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Rural India In Transition

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DOUGLAS ENSMINGER

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All India Panchayat Parishad

First Published, March 1972

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PRINTED IN INDIA

By Aroon Purie at Thomson Press (India) Limited, Faridabad, Haryana and
Published by All India Panchayat Parishad, A 23, Kailash Colony,
New Delhi-48.

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To the one man Jawaharlal Nehru to whom India owes her debt for the Community Development Programme, Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj in the new phase.

The pages that follow are dedicated as a homage and a pledge that there are many a heart and mind still alive to nurture the child he had consecrated into being.

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RURAL INDIA IN TRANSITION

Introduction

Since the middle of 1948 till early 1952, I was engaged in building up the rural-cum-urban township in the erstwhile swampland of Nilokheri*. This was intended for the rehabilitation of people displaced from West Pakistan as a fore-runner of the pattern that could be emulated widely. The idea also was that the experiences gained from this limited rehabilitation township could offer fundamental lessons for the reconstruction of rural India with her 557,000 villages, in fulfilment of the promises made prior to Independence to 82 per cent of India's population dwelling in the countryside. The rural-cum-urban township of Nilokheri was being developed as part of a scheme titled 'Mazdoor Manzil' which had been submitted to the Ministry of Rehabilitation and had received whole-hearted support from Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India.

The 'Mazdoor Manzil' scheme envisaged a nucleus township housing a population between 5000 to 10,000 servicing a hinterland

*For further details the reader may refer to 'Nilokheri' by S.K. Dey, published by Asia Publishing House.

within a radius of 5 to 10 miles encompassing a rural population of between 25,000 to 40,000. The concept from the very beginning was based on the hypothesis that the march of modern science and technology cannot be kept a close preserve of the urban people. If the rural people were to participate in the benefits of modern science and technology, a reciprocal relationship has to be established between the urban servicing nucleus and the countryside so that the rural and the urban could grow and flourish as complements to each other rather than one parasiting on the other. The idea had received further recognition through the report of the Narialwala Committee, since gathering dust on the archives in the Government of India. The concept was such as to capture the imagination of Jawaharlal Nehru with a spontaneity. I had therefore the opportunity to work on this experiment in a week to week contact with the Prime Minister of India who never failed to visit Nilokheri every year to see how the project was shaping.

About the middle of 1951 a long distance trunk telephone call came from the Prime Minister's office to my tent office at Nilokheri. The Prime Minister demanded my immediate presence at New Delhi. When I arrived in the capital I was asked by the Prime Minister to see Mr. Paul Hoffman, the President of the American Ford Foundation, who had come to India to explore the possibility of some programme with which the Ford Foundation could have immediate collaboration. Paul Hoffman had been a high Executive in the Studebaker Motor Corporation in America and was the Administrator of the Marshall Plan in Europe before he took up the office of the President of the Ford Foundation. To my utter surprise I found this ace Administrator and Industrialist talking to me all the time about the supreme importance of rural development as the foundation for the further growth of this country in science, technology and freedom.

After the dialogue was over a new scheme evolved on behalf of the Ford Foundation and in collaboration with the Government of India which envisaged 15 Pilot Projects in 15 States of India each encompassing a rural population of approximately 60,000 to 80,000. The programme primarily envisaged agriculture, rural sanitation and allied activities based on self-help by the people. Government was to provide a nucleus staff for the purpose and some very limited funds as nuclei for promoting the programmes. A Village Level Worker was envisaged for every 5 villages who would

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receive special orientation in Agricultural Extension spread over a period of 3 months. The same could be offered for the other staff at the headquarter of each of the projects. Five Agriculture Colleges in India were adopted for the development of an Extension Wing to carry out this special orientation programme. Dr. Douglas Ensminger, then a youngman came as the Ford Foundation Representative to promote this programme as the highest priority. Douglas Ensminger was a Rural Sociologist from the University of Missouri. After his initial training in Agriculture, and later in rural sociology, he had a further wealth of experience in the U.S. Extension programme under the leadership of the eminent Sociologist Dr. M.L. Wilson who was incharge of the Extension Department in the United States Government.

As the Ford Foundation Projects started forging ahead, we had the visit to India of another eminent American who is now a familiar figure in the Indian mind—Chester Bowles as the Ambassador of the United States Government. He had in his pocket a provision of 50 million dollars on behalf of the U.S. Government to assist finance India's development. Towards the close of the year 1951 a call came to me from Secretary General Bajpai of the External Affairs Ministry on behalf of the Prime Minister asking me to come immediately to Delhi and meet the U.S. Ambassador. The meeting took place. Chester Bowles and Mrs. Bowles came to spend a day and night at Nilokheri at the instance of the Prime Minister to examine the feasibility of multiplying the Nilokheri Growth Centre scheme throughout the country.

At the insistence of Chester Bowles I made a visit to Etawah in Uttar Pradesh where a scheme for Agricultural Extension had been proceeding under the chairmanship of Pandit Govind Balabh Pant, the then Chief Minister of U.P. as a pilot experiment for finding a correct approach to rural development. The Etawah project had by then been worked for about 4 years with the active collaboration on the one hand of a group of very efficient officers from the U.P. Government and on the other two Americans—one Albert Mayer an architect from New York, but with deep commitment to rural development and another ace Extension man, Horace Holmes, who hailed from the U.S. Extension Department. An examination of the Project at Etawah revealed to me that Etawah was moving more or less in line with the Ford Foundation Project of Rural Extension in Agriculture and related subjects, and constituted in a way the rural

counterpart of the 'Mazdoor Manzil' composite scheme which formed the basis of the urban counterpart we were working out at Nilokheri.

A scheme therefore evolved for working out a composite rural-cum-urban programme involving the building up of both a Growth Centre nucleus as well as the development of the rural hinterland based on the experiences already gathered at Nilokheri and Etawah as well as in the 15 Ford Foundation Pilot Projects. The new programme envisaged a much more intensive quantum of assistance flowing into the rural areas and also the coverage of all fields of development in the village—agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery, poultry, irrigation, soil conservation, communications, public health, education, social education, rural industrialisation, women's and children's programmes, indeed every element that entered into the life of the villager. The draft outline of the programme which received the sanction of the Government of India stated at the very beginning that :

"The purpose of the Community Projects shall be to serve as a pilot in the establishment, for the men, women and children covered by the project areas of the 'Right to Live'; food—the principal item in the wherewithals for this purpose—receiving the primary emphasis in the initial stages of the programme."

The broad features aimed at in the community project areas as outlined in the draft outline, as a physical target are given in Appendix I.

As the programme envisaged the involvement of all the nation building departments from the village up to the national level, a Central Committee was formed at the national level with the Prime Minister as the Chairman, the Members of the Planning Commission, the Minister of Food & Agriculture as Members. An Administrator was appointed to plan and direct the programme, and all nation building Ministries were directed to collaborate with the programme through the C.P.A. (Community Projects Administration) which had been specially created for the purpose. Unfortunately despite the insistence of the Administrator to adhere to the composite projects, sheer public pressure for wide expansion in the programme even at the very inception, forced the Government to accept the rural extension part of the composite project as the

general pattern throughout the country. Only six composite projects were sanctioned for West Bengal. 49 constituted pure rural programme for the rest of the country.

Even before the programme was formally inaugurated on the 2nd of October 1952, work had started in all the areas with an enthusiasm which had hardly ever been seen in the country before, except perhaps during the peak of the non-cooperation movement, if at all. Another 110 areas had necessarily to be added to the original 55 in the course of six months. Demands from Members in the State Legislatures and from Members of Parliament continued sky-rocketing. It was difficult to resist the mounting political pressures for expansion in the programme. A new scheme was therefore evolved called the National Extension Service which envisaged some limited nucleus funds but the same staffing pattern, namely a coordinating officer called the Block Development Officer encompassing about 100 villages with a population between 60,000 to 80,000 supported by Extension Officers in agriculture, animal husbandry, rural engineering, public health, cooperation, social education, women's and children's programme and rural industries. Every Block envisaged the deployment of 10 Village Level Workers with a basic High School education augmented by extension training in new Extension Training Centres created throughout the country. The period of extension training was extended from 3 months to 6 months and then a year and a half and finally to 2 years. Nearly 100 Extension Training Centres were established in the country to cope with the enormous programme of training. There were also 13 Block Development Officers Training Centres and other Specialised Training Centres for training of women workers, for social education organisers and public health workers.

For administering the programme, the same set up was established at the State level with the Chief Minister as the Chairman of the State Development Committee or Board, with Ministers representing the nation building departments as Members and a highly competent officer as Development Commissioner. At the district level the Collector was expected to give the same lead through a District Development Committee representing district officials as well as non-official members in the State Legislature and Parliament hailing from the district and prominent social workers. The Block level Committee represented the same spectrum, with the Sub Divisional Officer acting as the head of the team for supervisory

guidance on behalf of the Collector and the District Development Committee.

When the programme was confined to 55 Blocks it was manageable because these could be visited and supervised personally both by the Central Administrator as well as by the State Development Commissioners. Once the more diluted version of the programme through National Extension Service came into the scene, personnel whether at the Village, Block or District levels suffered a sharp decline in quality. During those early years, the nation building departments at the State level as well as at the Centre, were busy grappling with respective jurisdiction rather than expertise, input and approaches to extension of their respective faculties which in any society anywhere, are a matter of time. Meanwhile expectations of people had been aroused through the enormous initiative reflected virtually throughout the country from the newly set up administration and through the people's representatives who were willy nilly drawn into the orbit of the programme in spite of themselves. While needs of people and demands from them were escalating in geometric progression, the expertise and inputs in departments could grow at best in arithmetic progression. The gap between aspirations and fulfilment yawned wider with every passing day. A new leadership was sprouting from the soil from amongst the people hitherto unknown. A future threat to existing leadership reflected in the State Legislature and in the Parliament, was already visible.

A national programme encompassing 400 million rural people across the four corners of the country could not be implemented without setting some definite targets from year to year in every field of development. The programme had already expanded phenomenally. Indeed, while America took 50 years with all her enormous resources for establishing a rural extension programme covering 7 per cent of her population, India was obliged under political pressure to set a target of coverage of the whole country with National Extension Service programme in 8 years and the more extensive dosage of the Community Development programme in 12 years. Both the programme as well as the input had necessarily to be diluted under this abnormal speed of expansion beyond the limits of tolerance. To climax it all, a nucleus of functionaries was injected into the programme as Block Development Officers hailing from the Revenue Department who had been used through the ages to functioning from within ivory towers and concerned largely

with attainment of targets rather than in education of people to help themselves through the slow process of extension and assimilation. The impulse that had been generated in the early phase of the programme began necessarily to move in the direction of an anti-climax.

The democratic government we had in the country precluded any curtailment in the expansion programme. Yet a way had to be found out of the impasse. Unfortunately dissensions also began to grow within the Planning Commission for overlordship in the programme to an extent that it grew impossible to run the programme any longer from within the Planning Commission. On the 9th of September 1956, the Prime Minister asked me to meet him in his study at Tin Murti House around midnight. 'My dear friend', he said, "I thought the CPA would function as a tail attached to the Planning Commission. I wanted the dog to wag the tail. I find, the tail has begun to wag the dog. It would be unnatural for me to order the tail not to wag the way it is doing. I also cannot get the dog to wag the tail any longer. I have, therefore, made my choice. I wish to separate the tail from the dog. I have decided to create a new Ministry of C.D. at the Centre. This, perhaps, would be the first Ministry of its kind in the world. This could be revolutionary and I have decided to appoint you as the Minister."

I struggled hard to persuade the Prime Minister to the contrary. It was quite clear to me that there could be no room for a separate Ministry interloping in the affairs virtually of all the Ministries dealing with rural programmes. They were bound to clash sooner or later. It was also not certain that this new Ministry would receive the support of the Planning Commission in requisite measures. The body, which could run the programme which was one largely of coordination, could only be one under or in close association with the Planning Commission. If the Prime Minister wanted to raise the level of the organisation and if he wanted to make use of the Administrator without curtailing his position, the latter could be made an ex-officio Member of the Planning Commission. That would constitute the most satisfactory arrangement. The Planning Commission in any case had a wide term of reference and, because of its composition and wide functions vis-a-vis the States and the Central Ministries, it would be in a position to lend both dignity and effectiveness to this growing organisation.

The Prime Minister, however, had made up his mind. He added

"VTK* is convinced that the functions of the Planning Commission itself would be disturbed if the CPA which is both a coordinating and an executive organ were to be part of the Planning Commission."

As Administrator CPA, I continued my argument and eventually extracted a promise from the Prime Minister that the latter would not take any action till after my return from the South in the evening of September 16 as I had been committed to this programme beginning the next morning. The Prime Minister agreed. I left puzzled as to the wisdom of the next step that was being contemplated. As I landed at the Safdarjang aerodrome at 7 p.m. on September 16 on my return from the South, I was told that the Rashtrapati Bhavan had issued a communique in the evening at 6 p.m. creating a new Ministry of Community Development and appointing me as the Minister. So the die was cast.

