideas of neighborhood employment centers staffed by local neighborhood people. And for school drop-outs some version of a work crew program could be organized. Conceivably, the work crew concept might be developed for countries which want to provide post-primary school training and work experience but lack formal institutions or facilities where such training can be provided. The work crew concept could be organized as a means for a poor country to further educate without investment in additional school plant.

An old warehouse turned into a skill center, and former military camp and a naval air station turned into Job Corps Camps suggested to me, that certain less developed countries may very well be encouraged to look at under-utilized military installations or other facilities either being under-used or not used at all with a view to such facilities being readapted to serve the needs and imperatives of the society. A developing country, in making an

inventory of its potential resources for development, rarely includes such facilities or even thinks of them as affording an opportunity for dealing with a pressing problem, e.g., training, unemployment, etc.

(B)

Our Foreign Assistance programs have quite rightly emphasized the importance of concentration in project activities. Staff are encouraged to avoid "scatteration". In visiting War on Poverty programs I looked to see whether these principles applied in our domestic effort. In the very best programs, they did. However, they appeared to be orchestrated differently and certainly with greater flexibility than characterizes some country programs.

The way in which the concepts of flexibility and concentrated programs were intermeshed can perhaps be best illustrated by referring to a community whose anti-poverty directors in describing their anti-poverty measures, emphasized that they were concentrated on education and employment. The vehicles of the program are community schools and employment centers in target areas. The concept of the community school recognizes the school as a place for children and adults. The neighborhood employment centers staffed by local neighborhood people, state employment service people, psychologists, and social workers place the service to be rendered in the midst of the people needing to be served. For school drop-outs, there is a work-crew program. Work crew members get $20.000 a week. They stay on work crews until they are ready for steady employment. The entire program has been described as being a "hard nosed","bread and butter operation." The program components, such as the work crews, are loose and pragmatic.

This program has an organizing unit with functions comparable to those of a USAID overseas mission which organizes, plans, expedites, checks on, and secures the funding needed for the massive human renewal program. Important is the fact that it benefits from an effective political climate in the political leadership of the community, but has the advantage of not being officially part of the city government which does permit certain flexibilities in action. Very important is the fact that the organization has the power and the money: "Freedom to move quickly"; "To keep programs that work and discard those that don't". Very important is the great attention that the organization gives to the considerable infusinon of high quality talent with leadership that understands the political dimensions of social action. The talent is encouraged to be imaginative, experimental, and pragmatic in approech. A related ingredient is cash, and a certain sophistication in knowing what makes an activity saleable to various possible sources of financial help. The organization prides itself upon knowing what the various sources of help are.

It should be quite clear that this anti-poverty organization does not mistake concentration in program focus to mean a single tightly routinized activity.

The concept of the comprehensiveness of the attack on poverty, though concentrated on education and employment, allows its program to include pre-school nurseries, special reading programs, a store front library, a store front office for juvenile court authorities, neighborhood health services, a small business program, and the development of a skill center.

The concept of the skill center or some version of it may very well become the structure for the settlement house of the future. The on-the-job training concept has been enlarged to allow participating employers to be partially compensated for the training they provide to individuals who are placed directly on jobs. Services are organized for disadvantaged youths 16-22 providing pre-vocational training, referrals for skill training, and training on the job. Curriculum materials are developed which aid students in relating to and understanding urban environments.

The directors of this community's program repeatedly emphasized that had the concept of concentration of activity not allowed for changes is approach which grew out of operating experience, the "new" program of education may have ended up with even more rigidities than programs already operating. In education, the community school concept became the focus of operations. In concept, it was predicated on a willingness to innovate, to make the school an educational center, a neighborhood civic center, a center for community health services, a center for the open consideration of community problems. In this context the pre-kindergarten program, the reading program, the helping teacher program, the higher horizons program, the pupil services program, the in-service education program, the summer shcool program, and the adult literacy program all become points focused upon the community school oriented towards its new function.

Evaluation devices have been built into the programs to facilitate adaptations or improvements in administrative structures needed to carry out programs or to achieve goals. Innovations require

extensive orientation and training of both old and new staff. Evaluation concepts pinpoint the timing by which training needs to occur.

(C)

The nation's domestic involvement in Wars on Poverty provides frequent reminders that, whether one works on the problems of poverty at home or abroad, the art of assisting people to help themselves is not simply the conducting of a business operation.

Repeatedly during my observation of programs in various American communities one could hear remarks such as the following:

"One can not pressure people into acting in their own behalf even when tangible opportunities do exist. People have to be given time. They must be allowed to reject. One has to find the level at which one can encourage. People must be trusted to operate their own destiny. Frequently we give little thought and effort to erasing the suspicions that they who need help have of us."

At times, one hears statements to the effect that if country X does not follow "our" recommendations or is not prepared to help itself and do the things which must be done, there is no excuse for U.S. involvement. One must admit and agree with the pragmatism of this logic particularly when the statement is followed by the observation that one must not lose sight of the fact that we (meaning the AID operation) are a business.

However, if the aims of the AID program, in the context of its potential as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy, can be subsumed under a strategy of operation which has as its sole dimension simply the imperatives of the criterion of a business operation, there are other institutions more appropriate than the AID apparatus for achieving such ends.

This does not mean that one must turn to the "fool" side of the equation by suggesting that our overseas assistance efforts should not be guided by a firm recognition of the importance of self help, sound management criteria, and the relevance of certain precepts common to good business operations. It is also abundantly clear that U.S. interests are not served by a "blanketing" operation of providing assistance to every poor or developing country on a bilateral basis. There may be, however, instances where it is clearly in the U.S. interst to use the AID instrument to assist a society in moving toward that which it must eventually do. In our approach to such instances, we should not lose sight of what our domestic experience repeatedly calls to our attention: To get poverty's people to do the kinds of things that they must do, the real art and skill comes in finding the level at which they can become encouraged to act in their self interest!

The nation's War on Poverty program is perhaps the most significant mass experiment in social innovation ever undertaken by a democratic society. It shall provide a particular rich reservoir of experience. Developing nations may find something of relevance for their problems in this experience of American Communities in launching anti-poverty measures. Conversely, our domestic effort may find much of benefit that can be learned from Foreign Aid efforts.

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