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## MANPOWER IN LIBYA

Report by E. L. Keenan

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The development of human resources is as important to national growth and well being as capital investment and the utilization of natural resources. For social reasons it is even more important. Planning for manpower development is a necessity if agriculture, industry, and commerce are to be able to expand when other conditions allow such expansion. Practically everybody I have talked to in Libya seems to recognize that there is a manpower problem and that something should be done about it. The concern is almost pathological. But like the weather in Washington, D. C., little is being done about it. The timing is excellent for a coordinated manpower development program in Libya.

Many with whom I have talked stress the need for a manpower survey as a starting point. While such an endeavor means slightly different things to different people, I would define such a survey as an inventory of manpower resources by age, nationality, education, training, skill, sex, etc. This information should be gathered for individuals employed by the Government, for those employed in the private sector and for those unemployed or underemployed. I agree that such information is highly desirable. Besides supplying accurate statistics useful for planning purposes, the data would indicate whether individuals are being utilized in positions consistent with and related to their training, particularly in the Government. The number of skilled jobs filled by foreign workers would become known as would the magnitude of the problem involved in attempting to replace such workers with Libyans. I would caution, however, not to expect too much from such a survey. An accumulation of data solves no problems in itself.

However, the fact that there is now an ILO expert assigned to the Central Statistical Bureau in the Ministry of National Economy and that another ILO expert will be arriving shortly for a two-year tour of duty as technical advisor to the newly-created Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs assures the technical assistance necessary for these two agencies to cooperatively plan and administer a manpower survey in the near future. The Central Statistical Bureau is to begin a cost-of-living index in January 1961, and arrangements are under way for an occupational study and the establishment of an occupational classification system with a target date of June 1961. I recommend that the manpower survey be undertaken as soon as the occupational study has been completed and the classification system established. If by June 1961 the two experts believe additional technical assistance is necessary to complete the manpower survey promptly, I am sure that either USOM or ILO would consider making the necessary arrangements.

When we talk about a manpower survey, it must be realized that even complete information on manpower supply will give us no more than half

the picture. A manpower development plan involves relating manpower supply to manpower demand and anticipated manpower requirements. In so far as action programs are concerned, the proper placement, utilization, and on-the-job training for individuals now in the work force can be related to the job openings which exist today. Being concerned, however, with the long-range problems of having the right kind of manpower available in the future, it is necessary to look ahead five, ten, and even twenty years and make at least rough estimates of what the manpower requirements may be. Then planning for manpower development can proceed on a reasonable basis, and the educational policies as well as the content of school curricula can be adjusted to educate individuals in fields of work where the occupational opportunities of the future will exist. One of the manpower problems in Libya today is the difficulty of getting a fix on manpower requirements for the future.

The recent Report on the Economic Development of Libya made by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development includes a recommended five-year program which envisages an expenditure of LL25,000,000 during the period. This amount is related to an expenditure of 70% of the Government of Libya's share of its oil revenues for national economic development purposes. However, the Government of Libya has not approved the World Bank's recommended five-year program or any specific plan. In fact, I understand the Government has made commitments for expenditures for projects that are not included in the World Bank's recommendations which, if added to the Bank's recommended program, would increase the capital outlay to LL35,000,000 over a five-year period. Therefore, it is a matter of the highest priority for the Government of Libya to decide upon a five-year plan for economic development. If and when this is fixed, at least some estimation of the manpower requirements necessary to carry out the program can be made. At this point a planned manpower development program becomes a most practicable and highly necessary undertaking.

One could discuss the manpower problems of Libya from several different approaches and there are so many facets of the problem that it becomes complicated to attempt to place them in categories. Nevertheless, to focus attention upon specific problems which are apparent, I am breaking down the problem into four general categories. After discussing these four categories, I will conclude this report with several observations and recommendations which relate to manpower in general.

These four categories might be called four basic problems. The first is how to improve the manpower situation in the short term. The second has to do with long-range manpower development. In my judgment, basic improvements in the manpower supply situation cannot be expected in Libya in the short run. The third has to do with the question of balance between Libyan and foreign workers which is a subject one hears discussed in all quarters. The fourth concerns itself with the manpower problem within the Government of Libya.

#### A. Short Term.

I am confident that when the manpower survey is made it will show a deficit in the skilled labor supply available, even when this is related to present job openings, let alone additional requirements for the future. Therefore, even without the benefit of factual data, I think it is clear that more skill training is desirable and necessary. The Trade Division of the Benghazi Secondary School of Trade and Commerce is filled to the capacity of its equipment. The situation is nearly the same in the Technical Division of the Technical and Clerical Training Center in Tripoli. While there seems to be a lack of support for increased technical training, the graduates have no difficulties in securing employment, although the relation of the jobs to the training is a bit unclear. In Benghazi no one has yet graduated from the Trade Division because students accept employment before their schooling is completed. (Parenthetically, I recommend that trade training in the Benghazi School should be a three-year and not a four-year course.)