A Committee was appointed by the Government of India soon after the creation of the new Ministry, headed by Balwantrai Mehta, later the Chief Minister of Gujarat to study the working of Community Development programme in India and suggest how best it could be maintained and implemented in vigour. The Committee recommended a three-tier system of Local Government christened Panchayati Raj by Jawaharlal Nehru. This provided for the village panchayat to be made statutorily responsible for a good deal of the development programme at the village level. A Panchayat Samiti was envisaged at the Block level consisting of the representatives of the village people headed by a chairman directing and guiding the agency at the Block level and implementing development programmes in more intimate rapport with the people. A similar body was envisaged at the district level. The new programme of Panchayati Raj began to operate from the year 1959 in Andhra and Rajasthan to start with and then spreading to other States. The programme was implemented without any reservations whatsoever in Gujarat and Maharashtra, with some reservations in Rajasthan, Andhra, Tamil Nadu and Assam. In the rest of the States the response varied from reluctant implementation to dilution, diarchy and ritualism in the system. Two States in particular, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh enacted the legislation, but the legislation remained in cold storage and has only lately been brought to see daylight.

From the limited experience in the short run of the working of Panchayati Raj, it was evident that it had the potential for building

*Sir V.T. Krishnamachari, then Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission.

up a new leadership organically from grass-roots in the field of political democracy. Political democracy by itself would not go far enough. Economic democracy must travel alongside. Therefore Cooperation was transferred from the Ministry of Food & Agriculture and made a new department in the Ministry of Community Development. Jawaharlal Nehru the Prime Minister gave a clear mandate with the approval of the whole Cabinet, for giving a new look and substance to the Cooperative Movement. It was planned to cover every village within the orbit of a multi-purpose Cooperative Service Society supported from above by Cooperative Marketing Unions for marketing of agricultural produce, a Central Bank for credit, Processing Unions for processing of agricultural produce and Consumer Unions for servicing the rural people with consumer needs. The unions were expected to build up federations of their own at the State level and then at national level.

The two-pronged programme of political democracy and economic democracy started forging ahead depending on the vagaries of the soil in which the programme operated, with achievements more or less concurrent in both the fields. The new forces unleashed through a vigorous injection of this programme brought the deficiencies of nation building departments to still sharper contrasts. The Community Development and National Extension Service programme which had already gone beyond the limits of tolerance, was exposed equally in its inadequacies to meet and cope with the nature and the volume of the challenges posed by people's aspirations further accentuated by those new representatives both in Cooperatives as well as in Panchayati Raj institutions.

Meanwhile vested interests in the country had been gnashing their teeth in their impotent rage against Jawaharlal Nehru for what they considered Jawaharlal Nehru's designs to usher in socialism threatening their close preserves—political, economic and social. The bolt came from the blue in October 1962 in our debacle with the Chinese on the Himalayas. Jawaharlal Nehru never was the same in body, mind or spirit after the event. Deliberate tirade mounted against him from expected as well as unexpected quarters. The venom was directed against every revolutionary concept which Jawaharlal Nehru held near to his heart. Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Cooperation became a natural target. The so-called elite and the majority of newspapers owned by the custodians of the zeros to whom Jawaharlal Nehru was a positive threat, echoed the

sentiments in chorus. Some otherwise well intentioned people also fell in line with the mounting criticism against Panchayati Raj, Sahakari Samaj and Samuhik Vikas (Local Government, Co-operation and Community Development). The death of Jawaharlal Nehru 27th of May 1964 sealed for a time the glorious chapter of basic efforts for building up political, economic and social democracy from the roots.

Lal Bahadur Shastri succeeded Jawaharlal Nehru. Jawaharlal Nehru's memory was still fresh in the mind of the people. He did not tinker in any material way, with any programme in the country connected with Jawaharlal Nehru and his inspiration. He died following Tashkent. Indira Gandhi the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru came in power in January 1966. Community Development was merged in the sprawling Ministry of Food & Agriculture and has continued ever since as a past legacy which has to be kept up. The vendetta against the programme has been so universal that even the Minister incharge of the Ministry of Agriculture which encompasses all these activities, is virtually helpless except on the fringe, to nourish this programme with the vital nutrients it calls for. Politically it has proved impossible for State Governments to abolish the programme or the personnel. Even where an attempt was made to demolish the programme in Madhya Pradesh, the status quo had to be restored after nearly 3 years at considerable loss in efficiency and morale during this period.

We have today more than a dozen Secretaries and Additional Secretaries doing outstanding work at the Centre who had been Development Commissioners in their own time in the States. We have nearly 50 Members in the Parliament today who have held office either in a Panchayati Raj institution or in the Cooperative system in their States. At the State level we have likewise Secretaries/ Heads of Departments and officers down the line who have worked in one capacity or the other in the Community Development programme. The same feature applies to Members in the State Legislatures and in the State Cabinets. Those who hail from the grass-roots are a remarkable contrast to others who have functioned away from the field.

Agriculture has at last begun to forge ahead in a way to be hailed as the Green Revolution in India. We have at last the seeds that we need for the fields, the fertilisers, the insecticides and the cultural practices which our Research Departments in Agriculture are

now in a position to offer. The ground had been prepared through years of intensive work despite acute shortages in the input, to create in the farmer the receptivity for change. Prices for Agricultural commodities have at last been made realistic after years of pressures on the Government. The farmer throughout the country despite his so-called illiteracy has taken to improved methods which reflect in a yield of over 100 million tonnes of foodgrains against near 50 millions which we produced two decades back. The input is still not adequate to the escalating needs. But this was inherent in the abnormal emphasis we placed on industrial development over the years to the virtual neglect in building up resources for agriculture and our over-dependence on people's initiative in these vital matters to act as substitutes for the substance of input.

Primary schools are there within easy access of every village in the country from NEFA to Kutch and from Ladakh to Kanya Kumari even though the quality of the curriculum and the competence in the teacher leave yet a lot to be built up over an inescapable length of time. The rural-cum-urban development conceived in the fields adjoining Kurukshetra 25 years back has now found expression in the concept of the 'Growth Centre' which has at last acquired respectability and acceptance. The idea is sinking steadily albeit slowly, that development to endure must evolve into an integrated rural-urban continuum. Substantial programmes are being envisaged for employment of the rural unemployed and under-employed, also for special help to small and marginal farmers.

Meanwhile the growing trend in centralisation whether political, economic or social, which runs diametrically opposite to decentralisation of initiative, which we worked for over the years, is beginning at last to lead to second thoughts in people who ponder over the shape of things today. The relatively excellent performance given under Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj in both Gujarat and Maharashtra stand as a living monument of what can be achieved if there is a will to share power with the people on the part of those who are at the helm. As a nation we have made a phenomenal investment in the Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj programmes in this country—investment in money, man-power, hopes and aspirations.

The All India Panchayat Parishad was created by Balwantrai Mehta designed to act as a federation and a national custodian of the concept of Panchayati Raj. It has been the obligation of the A.I.P.P.

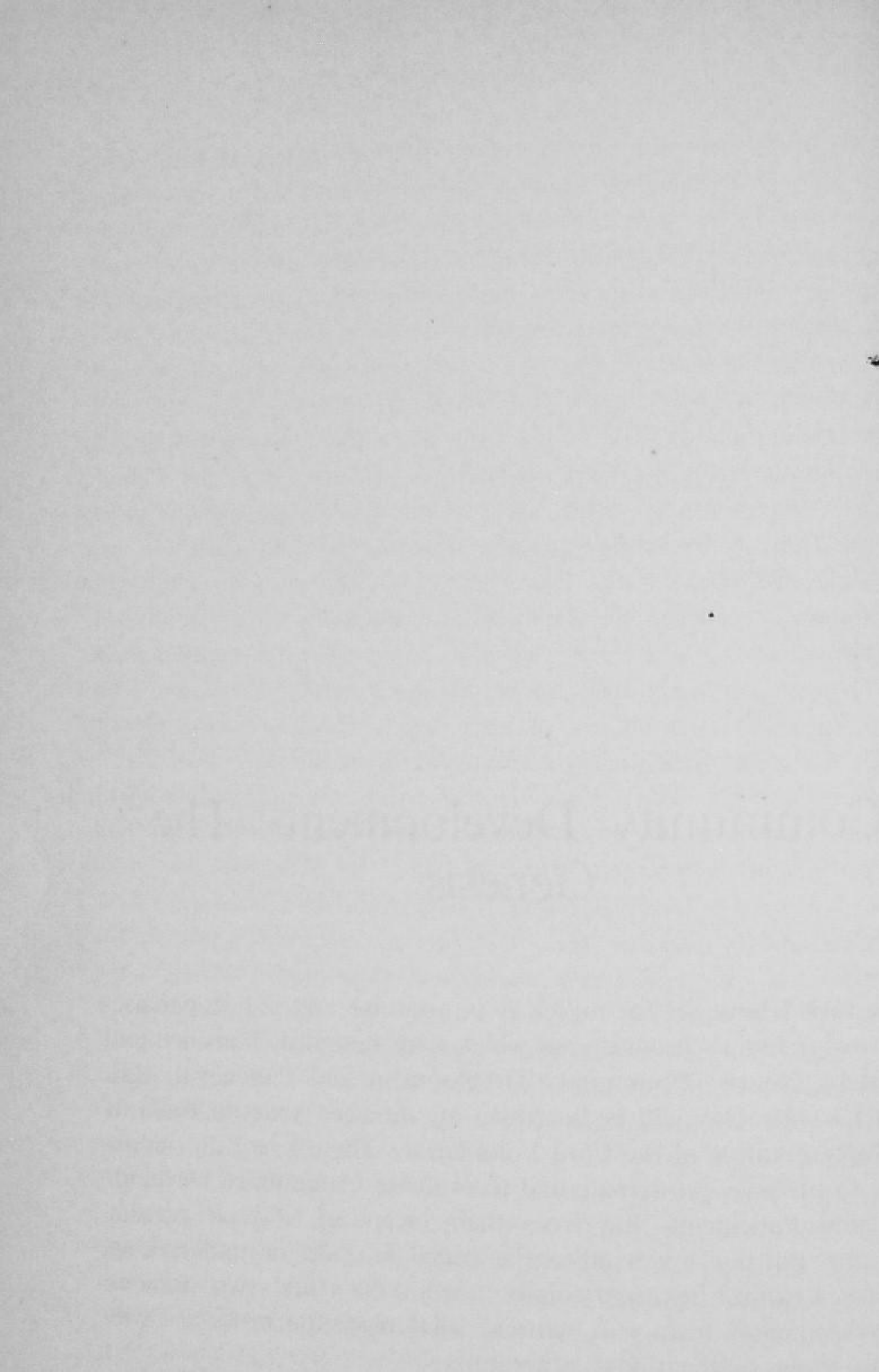
to act as an attorney for Panchayati Raj institutions and present before the nation a mirror of these institutions both in concept and in reality. AIPP has suffered the vicissitudes of fortunes ever since the passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru. With the meagre support AIPP receives from the States in the form of grants-in-aid, some token from the Central Government and assistance from the Indian Council of Social Science Research and some support from its own constituents in the States, A.I.P.P. has been ploughing its lone furrow over the years with Community Development and Panchayati Raj submerged in a sea of deliberate denigration. Now that a chink seems to be opening for rethinking over the whole issue, A.I.P.P. felt obliged to help support this process of rethinking. It is carrying out some research programme on Panchayati Raj through assistance from the Indian Council of Social Science Research. But research by its very nature cannot give a bird's eyeview of the programme from its inception to the present stage.

There are two Americans who probably have no peers in their understanding of the Indian problems and their commitment to people as both the means and the ends in society. One is Chester Bowles and the other Dr. Douglas Ensminger. Dr. Ensminger had the closest of association with the programme of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj over the 19 years of his stewardship of the Ford Foundation in India. Apart from having been the pioneer for the 15 Pilot Projects initiated by Ford Foundation late 1951, he has participated in the entire gamut of training programme both in India and abroad of functionaries in the programme from the ground upto the national level. The Extension Training Centres for Village Level Workers, Social Education Organisers Training Centres, Training Centres for Block Development and other Extension Officers, Women workers, the National Institute of Study and Research in Community Development, the programme for travel across India by non-official community leaders, the rural institutes for producing basic personnel for C.D. programme, universities and other institutions taking up short term training of teachers in Community Development and a galaxy of associated activities received both financial and technical assistance of the Ford Foundation through this unique person. Ensminger never failed to attend and make his own individual contribution to Development Commissioners' Conferences every year, to National

and Regional Seminars and Symposia. His contribution to the programme is a chapter by itself. Dr. Ensminger has not only participated in the programme of implementing Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj but also a good many of the major developments in the nation-building activities of the Government and of the people. His work in allied fields has gone to contribute lateral support to the basic programme for development of the people.