In total the vocational schools in Libya, together with the secondary schools turn out only a very few hundred partially-trained young men each year. Perhaps 500 others enter the labor force each year due to having completed their sixth and final year term of enlistment in the Libyan Army. The latter group has learned useful work habits and some have become more or less familiar with jeeps, trucks, or other mechanical equipment. I understand this group has no difficulties securing employment in jobs considerably above the level of common labor.

The needs today for so-called high-level manpower do not need elaboration. Libya obviously needs doctors, dentists, nurses, agronomists, scientists, etc. and could use men with the equivalent of two years of college in many technical fields of work.

It seems clear, therefore, that while the manpower survey is getting under way and while manpower requirements for the future are being firmed up, it is desirable and important to step up training to better equip Libyans to fill the jobs which exist today. Skilled and semi-skilled craftsmen, particularly in the building trades, are sorely needed and a combination of increased vocational training facilities, intensive on-the-job training, use of vocational and all other training facilities at night for adult training, and a system of apprenticeship with higher standards seem the best combination to meet the short-run problem.

Because of the demands of employers in the private sector and the requirements of many jobs in the public sector, English language training must also be part of a short-range program. In this connection, the techniques developed by the Civilian Personnel Division at Wheelus Air Base have apparently yielded excellent results and I recommend they be studied by the Government of Libya as well as by private employers.

I am told that 93% of the 1250 Libyan nationals employed at Wheelus speak reasonably good English. Formal English classes have been dropped and English is taught by foremen and supervisors as a part of on-the-job training. By requiring new skills and a certain number of job-related words in English in order to advance to the next higher classification, the Libyan workers have a real incentive to learn both the skills and the language. Pre-employment job testing is also being extensively and successfully used at Wheelus.

A technique which pays off well for a short-term development is audio-visual training. From my observation more of this could be done as a part of on-the-job training and the technique is adaptable for training larger numbers through films as well as slide presentations that can be shown throughout the country from the screens of movie theaters.

There are two ways that training can be stepped up in the short run: (1) the expansion of vocational training facilities and (2) on-the-job training including a formal apprenticeship system. I believe the greatest emphasis should be placed on the latter.

With respect to vocational training in the schools, some expansion may be in order, but I believe a shift in emphasis is desirable. Auto mechanics' training should be accelerated in both Tripoli and Benghazi. This means more floor space and more equipment in both places. In neither school are there facilities for training workers in the building trades although building and construction employs the largest number of men in both Tripoli and Benghazi. Consideration might also be given to the feasibility of training for food and restaurant work although this probably can be done better on the job. At the same time, too much emphasis on machine shop training in the vocational schools does not seem justified for there are few placements being made in this type of work. Insofar as commercial vocational education is concerned, more attention to English language training is necessary. I would urge that several subjects, or perhaps all subjects during the senior year, be taught in the English language rather than Arabic.

A stepped up on-the-job training program offers the best opportunity for the quick acquisition of practical skills. Employers should be encouraged by every possible device to step up their own in-service training programs. I recommend that consideration be given to the establishment of an apprenticeship system. Representatives of employers, organized labor and the Government should cooperatively draw up a plan which includes standards and a wage progression system based on skill ability and productivity. As a temporary measure, I believe Government subsidization of apprentice wages would be a practical approach. If an employer submits a training plan and it is approved, the Government would pay a stipulated percentage of the wage for an apprentice trained under this plan for perhaps the first or the first

and second year of employment. Such a system provides an employer with a real incentive to employ apprentices. Although such a system would be costly, the cost could be controlled as the numbers could be controlled; and as such a venture would be approached purely as a temporary program, it would be considerably less costly than a major expansion in vocational school facilities.

#### B. Long Range.

The long-range manpower development program begins with the primary schools. As everyone knows, school attendance has been growing rapidly throughout Libya the past few years. It seems to me that now is the time to turn attention to the quality of education, even if it means de-emphasizing quantity. Today individuals who finish six years of primary school in most cases have little or no comprehension of the technical or mechanical age. I am not an education expert and hesitate to discuss curricula content, but purely from the manpower standpoint the graduates of the school system should know more about the world in which presumably most of them are going to make their living. I mentioned somewhat facetiously while in Libya that a wise investment might be to put a large-size Erector set in every primary school. Perhaps this should be considered seriously. Finger dexterity, the use of simple tools and the practical experience of building something would help to better prepare the boys and girls in school today for the future.