Dr. Ensminger is now far away back to the University where he had his education. For over a year he has now been the Coordinator of Social Science Studies at the Missouri University in Columbia working in the atmosphere of that ancient University in close collaboration with all the basic faculties that deal with 'Power to the People'. Now that he has been away from the scene for a long enough time, I asked him if he would be willing to respond to his first love again, look back across the years and give us from this long distance, at this lapse of time and in the new environment in which today he is submerged, a panoramic evaluation of all that he saw and sees. Dr. Ensminger wrote a series of articles covering the entire landscape as a labour of love. These were published in 'Panchayat Aur Insan', the monthly journal of the A.I.P.P., also simultaneously in the 'Indian Express' through the courtesy of the Editor. Because of the response that these articles aroused in the readers and the incisive character of his findings we came to the conclusion in the A.I.P.P., that this precious material should be brought out in the form of a book for use by the elite, the lay public as well as the functionaries in the programme. The chapters here reflect the mind and heart of a kindred soul pulsating with all the aspirations that any Indian could have for the forgotten villager and the role he must play if democracy in India is to be a reality and not a sham.

Dr. Ensminger has never failed to respond whenever I had called on him in the past to write for our workers. We have a lot of literature from his pen which remains original, cutting across time and space. A.I.P.P. is grateful to this dedicated human-being hailing from the opposite face of this planet who has given us a chance to listen to what he has to say out of the core of his being. The book is now offered for critical appraisal and assimilation by all who profess their faith in 'Power to the People'.



Community Development—The Genesis

The task I have set for myself is to appraise and put in perspective, two of India's programmes which were designed, launched and guided by Nehru—Community Development and Panchayati Raj. What I have to say will be based on my nineteen years in India as the Representative of the Ford Foundation. There I had an opportunity to observe, participate and to evaluate Community Development and Panchayati Raj from their inception to their present state. In putting my hand to the pencil as I do in undertaking this task, I cannot help but wonder when India's first two decades of developmental history is written, what place the historians will give to these two national programmes.

As of this writing, Community Development has gone through three distinct phases. It was launched on October 2, 1952 and during the decade of the fifties was projected as a dynamic force to revolutionise village India. Largely because Community Development projected expectations for new and improved ways of living and

making a living, as short run changes—five, ten or fifteen years—instead of decades and even generations, and Community Development didn't bring about the expected changes, political leaders became disillusioned with Community Development in the sixties. For political leaders, planners and administrators, Community Development was in the sixties used as the scapegoat to explain away India's 'failure' to solve its food problem. As the decade of the seventies unfolds, one sees the beginning of fresh thinking about Community Development. Where the recent thinking will lead can only be speculated, but I would venture a guess that Community Development will be restored, updated and appropriately modified and again given a place of pride in India's natural development.

Few seem to be aware of at least four basic factors which influenced India's early thinking and led to the commitment to initiate a national Community Development programme. The most important single factor which motivated Nehru to champion the cause of Community Development and to vigorously support it till his death, was that he early saw in Community Development the means—the vehicle, the way—to keep his and other freedom fighters pledge made to the people during the struggle for independence, which paraphrased was, "You village people join us in the struggle for independence and when we are free, I will pledge your new government to doing all within its power to remove from the villages of India, the heavy burdens of disease, ignorance, and poverty."

A second major factor which was responsible for Nehru's unqualified support of Community Development was that while he recognised India was a nation of poor people, the people who lived in India's 550 thousand villages to him were one of, if not India's greatest underdeveloped and most valued resource. To Nehru, the greatest contribution he helped to come of Community Development was the development of the people as humanbeings and their competence in managing their own village institutions, and in solving most of their problems on a self-help basis, looking to and drawing on government as a resource but not the one to whom the villagers should look to solve most of their problems.

A third factor which influenced thinking and was responsible for the support of the Planning Commission initiating a national Community Development programme was the report of the Sir V.T. Krishnamachari Committee on Evaluation of India's then

national Grow More Food Campaign. The Grow More Food Campaign which was a national programme to assist cultivators set up production to meet the nations food requirements. The Krishnamachari Committee findings highlighted the fact that while the nations highest priority was for more food; the village people had their own priorities and these were for village schools, health services, roads and water. In essence, the Krishnamachari Committee report said that the route to attracting the interest of the village cultivators in applying improved farming methods essential for increased production was first to help the village people find solutions to what was bothering them and that once they were assured that the government was interested in helping them solve their problems, the villagers would respond to being helped to improve their agricultural output.

A fourth contributing factor was at the time of Independence and well into the Second Five Year Plan, Gandhi's philosophy and teachings greatly influenced policy and programme decisions related to village India. Gandhi's commitment to improve living conditions of the 80 per cent of India's people who lived in the villages, was following his assassination, accepted as a mandate by his followers and seldom challenged by political leaders, planners and government officials. The Gandhian philosophy of the village as being the centre of the people's universe was a compelling influence in giving shape and commitment to Community Development with the village as the focus.

Over the years, I have pondered two questions, both related to basic Nehru policy decisions taken during the early period of conceiving and launching Community Development. The first question pertains to Nehru and the Planning Commission (specific programmes to be achieved) for a programme which had long-range objectives—the development of human resources—the people.

As I reflect on this dilemma, I can understand how Nehru's mind was working. I think he anticipated, with his canny political wisdom, that if initially he presented Community Development to Parliament as a programme designed to change and develop village India over a span of several decades, if not generations, Parliament might not have voted the Community Development budget. Nehru was right in getting started with Community Development and this he did with a vengeance, in that during his life-time, the infra-structure that linked all India's 550 thousand villages in an organised

Block with a staff and development budget was achieved. Certainly the historians will record the building of the Community Development infra-structure during the period of India's first two Five Year Plans as being a monumental achievement, in that communication established with village India and village people began their "thousand mile journey" of recreating a new and vital village culture. Nehru saw during his life-time, the foundational structure laid for the long range goals to be achieved over generations of time—to bring about a cultural and economic transformation of village India. Nehru also saw during his life-time, the contribution Community Development had made in awakening of village people from their slumber and their growing awareness in free, independent India. They, the village people, no longer had to live as they had in the past. Yes, Nehru saw during the declining years of his life the most significant of all changes in India since Independence—the change in outlook of village people. What Nehru didn't see was an equally significant change in outlook of government to match and give leadership to the change in attitudes and outlook of village people.

A second question which has troubled many was, why did Nehru early support blanketing the nation with Community Development Blocks when doing so meant a watered down programme with many Blocks inadequately or poorly staffed. This decision I understand and emotionally supported, even though intellectually I knew the problems the decision to spread would create. If I had been in Nehru's position, I would have made the same decision. I didn't then and I don't now, see how Nehru could have made any other decision. Nehru couldn't say to the village people who looked to him for help in removing their burden of hunger, disease and ignorance, that they would have to wait another ten to twentyfive years while the country gained more experience in Community Development, could train superior staff and the country had the resources to invest in village improvement. Another factor influencing Nehru's decision to early blanket the country with Community Development Blocks was ever mounting pressure by Members of Parliament, each wanting a Community Development Block for his constituency. It may be a harsh judgment but nevertheless, it is true, the politicians who pressured for a Community Block in their constituency did so because of the new money then visualised would accompany creating and organising a Community Block.

Few of the political leaders really understood the basic philosophy of Community Development, that it was a programme to develop the people's competence to solve their problems and on a self-help basis, and that the development funds for a block were "resource funds" to support what village people felt they needed and were proposed in the first instance to contribute leadership, their own money and labour. The same politicians who went all out to get a Block sanctioned for their constituency turned against it when they thought it politically expedient in the sixties to get on the bandwagon of criticising and condemning Community Development. One can only conclude that few are the political leaders who themselves have deep commitments to the long and difficult task which, unlike building a steel mill, takes time to see the fruits of one's labour. But unlike the steel mill, which will belch black smoke to pollute the environment, Community Development will contribute towards the socio-economic, cultural and political advancement of the basic foundations of India's economy and culture—the 550 thousand villages.

Self-Help The Primary Objective

Community Development was conceived, planned and initiated as a people's self-help programme. Parliament appropriated funds annually on condition that the funds had to be committed within the year appropriated or revert to the treasury. The administrative bureaucracy—Centre and State—projected targets and allocated funds for the specific projects by Community Blocks.

At the outset it is important to appreciate that the above three interacting philosophies and modes of operating were in contradiction and when implemented could be expected to negate the basic and underlying philosophy of Community Development being a people's self-help programme. The programmes to be achieved in each Block were established by administrative people in the Central and State Governments, with all too much uniformity. Parliament judged the programmes on the basis of funds committed and targets achieved, i.e., number of schools constructed, miles of road built, wells dug, primary health centres opened, new Community Blocks opened, etc.

Since in this chapter, I want to examine the self-help concept of Community Development, we need to get perspective about the basic attitudes of village people at the time of India's Independence; the lack of experience of the administrative bureaucracy in working with people and more specifically in their accepting village people, most of whom were illiterate, as being intelligent and capable of growth in giving leadership as well as to effectively participate in self-help programmes. Equally important was Parliament's orientation in thinking that money appropriated annually could be spent uniformly Block by Block on self-help-programmes that required first, an expression of the people's concern about their problems and second, that the concern be strong enough to motivate people to action in solving their problems.

Few understood the complexities the village people would face when confronted for the first time in being expected to solve problems under their own leadership; through their institutions and with the expectation that most of the resources would be contributed by the people. It was a completely new idea for the people to think of the governmental funds budgeted for the Community Block as being resources to help the people solve their problems. The contradiction in a people's self-help philosophy was compounded by budgetary and target priorities being set from outside and imposed on the people.

Let us now examine these three conflicting interacting philosophies—a people's self-help programme, administratively established targets, and Parliament's appropriated funds to be committed within the budget year and for administratively prescribed purposes. In the thinking back of the decision to launch India's Community Development programme was Nehru's two early concerns and questions about the village people in accepting a government initiated and administered village self-help programme and whether or not government could attract young men who, once trained, would live and work in the villages.

It was at Nehru's request that the Ford Foundation's first grant in India, approved in December, 1951, was made in support of an experiment in organising fifteen pilot village development, self-help oriented projects, and five centres to train the first Village Level Workers. Before making a decision to launch a national Community Development programme, Nehru said he wanted to test out village response and acceptance to a village development programme

initiated and administered by government that was self-help in its philosophy. Nehru also wanted to test out in the five new village Extension Training Centres, whether or not young men of at least matriculation standing would join the training centre and later live and work in the villages.

While the first village extension workers recruited for the fifteen pilot extension blocks were given only minimum training, they were carefully selected and closely supervised. The initial village response to the new village workers was cautious, suspicious, indifferent, and in a few cases hostile. It took time, patience, skill and an opportunity for the village workers to demonstrate their interest and sincerity in wanting to be of service to village people. It took time for village people to understand that the new village workers were coming to them from "their government", the government of new, free and Independent India. Many village people expressed doubts about the sincerity of the village workers if they were from the government, remembering as they did, previous and many times distasteful experience with village workers who in the past also came to them from government. But in the past, the workers represented the rulers of India—the British. The new village workers were different in that they represented the newly formed government of the people of India. It took time for the new concept of government—their government—to have meaning to them. It also took time for the new village extension workers to get experience in helping the people decide what they themselves wanted, and together—the village worker and the village people—began introducing and testing new agricultural practices, bringing medical aids close to the village, opening up village roads, building schools, digging wells, etc. Success brought confidence to the villagers in the new village workers and established the village worker as a friend, interested in the welfare of the villagers.

The first of the five extension training centres opened and advertised for applicants to apply. The centre wanted to recruit 100 young men of at least matriculation standing. Over four thousand young men applied. These fifteen pilot extension projects and the five village worker training centres early provided Nehru with answers to his two questions. He now had the evidence that village people would, if properly approached; respond to a government-sponsored, village-oriented self-help programme and that India's young men would come forward to live and work in the villages.

We need now examine in depth the background, attitudes, values, social structure and experience of village people at the time of independence as a basis of understanding the complexities of introducing into village India a national village development programme having as its basic philosophy and objective, the full, effective and continuous involvement of the people in finding solutions to the many problems of village India. Self-help implied an awareness of a problem, a desire to change, a capacity to analyse problems, and experience in weighing alternative solutions. Here honesty commands, one face realities in accepting as a fact that at the time India's Community Development programme was introduced, village people had no background or experience to draw on in preparing to accept responsibility for a self-help programme. Instead of being change-oriented, village people had come to accept life tomorrow as being more of what it was in the past. What to the outsider may have been a glaring problem, was to village people an accepted way of life in the village. While people lived in clusters of villages, villages were not made up of a group of people having a common interest. Far from it. Village India was caste-ridden and *status quo* in its orientation.

The Community Development administration early recognised, Community Development would in the final analysis be judged by its success in educating and motivating village people to effectively participate in a self-help programme. The task of awakening village people from their traditional slumber and in preparing them to participate in a self-help programme was early entrusted to a new person added to the Community Block staff. This person was called the Social Educator. As important as was the role conceived for the Social Educator, the technical specialist and administrative people who felt their success would be judged by concrete achievements, the effect was those who pushed for achievement of targets within a prescribed time, were forever in conflict with the Social Educator. To administrative and technical staff, what was important was to build so many miles of road, construct a given number of schools or inoculate a targeted number of children; whereas the Social Educator held, the important thing was that the people themselves first recognised the existence of a problem; second, wanted to solve it; third, that they were prepared to provide the leadership to solve it and finally, only if the village people thought of it; as being of value and concern to them and would take pride in acceptance of responsibility for its continuance.

The Social Educator approach of educating the people to change and preparing the people to make the changes took time and delayed the achievement of targets and the commitment of funds budgeted for the Blocks. Parliamentary pressures supported by public opinion for early concrete achievements from funds appropriated were in fact, so great as to force Community Development Administration to retreat with the Social Educator approach and finally to eliminate them as members of the Block staff.

The Social Educator approach was right for village India. It was well conceived and had it prevailed over the achievement of targets approach, the ground for a self-help programme could over time have been laid. In the final analysis, the success of Community Development must be judged not by the achievement in the short run of targets, but rather in the long pull by the evidence of growth and development of the competence of people in increasingly looking to themselves for leadership, institutional competence, and most of the resources to solve most of their problems. These kinds of changes that are attitudinal and value-oriented come from programmes of continuous out of school education, from a ground swell of desire for change; from an understanding and judgment of alternatives and some outside money applied with great care and flexibility to match and round out what the people first commit themselves to do. India has plenty of evidence to support the conclusion that the village people have the capacity to be educated to give leadership for successfully participating in self-help programmes.

Let's now take a look at the administrative bureaucracy which couldn't have been more ill-equipped to give leadership to a people-oriented village self-help programme. The Indian administrative services created to serve the British interest in maintaining law and order was in direct conflict with the philosophy of helping people organise to assume the initiative in solving their problems. When the British Rajas departed, the Indian administrators moved over and accepted the seats previously held by the British, and in all too many, instantly took on the role of the departed British Rajas. Instead of being *status quo* oriented as was the British administration, Community Development was people, institutions, action and change oriented, with the interest and initiative being generated by village people. For the first time, Indian administrators were expected to play the role of change agents, and to be servants of the

people involving village people directly in decisions about what the village people wanted, and to look upon government as a resource rather than the one who traditionally commanded obedience. With this administrative background, the one thing administration felt comfortable in doing was establishing targets and in pressing village people to accept the imposed targets. In many cases, the imposition of targets and action expected was like a command performance. So strong was the administrative pressure to achieve targets that the people who had the final responsibility for getting results felt compelled to falsify achievements.

We now turn to conflicting philosophies of Parliament in meaning to be supportive of a national self-help oriented Community Development programme which by its methods of annual appropriations, and judging performance by achievement of targets, proved to be a major deterrent to Community Development taking roots as a people's self-help programme. More money was spent on Community Development with less lasting results than would have been the case if the emphasis had been placed on the response of the people to do things for themselves with the government money held in reserve for when it was needed to supplement rather than being out in front as a lure to a fish, hoping for an early bite. While all self-help programmes must be backed by money, great discretion must be exercised in how and when the money is committed. No amount of outside money can buy the people's interest, and commitment to work together in solving their problems.

There should be no two views about the importance, yes, necessity for Community Development setting forth objectives—targets to be achieved in the Community Blocks. This was important to assure uniformity of opportunity for all village people. But what was wrong in Community Development's approach was its failure to appreciate the need for great flexibility in allowing for the time factor in people themselves being ready and willing to accept responsibility for change in both their way of living and making a living.

In reflecting about changing ways of thinking and ways of doing things, an appreciation is needed of what is involved timewise in educating village people for change and in accepting responsibility for solving problems. In this process, there should be both long and short term objectives. Short range objectives can be getting early acceptance of specific improved agricultural practices, supporting such things as having children inoculated against smallpox,

construction of village approach road, digging a well or construction of a school building. These things can be achieved through intensive and continuous out of school education.

Let me now move to the time factor in change. We know, village people who are the adults—the present parents and village leaders—will early accept short range objectives. For the most part, they will remain oriented to 'traditionalism' the remainder of their lives. Keeping in mind the long range objectives of India's Community Development programme, we must in our education emphasise throughout, the importance of cultural transformation of village India—the importance of retaining many of the basic village values but with the evolving of attitudes and acceptance of the role of science and technology in stimulating thinking and action on two fronts—ways of living and ways of making a living.

Instead of judging and evaluating Community Development on the basis of two decades of its existence, which is the present tendency, an evaluation at the end of two decades should be on the basis of the contribution made to date in initiating and directing the process of change—a continuous process requiring at least three generations of time. Yes, it will take three generations to change villages from traditionalism towards modernism—in both ways of living and making a living.

The reason for an acceptance of three generations of time for change in basic attitudes, values and actions is a commonsense of understanding the process of changing village India. I have said we know we can get the present generations of adults to accept specific change but mentally they will remain oriented to traditionalism. Assuming the children of the present adult village population is provided good primary education oriented to helping village people live and more effectively earn a living, they will advance further toward modernism when they become the adult village population. But even though this second generation will be better educated and change oriented when they assume leadership for the village, they will be influenced and held in check from an all out acceptance of modernism by their elders, who, as I said earlier, will be basically traditionalist to their death.

The basic changes in attitudes, values and actions now being sought through Community Development should be approaching achievement as the grand-children of the present adult village population emerge as the adults and village leaders. Not to accept the

three generations process as being required for the cultural transformation of village India, will lead to still further frustrations about the worthiness of Community Development and further delay the presently sought changes in village India.

It takes time to grow a tree. It takes time to develop India's basic and most precious underdeveloped resource—the village people. It will take generations of time to bring about the cultural transformation of village India and see the emergence of a new and significant village India—the India of the future.

The Village Level Worker

As a people's village oriented self-help programme, Community Development needed; yes, had to have, the Village Level Extension Worker. But this newly created functionary early designated as a multi-purpose village worker was unwanted by all the Central and State Ministries having programme responsibilities at the village level. These ministries wanted a village worker but with a single purpose, under their direction, and only responsible for implementing programmes of each of their respective ministries.

From its inception, Community Development had as its central objective the awakening of village people; getting them concerned about their problems; motivating people to want to solve their problems; helping village people examine alternative ways of solving their problems; and finally, encouraging and assisting village people in solving their problems. In the context of a village self-help programme, the initiative was to come from village people being stimulated by the Village Level Extension Worker. The ministries having technical staff at the district and block levels and most of

the funds for development were to function as resources for village development and to provide the technical information needed and required in solving village problems. The expected role of technical ministries was conceived to be that of assisting village people solve their problems, related to agriculture, family limitation, sanitation, chronic disease, drinking water, irrigation, livestock, housing, education, nutrition, communication, etc.

The Community Development approach relied on the Village Level Extension Worker to create the climate within the villages for the technical ministries to serve the needs of the people. The technical ministries wanted their own village workers to do what they—the technical ministries—determined necessary to be done in the villages. Under the Community Development approach, the Village Level Worker was expected to create a 'suction' (demand) from the people for the services and assistance of the technical ministries. Under the technical ministries approach of having the village worker accountable to them, the village worker's role would be that of using a squirt gun, imposing on the village what the technical ministries felt was needed and best for the village people.

The fundamental conflict in these two approaches has never been resolved. That this is so is in no small measure accountable for much of the frustration about the unevenness and in many cases, unsatisfactory progress of Community Development. In the Community Development approach, the objective is to work for and with the village people and in the technical ministries single purpose approach, the village people would be expected to work for objectives set by the outside technical ministries and agencies. One is a response to the people's interest and needs; the other is to get the people to respond to what the outside agencies determine to be the village priorities and with what money they have to spend in the village.

There should be no misunderstanding about the important and necessary role the Village Level Extension Worker initially had to play in educating people to an awareness of their problems and creating in them a desire to solve problems. Furthermore, there must be an acceptance of the need for this role to be continued and it be a continuous one.

In reflecting on the cloudiness of the role of the Village Level Extension Worker, I now conclude his role was wrongly interpreted.

He was early thought to have a multipurpose role encompassing the concerns of both village people as well as the programme interest of all the technical ministries and agencies with responsible concerns about development in the villages. In playing the dual role of being a servant of the people in the villages and a functionary responding to the demands of the technical ministries, the village worker was not able to effectively serve the needs of either the village people or the technical ministries. As if these two dual and conflicting roles were not enough of a burden on the village worker, he was compelled to play still a third role which was in direct contradiction to his role as an educator and a servant of the people. All too frequently, the village worker was assigned such compelling and demanding tasks as collecting from village people 'small savings,' 'pressing people to repay loans,' being a 'sales agent' and 'looking after supplies.'

In this multi-faceted role, the village worker early learned on which side his bread was buttered. If he wanted to survive, to say nothing of advancing, he had no alternative to accepting as his first responsibility of imposing on village people the targets set by the technical ministries, many of which had money as the carrot. Since the pressures on the village worker were greater from the outside of the villages than the villagers demands on his time, the village worker had little time to devote to educating village people and the village people were not always sure that the village worker was a servant from the villagers point of view. All too often, the Village Level Worker functioned as the long arm of government imposing programmes on the people.

While I will return to a further analysis of the role and place of the Village Level Extension Worker as a servant of village people, I want to break into the analysis long enough to discuss recruitment and training of village workers. The initial commonsense, rigorous methods of selecting candidates for admission to the Village Level Extension Workers Training Centres was of the highest order. In making selections, priority was given to rural uplift experience, village background, matriculation standing, readiness to work with one's hands and an attitude of service and willingness to live in the villages. Initially, great care was given to selecting the principals and instructors for the Village Level Extension Workers Training Centres. In selecting staff, priority was given to those who had a record of experience in village uplift and who were

known to be concerned and experienced in applying the findings of research to solution of village problems.

The key person in the States who set the high standards and participated in selecting trainees as well as principals and instructors for the village workers training centres was the Development Commissioner. It can be documented as factual that when and as long as the Development Commissioners accepted and assumed a strong interest and concern about Community Development, the quality of trainees selected, the quality of principals and instructors, and quality of instruction was high. But as the responsibilities of the Development Commissioners multiplied and they were not able to continue providing influential leadership for Community Development, the quality of trainees declined as did the quality of instructors and training.

The final blow in reducing the Village Level Extension Workers Training Centres to mediocrity came when the Central Ministry of Community Development turned the management of these training centres over to the States. With the transfer of management of these training centres to the States, a trend that had set in, as the Development Commissioners lessened their leadership for Community Development was accelerated. This trend was towards political influence in selecting candidates for admission to the training centres and the technical ministries sending their less desirable staff to serve as instructors in the training centres.

Today—two decades later—the Village Level Extension Workers Training Centres are unwanted orphans of the States and as such, are in a sorry state of affairs with respect to quality of trainees, quality of staff and quality of instruction. Furthermore, these centres have lost their purpose in being and will remain adrift like a ship at sea without its rudder, until national and state leadership updates the place of Community Development in India's national development priorities.

In the early days of Community Development it was widely said the village worker should look forward to advancing up the developmental ladder to key staff positions in the block, district and state. But as time and experience has proven, all too few workers have in fact advanced beyond their initial assignment of a Village Level Extension Worker. That this is so should have been anticipated and a provision built into the programme from the beginning for providing scholarships for the top third of the village workers to take leave

after four years of successful service so they could earn the degrees required to fill positions at the block, district and state levels. It is the experience of working directly with village people that is so needed in India's bureaucracy.

Having detoured from my analysis of the role and function of the village worker to discuss the selection and training of the Village Level Extension Worker, I now return to the theme of this chapter. It is my conclusion that India will eventually, and hopefully sooner than later, return to the unfinished business of being concerned about the development of village people and village institutions as being basic to the development of India. To this, I would add a second conclusion. By whatever name it is to be called, a programme having as its objective the uplift and development of India's 550 thousand villages must, if it is to succeed, have strong political backing in the future as it did under Nehru.

It is one thing to criticise and condemn Community Development because of the limited contribution it has made to date; and another, to recognise the necessary pre-requisite to village development must be the development of the people's competence and the people's institutions to provide the needed and sustained leadership essential to solve the many complex village problems. If the above conclusions and assumptions are accepted, we can then project the future role of the Village Level Extension Worker as being central to India's Community Development.