Apart from the basic educational system in Libya, I noted a growing boy-scout movement. A surprising number of skills and techniques can be taught through the acquisition of merit badges, and I would urge that the growth of this movement be fostered and spread to as many outlying villages and towns as possible.

The high-level manpower needs of tomorrow, while they can't be measured statistically at this time in Libya, will obviously be considerably greater than the needs of today. This is particularly true in technical fields such as engineering, many branches of science, biochemistry, physics, agronomy, etc. Therefore, the better occupational guidance and counseling that can be given students at a relatively early age will pay dividends in the future for the individual and for Libya. Emphasis should be given to guidance instruction for all prospective teachers.

The training of teachers in itself is one of the most important long-range manpower problems. However, the present system of restricting certain graduates to teaching positions and not allowing these graduates to take jobs in industry does not seem to me to be either practical or in Libya's own best interest. This restriction seems completely inconsistent with Libya's national aspiration to fill important industrial and commercial positions with Libyans. In the long pull, the sound method is to educate individuals, preferably in fields of learning where there will be occupational opportunities, and let the

graduates determine their own futures, in the public or the private sector. It is not practical or desirable to attempt to legislate a career.

In terms of meeting the high level manpower requirements of the future, technical training at the university and teacher's college level must be improved. If Libya is to supply an appreciable number of the teachers needed in its primary preparatory and secondary schools, immediate considerations should be given to the establishment of a senior teachers' college. Such an institution could turn out graduates fully qualified to teach technical subjects as well as to give occupational guidance at the secondary school level. At the same time, the curricula at the college level must be hardened and additional emphasis placed on technical education. The degree of difficulty at the university level must be increased until a graduate has received training more nearly comparable to that of a four-year college graduate in the United States, Great Britain or Sweden.

I question the wisdom of the continuing heavy emphasis on the division of Arts and Education and the division of Commerce at the University. More numbers of college graduates prepared with a general education should not be the long-range goal. Technical education directed toward occupational opportunities needs more attention. The establishment of a division of Engineering and strengthening the curricula in the physical and biological sciences would appear to be in order.

One observation which has disturbed me is the attitude of many of the college students. It seems to be one of going forward with their education because it is free and because they receive a grant from the government while attending the university. Some students may be a bit spoiled. This is not good. In a developing nation assistance to education is necessary but when one hears stories that students worry about whether they will be able to secure employment with compensation at least equal to the grant they received while attending college, one wonders if the scale of values has not become unbalanced. Perhaps the university should charge a small tuition fee rather than be completely free, and perhaps a portion of what is now given as a grant could be advanced to students as loans. In any event, I recommend that this situation be examined so that the university will be truly for those who have a real desire to become educated and not a place for individuals who merely wish to live fairly comfortably for a couple of years.

Perhaps the attitude of some students would change if the restrictions limiting their employment to teaching or to a certain number of years of employment with the Government of Libya were removed. As indicated earlier, in the long run it is just as much in the interests of Libya to have Libyan university graduates employed in industry and commerce in the country as it is to have them in the Government.

### C. Balance Between Foreign and Libyan Workers.

The question of balance between the numbers of Libyans and numbers of foreign workers employed is one of vital interest to both the Government and practically all employers in the private sector. It is understandable that the Government wants Libyan nationals in all positions they can possibly fill. It is equally natural that employers want qualified individuals who both know their job and know how to produce. These goals should not be considered as inconsistent. Clearly there are not enough Libyans to fill the executive, technical or skilled jobs which exist in the economy today. With reasonable training programs, Libyans can fill semi-skilled and some skilled positions in the short run. The highly technical positions in the oil industry and in other parts of the business community require not only a technical education but years of practical experience. The filling of these jobs by Libyans is a long-term proposition, as the Government of Libya must realize. Full advantage should be taken of the foreign technicians and experts who are in Libya to train nationals so the latter can fill increasing complex positions as time goes on.

In the short run, in-service training programs provide the quickest and most direct method to give Libyan workers the skills required. A sound apprenticeship program with standards is part of the answer. The establishment of in-service training programs on the part of the Government and private employers is another part of the answer. I would not, however, recommend that employers be required to employ any certain number or percentage of Libyan workers as apprentices on a compulsory basis. Compulsion, without some incentive for the employer, could too easily result in a lack of will to train Libyan workers. In my opinion, a short-term Government wage subsidy program for apprentices is a better answer. Paying part of the apprentices' wage is not desirable as a permanent practice but for a period of a few years, it is probably the most practical way to train people quickly and less costly than radically expanding the vocational school system. On-the-job training also has the advantage of providing upgrading possibilities for the men now employed who are beyond school age.