While I recognise the necessity of broadening the community base from the village to a configuration of villages around growth centres, we must accept as a fact that the beginning point is where the people live, and they most certainly live in villages. This being so, if we want to influence the thinking and actions of village people the point of contact in educating for change and development must be with the people in the villages.

The role of the Village Level Extension Worker as a stimulus to village change must be reaffirmed. Based on the experience of the past two decades, the future role of the village worker must be single, not multi-purpose. A single purpose role implies having primary concern for the development of the people's competence and the people's institutions in solving village problems and in utilising to the maximum, all the technical and financial resources available to the villages from the technical ministries.

In fulfilling the single purpose role as outlined above, the Village

Level Extension Worker must be knowledgeable about the recommendations of the technical ministries and be capable of explaining and interpreting these recommendations to the village people and the source of the village workers technical knowledge must come to the technical block and district staff. If the Village Level Extension Worker is to fulfil the all important role I have projected, the curriculum of the Village Level Extension Workers Training Centres must be completely revamped and the Block staff trained in properly relating their contributions and services so they will be supportive of the key role of the Village Level Extension Worker as a stimulator and strategist for change.

Community Development And Agriculture

When I first arrived in India in November 1951, a Committee headed by the late and wise Sir V.T. Krishnamachari was just completing its study on India's Grow More Food Campaign. The Grow More Food Campaign launched in 1947 had as its central objective encouraging and assisting cultivators increasing their production. Great emphasis was placed in bringing idle land under the plough.

The reason the Krishnamachari Grow More Food Inquiry Committee was set up was the mounting concern within the government over the lack of cultivator response to the nation's appeal for an increase in agricultural food production. The significant finding of the Committee was that a pre-requisite for cultivators to respond to the government's appeal for increasing food production was for the government to first respond to help village people work out solutions, to what to them were their needs. Clearly implied was assisting in meeting village 'felt needs' would have to take precedence over the nation's need for more food. Village people wanted

their children to have an education and therefore, wanted the government's help in creating village schools. The people wanted available to them more and better health services and for these they expected the government to help. The village people wanted wells so they could have pure drinking water within their village—etc., etc.

The Grow More Food Inquiry Committee correctly read village people's minds. If the government would take an interest in helping village people find solutions to their expressed 'felt needs', then and only then, could the government count on village people responding to the government's appeal to village people to put forth greater effort to increase food production. Through the combined wisdom of two men—Nehru and Sir V.T. Krishnamachari—the decision was made early in 1952 to launch India's Community Development programme. Nehru devoted a good many hours of his time as did the Planning Commission, weighing alternatives about where in the administrative bureaucracy of the Central Government, national leadership for Community Development was to be centred. Since the Grow More Food Campaign was sponsored by Ministry of Agriculture and the introduction of Community Development was an outgrowth of the Grow More Food Campaign, the Ministry of Agriculture assumed it would be given leadership responsibility for Community Development. But that wasn't Nehru's decision.

As Nehru reflected over the implications of his government sponsoring a national Community Development programme which one day would reach out and involve all of India's 550 thousand villages, he became truly excited. He saw in Community Development a way to involve India's masses in contributing to the development of the new India. While he recognised India's people were poor, he envisaged Community Development as a means of developing village people as a national resource and through the development of village institutions directly involve village people in a wide range of village self-help programmes—all important to village people and all related to building up the new India. Community Development was to be the vehicle of the government of new independent India in keeping its promises of removing from India's masses, their long held burdens of disease, ignorance and poverty. Nehru also visualised all resources of both the Centre and State related to village development would be coordinated by Community

Development to assure their being applied in keeping with the interest and needs of the villages.

Having evolved in his mind this meaningful concept of Community Development—the development of village people as a national resource, the development of people's institutions and resources of government being coordinated at the village level for village needs, it was a logical and highly rational for Nehru to decide to create within the Planning Commission a separate administration for Community Development and to have the Administrator for Community Development report directly to him. Having created a special unit within the Planning Commission to administer Community Development, it was most logical and essential to have a non-ministry functionary designated in each State to be in charge of Community Development in the State and through whom the Central Administrator for Community Development was to communicate to the States. This State functionary was designated the Development Commissioner and placed directly under the Chief Minister in each State.

As I reflect back over the past two decades of India's experience in organising, launching, administering and evaluating its Community Development programme which by the middle sixties, encompassed all of India's 550 thousand villages into organised Community Blocks, I stand in awe at Nehru's great wisdom in conceiving of such a sensible organisational arrangement in both the Centre and in the States for administering Community Development.

Upto this point in our analysis, we know the origin of Community Development. We know Agriculture expected it would be given the responsibility for administering Community Development and expressed concern and disappointment when it wasn't. We know the great concept Nehru evolved in his mind for Community Development and its influence on his decision to have the administration of Community Development placed in the nerve centres of both the Central and State Governments—under Nehru in the Centre and under the Chief Ministers in each of the States.

In an analysis of the interaction between Community Development and Agriculture one could make much of the tension and sometimes conflicts which have been present and at times very pronounced. The reason I am not concentrating on these tensions and conflicts, is that I look upon the past two decades of launching Community Development and getting the agricultural development

programmes started as a period of learning. This has been a period of experimenting, spread over enough time to evaluate and provide the basis for future programme projections.

What is important now is for India as a nation to hold fast to its commitment of developing the competence of village people and village institutions essential for a modernising agriculture and basic to improving the quality of human life in India's 550 thousand villages. In searching for the truth, as was Gandhi's approach to all problems, about the nature and significance of the interactions between Community Development and Agriculture, one must understand India at the time of independence. India's Grow More Food Campaign initiated in 1947 was the nation's first developmental adventure after gaining independence. It was a programme based on hope and not formulated from experience. The truth is that India came to independence without experience in organising and managing national programmes for agricultural production.

In formulating its Community Development programme, India did have some village development experience to draw on. There was Gandhi's considerable experience with village uplift programmes. These Gandhian programmes contributed greatly in focusing national attention on the desperate plight of village people, especially the Harijans, and therefore, contributed to the decision to initiate a national Community Development programme. The best known of the early experiments in village development was a project sponsored in the Punjab by a Britisher, F.L. Brayne. The work of two missionary couples, Hatch and Weiser, contributed significant background, as did the Etawah pilot projects conceived and early led by an American, Albert Mayer. Finally the two refugee resettlement communities, Faridabad and Nilokheri, had considerable influence in the early days of the thinking and planning for Community Development.

While these several village development and pilot projects provided useful background information, India had no governmental experience to draw on in projecting its plans for launching a government-sponsored Community Development programme. What is significant is that the government of new, independent India early recognised the importance of establishing working relations with village cultivators and in assisting them in increasing their agricultural output, and in establishing village institutions. To understand

and properly evaluate India's first twenty years of experience with Government sponsored programmes in agricultural production and Community Development, one cannot too strongly emphasise that planning, projecting and implementation had to proceed simultaneously and all projections were made without Indian experience to draw on. India had to find its own way and this it has been doing the past twenty years.

To be sure, the experience of the world community was always available to India, and India drew freely and deeply from the well of experience. But India was always confronted with the necessity of experimenting with ideas whether or not they were generated from within India or were experiences from outside felt to have application to Indian conditions. The base line—the prevailing situation in India with respect to agriculture and village life at the time of India's launching its Community and Agricultural development programmes, is briefly summarised as follows:

First, let's take a look at agriculture in India. Here I am recording only the salient features of Indian agriculture which will help explain the interactions over the years between Community Development and Agriculture.

In the pre-independence period, India's orientation to agriculture was mostly a hope and a prayer—to avoid too many famines too frequently.

India lacked experience in how to organise and carry out national agricultural/food production programmes.

Village cultivators look upon their land with hope and the 'Will of God' that it would produce enough to meet the needs of the family. Village agriculture was self-sufficient, not market-oriented. Only in the wheat areas, and this largely in the Punjab, was there a cultivator orientation to marketing.

The village cultivators security was based on following traditions of the past.

Since village life was, in every sense, lived on close margins—food enough or fear of hunger; work or no work; life or death; literate or illiterate; village people could not afford to take risks

with the new agricultural practices until they were tested under village conditions.

Agricultural research was oriented to underpinning a traditional agriculture.

Land was held by big land holders with limited holdings by the actual tillers.

Agricultural price policies were consumer oriented—cheap food for poor people.

Agriculture officials had limited contact with cultivators and little agricultural competence.

There was a void in institutional relations between government and village cultivators.

Agriculture was a low status occupation and was supported by the least competent administrative and political leadership.

These above items comprised the status of village agriculture and the baseline from which India started its agricultural development journey. Since village agriculture and village life are so intertwined, all baseline characteristics about agriculture were naturally a part of village life at the time Community Development was conceived and launched. But there are additional characteristics about the village, essential to an understanding of the evolutionary process and experiences of Community Development the past two decades which need to be recorded.

At the time India launched its Community Development programme, October 2, 1952, village life could be characterised as follows:

Village people had accepted *status quo*. The only thing they expected to be different about tomorrow from today was that it would be tomorrow.

Traditionalism in every respect dominated village life—in ways of thinking; in relations; in ways of living, and in ways of making a living.

While village people looked to government to help them, they viewed government with suspicions and mistrust.

Village institutions were few in number and those that did exist were supportive of the Gandhian concept of village self-sufficiency.

There was a void in institutional infrastructure relating villages to each other, the district, state and centre.

Village people lacked experience in thinking and working together in the Community Development philosophy of 'self-help programmes.'

Casteism was deeply entrenched in the villages of India.

Before proceeding with the next stage in the interactions between Community Development and Agriculture, we must bring into our analysis an understanding of another baseline or starting point. This is the administrative bureaucracy of India. This is particularly important since the implementation of India's Community Development and Agriculture programmes were entrusted to the Central and State Governments for their implementation. Keeping in mind the interactions between Community Development and Agriculture, the following characteristics about India's bureaucracy are particularly important.

India inherited from the British an administrative bureaucracy highly efficient in the purpose for which it was created—to serve the British interest in maintaining law and order, and collect revenue.

Because of the key role of administration in implementing Community Development and Agriculture programmes in the past two decades, we must understand that this British created administrative bureaucracy lacked experience in implementing programmes having such concerns as : development of people's competence; development of people's institutions; awakening people from their traditional slumber; creating in people a desire for change; demonstrating new methods; developing village attitudes of trust and

partnership with Government; involving people in all decisions related to village improvement; relating technology to the solution of village problems, etc., etc.

While Indian administrative bureaucracy has changed in many ways through its having assumed responsibility for a wide range of planning and development programmes, it has yet to achieve the status of being a dynamic administration—oriented to change, growth and development. It persists in 'knowing what is best' for each lower level of responsibility; refuses to widely delegate responsibility; holds firmly to traditions; lacks confidence in village people and people's institutions and continues in the belief that it possesses superior wisdom on all matters.

Now known, but not known when India launched its Community Development and Agricultural Development programmes twenty years ago, are the specific and essential elements of a modernising agriculture development programme for India. Important to this understanding is that while each element of the programme is essential unto itself, a modernising agricultural programme for India requires the inclusion of all elements and in appropriate and continuous relation to each other. No single element or combination of two or three will bring India to its objective of 'food enough.' But all elements taken together and effectively interrelated will contribute to the continuation of India's movement from traditional toward a modernising agriculture essential for India to achieve food self-sufficiency.

Also known today, but not known twenty years ago, are the specific ways Community Development and Agriculture are dependent on each other in achieving their individual objectives. It can be documented as a truth, neither Community Development nor Agriculture can, independent of the other, achieve its objective. But by working together, each can contribute to the achievement of the other's objectives. One of the most significant conclusions to be drawn from the past twenty years of experience in the working of Community Development and Agriculture, is that India must now move its rural development focus toward integrated area development. Only through an integrated area approach can India achieve a modernising agriculture and the present disadvantaged groups of people in the villages look forward to having alternative employment opportunities and all the people be assured they will have parity of socio-economic services and institutions. While

others must join in integrated area development programmes, Community Development and Agriculture clearly will have to give the lead in directing their efforts and in providing leadership for integrated rural/area development.

A careful analysis of India's past years of experience in Community Development and Agriculture makes possible listing the following elements as being essential to the development of a modernising agriculture in India. Following the list of each element, I will indicate future emphasis required and appropriate roles for both Community Development and Agriculture. In projecting the interrelations between Community Development and Agriculture for the next two decades, the following can be stated as the essential and contributing factors to the development of a modernising agriculture in India. All these 'contributing factors' need to be programmed for simultaneous and continuous attention. Experience of the past twenty years makes clear there are no shortcut approaches to modernising India's agriculture.

1. Agricultural technology : The development and adaptation of agricultural technology is clearly agriculture's responsibility. While great progress has been made in the development of superior agricultural technology, there is urgent need for intensification of research in the areas of water use and management, plant protection and high yielding rice varieties resistant to diseases and insects. Especially urgent is the need for agricultural technology adapted to the low rainfall areas.

2. Research must place high priority on packaging of agricultural technology; first, research wise; second, in field testing; and third, in recommending to cultivators (i.e., seed, fertiliser, pesticides, water and tillage practices). If extension is to be on a sound basis in recommending a package of agricultural practices and the cultivators are to have successful experience with them, it follows that Agriculture will need to research and field test alternative packages to practices.

3. Development of competence of village people to make wise decisions based on alternatives must in the future be more purposefully worked at by both Community Development and Agriculture. For village agriculture to progressively move from traditionalism toward modernism, village leaders, leaders of village institutions and cultivators must continuously be involved in all phases of introducing agricultural technology and the development of institutions

in support of agriculture. Cultivators must know what are the next steps and the implications of their accepting or rejecting them. Since people can be expected to make wise decisions only as they gain experience and learn how to sort out what is important from the unimportant, Community Development must be the champion for involving village people in all village oriented programmes.

4. Educating village cultivators in organising and managing superior and complex agricultural technology must be a joint responsibility of Community Development and Agriculture. Agriculture must take the lead in organising training programmes for district and block extension workers. The district and block staff must in turn train the Village Level Extension Worker in what the cultivators need to know about managing agricultural technology. Community Development must have the responsibility for scheduling the time of the Village Level Extension Worker and supervise him so he in turn can carry out his extension educational role with village cultivators both in group meetings and direct farm visits.

5. Development of an infrastructure (i.e., roads that link villages with market and service centres/growth centres). While it should be the primary responsibility of Community Development in involving village people in construction and maintenance of roads, Agriculture must be an ever present champion supporting programmes and efforts that contribute to the construction of roads. Without the linking of villages to roads and villages being linked to major centres, neither Agriculture nor Community Development can achieve their individual or joint objectives. Government policies in support of a massive road development programme can be justified in two counts: provide employment to hundreds of thousands and develop the needed roads.

6. Development of institutions : The strongest possible case must be made for Community Development and Agriculture to work together and more purposively contribute to the development of effective institutions serving single and clusterings of villages. It is clear there are great limitations on what government can do. People working through their institutions can do many things government cannot do and some institutions can do things better than government. It behoves both Community Development and Agriculture to lend their full support in making Panchayats both responsible and response institutions. Cooperatives must,

in the future, become institutions of the people and serve the needs of all the people.

7. The Village Level Extension Worker must be given permanent status; upgraded both in salary and status; and kept under the direction of Community Development. To avoid future conflicts over allocation of time the village worker spends on agriculture, it will be necessary to draw up a yearly plan of work to schedule village worker's time directly to agriculture extension. Since there are significant variation in agriculture between Community Blocks these plan of work should be drawn up of each Block. Given the plan of work for agriculture, Agriculture should be responsible for conducting periodic training programmes to keep the Village Level Extension Worker current in new agricultural technology and understand the recommendations to be made to the cultivators for each of their agriculture operations. In giving overall supervision to the Village Level Extension Worker, the Block Development Officer must respect the importance of protecting the Village Level Extension Worker's time scheduled for agriculture.

8. District and Block agriculture extension staff must be strengthened to give direction to a modernising agriculture. This will require upgrading the competence of both block and district extension staff in their knowledge of agricultural technology as well as in extension educational methods.

9. The coordination of all agriculture related staff and all agriculture inputs at the district level is a myth. A pre-requisite to educating village cultivators in organising and managing agricultural technology is to have a district officer at the district level in charge of coordinating the activities of all agriculture related staff and all agricultural inputs going into the district.

10. Agriculture land tenure legislation must be concerned about the necessity of individual holdings being large enough for the cultivator to apply scientific methods and assure : (1) security of tenure and (2) that rental agreements provide an incentive to the tenant to maximise production. Since water use and management are now accepted as critical to increasing agricultural production, renewed emphasis must be placed on consolidation of fragmentised scattered holdings.

11. If agriculture is to be made more secure (i.e., less risk from weather) and the disadvantaged people in the villages are to be

provided alternative economic opportunities, the agricultural universities should be encouraged to take up new lines of research such as : alternative cropping pattern, alternative economic opportunities, food processing, storage, and marketing, and agro/business management.

12. All essential agricultural inputs must be provided when needed and easily accessible to the cultivators. Administrative commitments on delivery of agricultural input must be closely correlated with extension's recommendations to cultivators. While delivery of many of the agricultural inputs must continue to be the responsibility of agriculture, future emphasis must be placed on encouraging and facilitating non-government involvement in providing agricultural services and supplies.

13. Finally, agriculture must continue to be profitable to the cultivators and government price policies must be incentive oriented. As I look back over the twenty years of interaction between Community Development and Agriculture, I feel justified in drawing the following conclusions:

While outwardly the appearance of India's 550 thousand villages may not appear visibly changed, there has been significant and lasting change in the people—their attitudes, relations, expectations and readiness to accept new methods and ways of looking at their problems.

While people continue to live in villages, their thinking and experience world has been greatly expanded.

While there are great variations within and between villages in acceptance of improved agricultural technology, one will find in each and everyone of India's 550 thousand villages that some improved agricultural practices have been introduced and are being successfully carried out.

The trend from traditional toward a modernising agriculture in village India is clearly in process.

While there are great variations throughout India in the effectiveness of the cooperatives in servicing all who need credit, great progress has been made in changing the cooperative from its narrow village self-sufficiency orientation to making it a viable institution oriented toward development.

The creation of Panchayati Raj was a major achievement of the past decade. The challenge of the seventies should be to perfect it as a basic institution of, for and by the people in all of India's villages.

Today, there are some fifty thousand Village Level Extension Workers, supported by some twenty thousand block and district extension staff. The recruitment, training and placing of this staff in the Community Development structure was a major administrative achievement. The decade of the seventies should be directed toward strengthening Community Development and in perfecting its linkages with village people and research institutions.

While village people still have many unfilled needs, Community Development contributed mightily the past two decades in helping all of India's 550 thousand villages get schools, construct roads, dig wells and create primary health centres. The greatest need of the seventies is in educating the village people to properly and effectively utilise these new additions to the villages. Especially important is getting the village school to serve the educational needs of the village in contrast to preparing students to enter the next higher institution of learning.

Accepting the importance of having initiated the trend toward a modernising agriculture, the challenge ahead to both Community Development and Agriculture is to assist those who profit from a modernising agriculture to first invest in further strengthening the agricultural production base and second, in covering this increased income into improved family and village levels of living.

Now that the dust is beginning to settle over the controversy about Community Development, the evidence is clear that lack of a producer incentive price policy, limited superior agricultural technology and the failure to provide the critical agricultural inputs were the major contributing factors retarding cultivator response to the nation's appeal for increased agriculture. With the new superior agricultural technology, the readiness of cultivators to take up new practices that prove profitable and within its capabilities, the government's commitments to price policies and to providing all the needed agricultural inputs, India can now with confidence look forward to achieving food enough for its people by the end of the seventies. But what can India look forward to on the people and people's institution front ? Here one can hope a decision will be made at the highest levels to appropriately modify Community Development and to continue its charge of developing India's village people as a national human resource and village people's institutions and infrastructures essential to the development of village India and a modernised agriculture.

But if Community Development is to play the role of development of village people as humanbeings and people's institutions capable of contributing to the solution of India's complex rural problems, Community Development will have to be led and structured independent of established ministries.

In the process of growth and development of village India, in the future Community Development must accept greater responsibility for strengthening the village's economic base. This means contributing to the modernisation of agriculture and developing alternative economic opportunities for the present disadvantaged groups to be gainfully employed.

While the ultimate objective of Community Development must be to improve the quality of human life in India's 550 thousand villages, for village and family improvements to have meaning village people must be continually engaged in the processes of change and have the required increased economic resources to pay for the things they want and need. Only as the village people themselves contribute their leadership, work for change through their own institutions and contribute from their own economic resources, will changes in the village become a part of a new way of life for the future.

Panchayati Raj

No programme introduced in India since Independence, 26 years ago was more risk taking nor more promising in its implications than Panchayati Raj. Today, no programme in India is more controversial, more generally damned by the administrative bureaucracy and the political pundits, than Panchayati Raj. Panchayati Raj is today credited and damned for having opened the caste sores of village India; for having accelerated rather than solved village conflicts; and for being actively involved in party politics.

As one who has followed Panchayati Raj from its conceptualisation, to its introduction, to its working, and now its evaluation, I have no difficulty accepting all the above and other similar accusations levelled against Panchayati Raj as being true. That Panchayati Raj is credited with having brought village conflicts out into the open; disturbed the tranquillity of India's bureaucracy and heightened political concerns are to me all signs of India's Panchayati Raj being a positive force with great potential for involving village people in change; for serving as the needed link between village

India and India's bureaucracy and being the incubator for democracy at the people's level. That these things are really happening is the positive evidence of the greatness of Nehru's dream in visualising the dynamic role Panchayati Raj could play in involving village people in the working of democracy. Whatever else may be said about the Panchayati Raj today, it is a living example of the vitality of village people. In Nehru's dreams, his tomorrows were filled with hope and faith in village people.

For those who fault Panchayati Raj for having opened up the sores of casteism, I would reply what concerns them is that in the functioning of the Panchayati Raj, it has openly documented the depth of feeling people have about caste revealing it does exist and is a social concern which won't go away by its being ignored or by having responsible people say India has outlawed caste. The U.S. outlawed slavery a good many years ago, but in doing so, we did not outlaw people continuing their deep seated attitudes and prejudices.

That India's bureaucracy finds working with and through the Panchayati Raj system distasteful and irritating is evidence the Indian bureaucrat has yet to accept the important role of village people in planning their destiny and in having government function as a resource to help people find solutions to their problems rather than being the commander over village people.

When one gets to the bottom of the concerns political leaders express about the Panchayati Raj's involvement in politics; it is related to the growing trend of village people in looking to Panchayati Raj leaders for help in solving problems and in getting government to respond in contrast to their elected representatives in State Legislative Assemblies and the Lok Sabha at the Centre. That Panchayati Raj leaders are assuming roles of influence in getting Central and State Governments to respond to village needs is evidence the Panchayats are beginning to assume roles they were created to play—to be centres of power for and of the people.

What isn't understood about Panchayati Raj is that State Legislative acts which gave it present form were new but that as a village institution, its roots of traditionalism has long taproots and many firmly implanted spreading roots. In a sense, the Panchayati Raj legislation passed by each State was designed to modernise the ancient and traditional village panchayats, moving them from their official's and leader's positions being 'inherited' to now being

elected and/or appointed. Now also was the emphasis on all sections (castes) of the village being represented through an election or appointed when the election process failed to elect representatives from the lower castes.

The remaking and the modernising of India's traditional panchayats, placing them in positions of power and influence, both in terms of village planning and development; and giving them a voice in what and how government worked was a new role. Based on the experience of the past fifteen or so years, which dates the time when the States began passing legislation to modernise the panchayats and give them their present structure and functions, one can draw a number of meaningful conclusions—all having high relevance in pointing up need for further legislation as well as government policies and commitments giving direction to the role of government in the future development of Panchayati Raj.

The one inescapable conclusion is that Panchayati Raj, having been created through State Legislation is 'in India to stay.' The question, therefore, is not will Panchayati Raj die and disappear, rather what amendments in the Panchayati Raj legislation does experience suggest are now needed and how can the Centre and State governmental bureaucracies contribute to improving the functioning of panchayats.

The areas where legislative amendments need to be considered with care and some sense of urgency pertain to (1) the powers of the Panchayati Raj in raising local revenue; (2) the relationship between the block and district panchayat structure and the block and district staff; (3) the relationship of the panchayat and the village school; (4) the relationship of the panchayats to developmental programme requiring group action such as consolidation of scattered land holdings, channels for irrigation, village adoption of a total package of improved agricultural practices, village commitment to family limitation to two children, etc., etc. But most important is to keep the panchayats attention focused on the village people learning and accepting that government can help solve village problems but only if, as and when the people have the interest and will, and are ready to put forth their own efforts.

Much of the tension between Panchayati Raj and the administrative bureaucracy can in the future be avoided by a more careful formulation of policies defining where primary responsibility rests for initiation of programmes. It is unreal to have legislation place

powers with the Panchayati Raj for deciding all programme priorities and then to have the Central and State Governments formulate priority programme followed by projection of targets for the districts, blocks and villages. Commonsense says this dilemma can, in the future, be gotten over if legislation and governmental policies specify that Panchayati Raj is to function as the institution of the people in relating all external village oriented programmes to village conditions and needs and in creating the interests within the villages for individuals and/or group action in accepting the contribution programmes have to make toward improvements in family and village life.

It is one thing to have provided the legislation to modernise the panchayats and quite another to have provided for the needed leadership and training required to guide and facilitate the transition of the deeply rooted traditional village panchayats toward modernisation, helping them play a positive role in giving leadership to village change and relating the services of government to village conditions and needs.