One other approach to training in business and industry should be explored. This would involve the inclusion of a specific training clause in all contracts entered into by the Government with private parties. The inclusion of a training clause in contracts let by private employers to subcontractors is also a possibility.

Another facet of this problem of balance between nationals and foreign workers has to do with the administration of the labor laws of Libya. In the last analysis, a satisfied worker and a satisfied employer result from a situation where the man is working at something at or near his full skills, producing well, and being paid accordingly; and the employer is happy because he is getting good production. Attempting to protect employment rights of Libyans solely by legislation and making it very difficult and costly for them to be discharged if they are not efficient is not the answer. Defensive labor law administration should be relaxed and more attention given to efforts to improve

the productivity of workers. In this connection, the newly-established Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs can make a contribution by issuing regulations which are fair and practical and at the same time consistent with the recommendations of the International Labor Organization.

At the same time, the new Ministry can and should issue regulations which would constitute standards for the operation of the labor or employment offices which are administered by the provincial Labor Directors. These employment offices are in their infancy and are not properly staffed. By law they have much authority but they have little means of carrying it out. Workers are too often referred simply because they have been unemployed for a long time and need a job. Employers cannot be expected to have any confidence in an employment service that operates on this basis. Workers should be referred on the basis of their qualifications and every effort made to refer only those workers who are fully qualified to do the job. The building of a national system of employment offices with fully-qualified staff will take a long time. While every effort should be made to develop a sound employment service as quickly as possible, there should not at this point in time be any requirement for employers to secure all of their employees through the public employment service.

The system of identification cards which exists in the Province of Cyrenaica and which is contemplated in Tripolitania in accordance with an existing law, does not appear to me to be calculated to assist in the placement process. It may serve a purpose in giving preference to local workers although this is not, as I understand it, the express purpose of the system. One danger in this kind of a system is that it tends to attach a man to an occupation. This is not realistic as a man acquires new skills and should always be given an opportunity to up-grade himself, which he well may be able to do after some on-the-job experience. Rigidity in the labor force in a developing country such as Libya is not in the country's own self-interest. I suggest that the identification card procedure be reviewed to see if it is really worth the effort or whether more beneficial results might be obtained by putting an equal amount of time and money in training competent employment interviewers who could register workers and refer them to employers on the basis of the workers' qualifications.

#### D. The Manpower Problem in the Government.

Manpower problems within the public service in Libya are serious today and can be expected to grow more serious within the immediate future as the Government becomes larger and more complex in structure. A part of the growing pains comes from the shifts and reorganizations which always seem to be a part of a new and growing governmental structure. These shifts generally result in poor manpower utilization at least in the short run.

To cope with this situation, an organized training program within the Government service seems to me to be an imperative. The Training-Within-Industry approach is now a standard part of industry's training effort in industrialized countries. Training-Within-Industry instructors

are highly trained and experienced people themselves, and they know how to train others in the most effective way. I recommend that a staff division responsible for Training-Within-Government be established at an appropriate place in the Government of Libya (presumably the Federal Establishment and Personnel Office) and that this office furnish leadership, technical assistance and actual training aid to the several Ministries.

The establishment of such an office should not in any way remove from the individual Ministers their responsibility for training as a part of administration and supervision. In fact, there should be a clear pronouncement within the Government that an important part of each Minister's responsibility is training his professional and clerical staff. The Training-Within-Government office would furnish technical guidance to the Ministries and the training officers within such Ministry.

The Training-Within-Government unit should make full use of the foreign experts employed by the Government of Libya to assist as training instructors in the areas of their special competence. Seminars and specific training sessions would be arranged by the Training-Within-Government unit, making use of these foreign experts as instructors and, when appropriate, also calling upon specialists from United Nations and the USOM Mission in Libya for both technical and direct training assistance. It will probably be necessary to employ a foreign expert or two to help man this Training-Within-Government unit for the first few years; for if this unit is to do a thorough job, they will have to use job analysis, tests of various sorts, and perhaps make recommendations to Ministries concerning job breakdown or possibly job combination.

To insure that high priority will be given this function, it would be most desirable to establish a full-time training officer in all of the major Ministries. This individual would be the Minister's staff assistant for training within the Ministry and would also be the liaison officer with the Training-Within-Government unit.

The problem that has to be faced by the Government of Libya is to assure the maximum effectiveness of its civil service personnel during the next five or ten years while waiting for young Libyans who are now being educated and trained to assume key posts in the Government service. Making the most out of the type of manpower available today within the Government of Libya means not only a positive training program but continued reliance upon foreign experts for many technical and administrative positions until such time as Libyans who are now being prepared through education and experience can assume these responsibilities.