Training for well defined purposes, including governmental staff of the block and districts and elected and/or appointed members of the Panchayati Raj is a must for the future. But a prerequisite to the training of government staff in the formulation of Centre and State Government policies which clearly define the role of Panchayati Raj in all rural development programmes and in linking the services of government to village people. This policy must explicitly state the importance of all district and block staff being trained and assuming responsibilities for improving the quality of panchayats not only tomorrow but continuously and into the indefinite future. In brief, the Central and State administrative bureaucracies must be held responsible for a continuous contribution to improving the working of Panchayati Raj.

While the critics of Panchayati Raj greatly outnumber the supporters, my assessment is that given the traditional setting and functions of panchayats and the very-very weak training programmes and continuous hostility of the administrative bureaucracy towards it, Panchayati Raj has more plus going for it today than objective rational thinking would have forecast when the legislative process was initiated to modernise them.

I have never been able to understand why those who gave leadership to supporting legislation to modernise panchayats did not

stand that while legislation was basic, imperative to the realisation under of the objectives was continuous education of village people in the restructuring the new functions of Panchayati Raj. To this day, village people as well as officials of government are far from clear about the potentialities of Panchayati Raj. But this is about the past.

The future requires a continuous village oriented educational programme about the structuring and functioning of Panchayati Raj. The elected and/or appointed members of the Panchayati Raj structures must in the future recognise that they are mirrors of the people who elect them. In the future, the people who cast their votes for Panchayati Raj representatives must know what Panchayati Raj is all about and therefore, have judgment about individuals who can contribute most to making the Panchayati Raj serve the people's needs.

But I want to go further in pursuing the importance of education. While it is reasonable to expect a great deal can be accomplished through village educational programmes with the adult population, most of whom are illiterate, the future requires that the Panchayati Raj and Centre and State Governments join in a policy of changing the village school from its present orientation of being an institution of the State Government to making it an institution of the village with Panchayati Raj having a strong overseeing role. As the village school presently functions with its orientation of preparing students to qualify for secondary education, it fails in what should and must in the future be its primary mission—educating both children and adults in ways and means of more effectively living and earning a living in the village. The village school of tomorrow must not only accept the responsibility for freeing all people of ignorance but making it meaningful for people to want to be literate and have continuous experience which makes being literate important to the people in their daily lives.

Since the Panchayati Raj was created as the basic foundation institution for, of and by the people in India's 550 thousand villages, it is of the greatest importance that the All India Panchayat Parishad be strengthened so that it can be a truly national force giving the needed non-governmental leadership to the development of effective Panchayati Raj programmes in all States. There must be no mistake about the need for Centre and State Governments having strong commitments to making the Panchayati Raj work effectively,

but the government's role must be a supportive, not a dominating role. The dominant leadership role must come from the All India Panchayat Parishad.

If the All India Panchayat Parishad is to fulfil its strong role of national leadership, it will be essential for the Central and State governments to agree on a formula for making annual grants to the All India Panchayat Parishad. While these grants must be in support of defined and projected programmes, they must be free of government strings. Funds are needed by the All India Panchayat Parishad to have a small but highly effective core staff at the Centre, in each State and in each District, and to finance high quality training centres. While the Panchayati Raj is and must continue to function as the people's institution, it is important to recognise that non-government institutions require professional leadership. It is to provide this high level professional leadership that the All India Panchayat Parishad must be supported by Central and State annual grants.

In concluding this chapter, I want to indicate the important role Panchayati Raj can play in supporting two of India's high priority national programmes—agriculture and family planning. It is my opinion that the success of both agriculture and family planning programmes within India's villages can be directly correlated with the extent and effectiveness of the involvement of Panchayati Raj. Both programmes are dependent on heavy and continuous government inputs and both are dependent on decisions and actions of individuals, families and the village community. This being so, implied for the future, both agriculture and family planning programmes must, if they are to get the needed village response and follow up action, become programme concerns of Panchayati Raj and Panchayati Raj leaders must be trained and accept responsibility for playing the needed role of a facilitator of village acceptance and action, be it individual, family or community. The Panchayati Raj can be both an educator and a group action force, bringing pressures on people to do what is in their and the village's best interest. Playing the role of a social pressure group cannot and must not be played by government, but it can appropriately be played by Panchayati Raj. For all cultivators to be helped and encouraged to improve their agricultural operations is in the best interest of the cultivator, his family, the village, and the nation. For couples not to have more children than they can themselves adequately provide for and the

nation can assure employment is in the best interest of the families, the village and the nation.

I will conclude by an analysis of Panchayati Raj's involvement in politics. For those who view with concern the political involvement of Panchayati Raj, I would ask "what is more important to India's achieving its own clearly stated objective of developing a viable political system and in planning and development being through democratic institutions utilising democratic methods than for Panchayati Raj to become a dynamic force for change?" A development of great political significance to India is the emergence of a new political elite within the districts. An analysis of the new political elite identifies them as coming from three groups—the successful cultivators, entrepreneurs of small and medium industries and the leaders from Panchayati Raj. Not infrequently successful cultivators and industrial entrepreneurs are also panchayat leaders.

Related to Panchayati Raj being a force for change is that as an institution of, for and by the people, it must command political attention. Political leaders respond to centres of power. Without any question, the Panchayati Raj is a growing centre of power—power of village people who are learning how to have their vote count in heightening political leadership concern for the plight of hundreds of thousands of village people who, after 26 years of freedom from British rule, have yet to achieve socio-economic justice.

What concerns political leaders about Panchayati Raj is that it is becoming an 'activist institution' and will increasingly insist that political leaders deliver on the commitments they make in the heat of campaigns. My question is "Why shouldn't Panchayati Raj keep political leaders' feet to the fire on their commitments?" and "why shouldn't Panchayati Raj have enough influence with political leaders to hasten and intensify government concern and action for and about village problems?"

The working of democracy in India must have meaning to the people where they live. Since better than seventy per cent of India's people live in villages, it is of great importance that village people become actively involved in the working of the Panchayati Raj and that the Panchayati Raj respond to the needs of the people. For village India, the Panchayati Raj is functioning as an incubator for the working of democracy in developing social and political consciousness among India's village people and providing needed experience for tomorrow's political leaders of India.

Co-operatives

No area of India's development offers greater potential in contributing to rural development than do the co-operatives. But for nineteen long years, which was the time I spent in India, the co-operatives were caught up in contradictions in policies which worked to the disadvantage of co-operatives; denied village people needed services; and retarded agricultural and rural development.

One basic policy was the charge to Community Development to give priority and continuous attention to the development of three basic village institutions—primary schools, panchayats and co-operatives. Another broad based national policy made clear all co-operative policy and management concerns were to be the prerogative of government, thus making unmistakably clear that co-operatives were looked upon as being institutions of the government. A third conditioning factor which greatly influenced the role and development of co-operatives through the decade of the fifties was the strongly held view of planners and political leaders that co-operatives should play a major role in carrying out the Gandhian philosophy of village self-sufficiency. This view ran counter to all rational thinking

about co-operatives being viable institutions. The planners greatly complicated the process of developing co-operatives as people's institutions by projecting targets resulting in administrative pressures and decisions preceding understanding, involvement and acceptance of the village people.

One doesn't need to ponder long the implications of policies that first state co-operatives are to be institutions of, for and by village people; second, that government will take all decisions about the organisation and management of the co-operatives, third, that there will be a co-operative in each village with emphasis on village self-sufficiency; and fourth, the emphasis on targets rather than people's understanding, involvement and commitment to co-operatives.

One of the most impressive memories I have about my long years of working in India is that in all fields of India's rural development, except co-operatives, critical analysis, free discussions and a readiness to modify programmes were accepted ways of thinking and operating. But not so for co-operatives. There is no other way of recording what I know to be true, but to say with respect to co-operatives many political leaders were emotionally committed to imposing on India in its birth as a new and developing nation philosophies and stereotyped ways of thinking of the past. Equally important to the political leaders insisting on imposing unworkable co-operative policies was the closed-mindedness of government bureaucrats who were not about to purposively prepare village people to assume leadership and accept management responsibilities for the development of co-operatives as people's institutions.

Within this complex of contradicting policies, the co-operatives have been protected by government for the past two decades. They have never had to prove their worth to survive. No one knows how many crores or rupees India has spent in keeping weak and ineffective co-operatives alive and in subsidising all phases of co-operative programmes. Co-operative employees of government have few incentives to work to their maximum capacities when government is ever present subsidising inefficiency.

At the people's level—within the 550 thousand villages of India, the co-operatives have been dominated by, and for the most part, serve the elite in the village. Credit and fertiliser, for example, are difficult to come by for the weaker sections of the community.

Government policies assuring co-operatives monopolies on credit

and exclusive sales of fertiliser, have been both a deterrent to the development of co-operatives as well as retarding the development of a modernising agriculture.

What I have said thus far is both harsh and negative but is true. I have always felt it was appropriate to be constructively critical providing one visualises acceptable and workable new directions. Essential in pointing up new directions for the development of co-operatives is adequate diagnosis of the root causes of the present illness. So I ask my readers to accept what I have said thus far as being diagnostic. I will now move to being constructive, pointing up new directions essential in the co-operatives are to become effective people's institutions; play an essential role in changing India's agriculture from traditionalism to modernism; and serve the needs of all sections of the village community in all aspects of rural development.

Here and now we need to recognise one of the most difficult tasks ahead will be to change the co-operatives from being quasi-government to people's institutions. The essential first step in bringing about this change will be a clear policy declaration of government to accept the responsibility for transferring all leadership and management responsibilities for co-operatives to village people. On this there should be no delay and there must not be any compromising, accepting halfway measures. Required in moving leadership and management responsibilities from government to the people will be well thought out and effectively executed co-operative educational programmes in the villages.

Village people have repeatedly demonstrated their readiness to accept change once they understand why and how the change is best for them and they are convinced government is working in their best interest. I therefore have confidence village people will accept the need for a population and economic base adequate to assure the co-operatives developing strong people's institutions oriented to serving the needs of all sectors of the population and have the co-operatives functioning under competent management. Most important of all, the people must accept government's assurance that in the future the voice of the village people will take precedence over government in formulating policies and in all phases of the co-operative's activities. Lest I may be misunderstood in emphasising economic viability, I want to make clear my emphasis is not on bigness. While viability is essential if the co-operatives are to

provide the needed services, the co-operatives must not be so big they become impersonal. As in people's institutions inter-personal relations are of great importance.

If I properly judge the Indian scene, the 'climate' is now right to think, plan and act positively about co-operatives playing a dynamic role in changing village India from self-sufficiency to a market economy and in moving Indian agriculture from traditionalism to modernism. For the co-operatives to be effective agents for change they must be organised to function in a changing environment. There is presently in India wide acceptance that co-operatives should be organised to serve clusters of villages as is presently the case in in most of India. Now required is an understanding of how many villages must be served by a single co-operative if they are to be effective in serving all the needs of all people. Since the objective must be to have the co-operatives develop into economically viable people's institutions, the geographic area covered by a single co-operative must be of sufficient size to support a co-operative having a volume of business large enough to pay for a competent manager, provide for the needed facilities, stock supplies and carry on effective co-operative educational programmes but not so big that it sacrifices inter-personal relations. In a very real sense, if the co-operative is to function as a change agent and serve the needs of a modernising agriculture, it must think of itself as being an agro-business institution. And as a business it must have competent management.

Essential to achieving the major objective of turning the co-operatives over to village people will be to assure that in the process of restructuring the co-operatives and in delineating the geographic area it is to serve, a formula is developed for the people to follow in electing the board of directors for overseeing the co-operative. It is important that the formula for electing the board of directors assures each village is represented as well as all sections of the village community. Returning for a moment to the need for a competent paid manager, there must be acceptance the manager is an employee of the co-operative, hired by the board of directors and is solely accountable to the board.

The place where the government can and must play a dynamic role is in educating village people about all aspects of co-operatives. Initially, it will take time to get village people to accept as a fact that co-operatives will in the future function as people's institutions.

If people are to vote intelligently in electing members of the board of directors, there must be an educational programme at the village level to acquaint all who will vote on the objectives of co-operatives, member responsibilities, and the role and responsibility of elected members of the board. All should know the role of the paid manager. Only through a continuous membership educational programme will people respond to the new challenge and accept responsibility for running the co-operative as their institution.

Except in economically depressed areas the government should stop subsidising co-operative and discontinue policies which give co-operatives exclusive service rights such as credit and distribution of fertiliser. I join all who are strong supporters of the important role co-operatives can and must play in India's agricultural and rural development. My message here is the sooner the co-operatives have to stand on their own feet and meet competition, the sooner they will be capable of meeting the present and emerging needs of village people and as people's institutions become innovative and change agents.