The foregoing discussion of four phases of the manpower situation in Libya points out a few of the problems and suggests approaches that can be taken to help meet them. I would like to recapitulate by quoting an article which appeared in the Tripoli SUNDAY GHIBLI on December

18, 1960. This excerpt, which paraphrases and quotes from the recent report of the World Bank, contains many words of wisdom:

"There is no reason why Libya cannot provide a living for the same number of people—at least 2,500,000—as it did in Roman times, states the concluding chapter of the World Bank's report on Libya.

"The report again emphasizes that neither the towns nor the oil industry will provide employment for more than a fraction of the 200,000 people at present working in farming and animal husbandry.

"So—to stop the drift of the people away from the land—the lot of the small farmer and pastoralist must be improved even though increasing agricultural output might well be dwarfed by developments in oil production and in trade.

"But progress in agriculture will not be the less important because it is unspectacular and, though it may take a long time to achieve major results, the world bank mission is convinced that agriculture, forestry and water resources must be accorded high priority in planning for the longer-term development of the Libyan economy," states the report.

"Libya's most urgent task is to build up the administrative machinery and to train the people that will be needed to execute a much larger programme of capital formation than any that should be contemplated at the present time.

"((Investment in people, through better education, medical services, nutrition and housing will at this stage often be more rewarding—though also more difficult—than investment in construction...))

"((The rate at which the economy grows will be powerfully influenced by the supply of skilled professional and technical personnel.))

"The mission points to the disadvantages of Libya's reliance on foreign technicians and administrators. But, if a faster rate of progress is desired in the short run, extensive use would have to be made of the services of foreigners in the preparation and execution of programmes."

I subscribe to the above sentiments and in the area of human resources conclude with the following observations:

1. The new Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs should proceed to plan and administer a manpower program which is consistent with the general ideas expressed in this report as well as the general policies which have been recommended by the ILO in earlier reports.

2. The Libyan Development Council should be a major force both in the economic expansion of Libya and in the coordination of the several ministries who are directly involved in economic development. If the Libyan Development Council is successful, it will eventually have to

take the initiative in coordinating several phases of manpower development with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of National Economy, organized labor, and organized employers.

3. An accelerated on-the-job training program is the quickest way to enhance the skills of Libyan workers.

4. The vocational education system should be expanded for auto mechanics and construction trades training. The facilities of the Commercial Division should be improved. A new school for training Vocational School teachers would appear to be justified.

5. The educational system in Libya must be modernized and upgraded. Technical education should be given prominence and expanded. Quality rather than quantity should be the order of the day. Dr. Frank Holmes, USOM/Libya, has valuable and practical ideas as to how to implement this phase of a manpower development program.

6. The fact that there are three electronic training programs under way in Libya is hopeful. The arrangement being established by Hycon-Page to train workers in the field of telecommunications should be continued by the Government of Libya as many workers in this general line of activity will be needed. It is precisely in this area of technical training where the Libyan education system is weakest.

7. I did not mention foreman training earlier in this report although it is a subject which needs attention. At a relatively early date some practical course on foreman training for Libyans should be established.

8. The Agricultural Division of USOM has tentative plans for road repair projects which might be approvable under Title II of United States Public Law No. 480 which deals with surplus commodities. Under this arrangement a portion of a worker's pay would be given in surplus commodities. It is desirable to have a few projects which involve heavy labor usage on the shelf so they could be implemented quickly if the unemployment situation should become more severe. This type of assistance, in my opinion, is not desirable in the long run but is a palliative which can be brought into play if the occasion warrants.

9. The problem of effective performance on the part of professional staff and civil servants in the Libyan Government is of tremendous importance. A vigorously prosecuted and highly geared training program within Government seems worth the relatively small amount of money and great amount of effort necessary to make it effective. The Government of Libya must make the most out of what it has during this interim period when many young Libyans are being educated and trained presumably to assume key roles in the administration of their government during future years.

10. A thirteen-week manpower training conference is being held in Washington, D.C. beginning April 17, 1961, and the Government of Libya

has been invited to send a representative. As the new Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is just developing its program, it would appear most timely for the Government of Libya to send a senior official to this training conference. In addition, it is hoped that the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs will recommend that one or two of its young executives be given fellowships under the participant training program for one year of study in the United States in the very near future.

11. The manpower survey in Libya should get under way by early summer 1961. If the ILO technicians working in the several government departments cannot handle this survey without additional technical assistance, the Government of Libya request a technician promptly so that either the United States or an international agency can supply him.

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