Essential to the development of strong people's co-operatives is that they be supported by unbiased research and that training be of high quality. I would turn to the agricultural universities in India for the unbiased research and high quality of training. I am well aware few of the agricultural universities in India are presently either capable or thinking about their accepting major and continuous responsibility for conducting research and providing the needed training for co-operatives. The agricultural universities in India need new challenges. They are presently thinking and functioning too narrowly. They are too exclusively focused on technical agriculture. The agricultural universities need to—yes, must—broaden their terms of reference and accept responsibility for conducting research and build into their curricula teaching programmes that encompass all matters related to a modernising agriculture.

Since the development of an institutional infrastructure is essential to a modernising agriculture, and co-operatives are one of the basic institutions underpinning and contributing to the development of a modernising agriculture; it logically follows that the agricultural universities must accept a responsibility for research and training in the development of co-operatives. In accepting a basic condition to the development of strong people's co-operatives the economic and population base be adequate to assure development

of viable co-operatives, it must be understood the key to the success of co-operatives will be the role played by the manager. The manager must be competent and motivated to organise and direct continuous co-operative educational programmes essential if the co-operatives are to function as the people's institution. The co-operative must be managed as a business with emphasis on providing high quality and timely services oriented to meeting maximum needs of the maximum number of people. The success of the manager will be directly related to the co-operative educational programme and the people's understanding and involvement in all phases of the co-operative's policies, programmes and management.

While I see the agricultural universities as being the primary source from which co-operative employees will be drawn in the future, today there is urgent need for all the agricultural universities to develop a curricula in agro-business and start with the training of managers for co-operatives. In serving the needs of a modernising agriculture both the co-operatives and the agricultural universities must give urgent attention to agriculture's needs in the fields of marketing and processing.

In making the suggestion in the future the agricultural universities be looked to for both research and training in co-operatives, I am aware there presently exists in India a number of government-sponsored co-operative training institutions, and that the suggestions I have made for involving the agricultural universities will not be palatable to many associated with these institutions. My point is, if the co-operatives are to become people's institutions, the government must divest itself of the research and training functions as well as free itself of policy. Furthermore, I feel once the agricultural universities face this new responsibility and are staffed up, they will do a superior job to the government-sponsored co-operative training institutions in giving leadership to unbiased research and provide high quality training.

Since it will take time for the agricultural universities to broaden their curricula and staff up to accept research and training responsibilities for co-operatives, the present government-sponsored co-operative training institutions will need to be continued for several years, but on a phasing out basis as the agricultural universities phase in on co-operative research and training.

Time, patience, and persistence will be required to evolve and implement the kind of co-operative policies and programmes needed

and timely for implementation in India. A commitment now to get the government out of co-operatives and to have them evolve into strong people's co-operatives will take the next two decades. But each year there will be visible evidence that the co-operatives are growing in strength as the people give them stronger leadership and support and the people see the co-operatives developing as institutions of, for and by the people.

One must not become discouraged by the shortcomings and failures of the past. Co-operatives as people's institutions must be a part of India's future.

The Village School

The primary village school in India is the foundation institution affecting in both positive and negative ways India's achieving its objective of : development of village people as one of India's most important human resources, that is, people competent to take decisions based on known alternatives, competent to play the role of citizens in a free society; developing an effective and viable democracy underpinned by democratic institutions using democratic methods; involving the masses in accepting responsibility for developing the new nation; contributing to the conditions which will help India's people achieve social and economic justice; and the cultural transformation of village India from traditionalism to modernism.

There is no area of India's development that one could write more critically about; nor is there any area which has made greater progress to go further to fulfil its mission than education at the primary and secondary levels. It is not difficult to point up the specific ways Community Development contributed to helping village people realise their most cherished hope—the wish of parents that their

children be educated. One of the most universally expressed wishes and hopes throughout village India at the time Community Development was initiated in 1952 was, and continues to be, expressed by parents who want more and better educational facilities and opportunities for their children.

Community Development was given a charge—yes, a mandate—to give high priority to helping village people realise what was both a village and national interest and concern, that is making it possible for all children to attend primary school. But in carrying out this mandate of helping all village people have a primary school, Community Development was never able to achieve a partnership status with the Central and State Ministers of Education nor were the Central and State Ministers of Education interested in having village people share in financing and managing the village schools. Community Development's role in developing the primary school as an institution of village people was therefore limited to persuading village people to providing land and contributing through work and funds to the construction of a village school building.

In a most uncharitable way, Community Development's role in carrying out its charge of developing the primary village school as a village institution can be described as selling village people on the need for a school building. Village people thought when they contributed to the construction of a school building they were providing the conditions for their children to be educated. In a sense, they were. But in educational terms the building is only a faculty. The teacher, the curricula and the purposes of education—all issues of primary and secondary education—were forbidden areas for involvement by Community Development and village people.

If there is any one place where political leadership, planners and educators let the people of India down, it was in keeping intact the philosophy, objectives, curricula and structures of the British created system of education. While few will disagree that primary and secondary education in village India have little relevance to either village conditions or needs, the focus of both primary and secondary education remains pretty much as it was during British rule—focused on preparing students to qualify for admission to the next level of institutionalised education. Education for life in village India where most village boys and girls spend their life is foreign to the objectives of both primary and secondary education in village India. But to continue in this critical vein solves no problems. To provide

guidance for the future, it is appropriate to ask what lessons can be drawn from the past two decades of India's experience in the field of primary and secondary education.

In framing India's Five Year Plans, India's planners were faced with the task of carrying out a mandate of the Constitution in providing free, universal and compulsory education for all children up to the age of ten within ten years. One can therefore understand how the achievement of this constitutional mandate was in the framing of each of India's Five Year Plans converted into 'setting of targets'—so many new schools to build and so many new teachers to train and assign to new village schools. But the tragedy of an exercise in constructing school buildings and training new teachers is that village people were not themselves engaged in an exercise discussing 'education for what purpose.' Political leaders, planners and educators seemed content to accept the constitutional requirement—education was being met through achievement of 'targeted programmes.'

Critical though I am about the lack of attention to involving village people in discussing the purposes for which the children were to be educated, I add it up as a major and significant achievement to have constructed thousands of new schools and to have expanded by the thousands the number of teachers, though poorly trained who have been assigned to teach in the new primary and secondary school buildings.

During most of the fifties, great effort was made to gain national acceptance of having primary and secondary education organised along Gandhian lines of 'basic education.' In my judgment, this effort failed because its advocates, who were primarily Gandhians, were too steeped in traditionalism to understand that Gandhi's philosophy about basic education was that it be life and experience oriented. The Gandhian traditionalist placed the emphasis on the spinning wheel as being in the centre of life's experience, and this to the would-be modernist was interpreted as 'backward education.' The effect was that 'basic education' did not take off in India as the educational emphasis for primary and secondary education.

There are too many people in important political, planning, educational and administrative positions in India who today look down on village India. They see education as being essential in facilitating the migration of village people. Educating boys and girls to leave the villages of India will only add to and hasten the process

of culturally eroding village India. The cultural erosion in village India, by educating the youth to leave the villages will be comparable to the erosion of India's hillsides through denuding them of their trees.

What is now required in India is placing primary education in the centre of all village life with the teacher playing the role of a respected and learned village leader. Urgently needed for village India is an educational philosophy backed by a programme which emphasises continuous education beginning with a curriculum for formal instruction in a primary school that directs learning for purposes significant to living and earning a living in modern day village India. By emphasising continuous education with the school teacher as central to the educational process, the present adult illiterates can be made literate and the children who drop out or stop at the end of their primary education won't slip back into illiteracy once they stop attending the formal classroom instruction.

Village life can, through a good teacher and a properly formulated curriculum, be made exciting and education a study of science and its technological applications to all phases of village life, be it farming, industry, family planning, environmental sanitation, nutrition, etc. While a good salary in itself won't assure a good teacher, it is imperative that the salary scales for primary teachers be raised to an adequacy level where a man will as a village teacher be paid a salary adequate to support an acceptable level of living for his family including providing an opportunity for his children to be educated; for his family to be assured of adequate medical care and savings for retirement and old age.

It should be possible in India for the village to provide a house, a garden and an adequate salary for primary teachers if village people become partners with the State Ministries of Education in providing for and managing primary and continuous education. Except in the very backward and poor villages, India can through their panchayats, tax for education. Village people must feel that they have a stake in the education of their children and the village teacher must come to realise he has a stake in the village—its people, its institutions and its advancement from traditionalism toward modernism.

In placing emphasis on the village teacher being a village leader, I am not implying the village teacher should replace the Village Level Extension Worker, but it does follow the Village Level

Extension Worker will want to place great reliance on the village teacher being supportive and interpretative of all programmes recommended for and to the village—be they in agriculture, health, family planning, nutrition, sanitation.

There was great wisdom in the initial charge to Community Development to develop the primary school as an institution of, for and with village people. Without the involvement of village people primary and secondary education will at best remain second rate and the village and the nation will continue to be the losers. Needed now is a renewal of the charge to Community Development to involve village people in financing, managing and agreeing about the purposes of education. Also needed is a clear directive to the Central and State Ministries of Education to accept village people as partners in making education a continuous process of learning and living, beginning with the primary school.

The quality of life and the culture of village India will be determined by the role of the primary and secondary education and the process and involvement of village people in making the village school the centre for continuous education.

Weaker Sections Of The Village Community

Community Development was expected to make a major contribution toward improving the well being of India's disadvantaged groups who lived in the village—the landless labourers, the holders of small uneconomic farming units and the village artisans. Two decades later the facts well supported the conclusion that through Community Development all village people, the disadvantaged included have for the first time access to schools and health centres not previously available and many thousand villages now have wells and access roads.

Accepting the significance of village people now having schools, health centres, village approach roads and thousands of new wells, it is a fact and must be admitted that twenty-three years after India gained its independence, the disadvantaged groups have not significantly improved their level of living. Those at the very bottom of the heap have probably sunk deeper into poverty. At this moment we need to pause and ask in what ways was Community

Development expected to contribute toward improving the economic and social well-being of these disadvantaged groups. We need to examine whether or not it was realistic to have so boldly charged Community Development with this basic and gigantic task of improving the lot of the disadvantaged groups without at the same time having assured on a national basis the conditions essential to bring about the many complex socio-economic political reforms.

We must without reservation accept the two essential conditions for improving the level of living of the disadvantaged groups are that they have access to economic opportunities to earn a 'decent living' and they have an opportunity to be educated. When we place the emphasis where it belongs on access and opportunity, we move directly to an examination of a nation's policies and legislation. An examination of the record reveals very little has been done through national policies and legislation to provide the disadvantaged groups access to economic opportunities or the opportunities for an education. There should be no quibbling about the conclusion that without the essential national policies, supported by realistic legislation and vigorous administration, Community Development as an institutional structure designed to bring about change through extension education, was as helpless in contributing to improving the lot of the disadvantaged groups as a car is ineffective in going through sand with tires worn smooth of their tread.

The very political leaders who should have shouldered the responsibility for passing the essential legislation and insisted on realistic policies and strong administration were the first to condemn Community Development for its failure in not contributing to improving the socio-economic well-being of the disadvantaged groups. People who have corns on their toes don't want to look at their feet for fear they will have to have the corn removed and this they know will be personally painful. What I am saying is a well known fact—most of the political leaders were soft on needed legislation and silent on the need for policies and vigorous administration if it meant the needed changes would reduce their wealth, prestige and influence as a political figure. Few want to see their positions of influence and status changed.

One need not go further. The record is clear and the implications written in bold letters. If the disadvantaged groups now living in the villages of India are to be brought into the developmental

stream, which Community Development is certainly capable of contributing to, legislation and policies must assure the disadvantaged groups have access to economic opportunities to earn a decent living and they must have an opportunity to be educated. While I don't think many will question what I mean by access to economic opportunities to earn a decent living, I suspect some will chime in by saying if there is a school in the village, certainly the disadvantaged groups have the needed opportunity to be educated. This I would deny and say by an opportunity, I mean they must be free of economic pressures requiring all who can earn, to work if they are to survive.

There was never any doubt about land reform legislation, effectively implemented, being one of the conditions essential if a significant segment of the disadvantaged were to have new and essential conditions to earn a decent living. Under land reform legislation the two conditions essential if new opportunities were to open up for a significant segment of the disadvantaged group to earn a decent living were security of tenure and change in rental rates making them favourable to the tenant—the one who tilled the land. To date, two decades later, few States can get passing marks for the way they have legislated and implemented their land reform legislation.

The second condition essential for the disadvantage group to earn a decent living is that agriculture be profitable. Because the national price policies on foodgrain in India were until the middle sixties oriented toward cheap food for the consumer, there was little economic incentive for the cultivator to invest in agriculture inputs and labour essential to increasing his production. Many cultivators who had, with the existing technology and through additional investments in fertiliser and seed, increased their production, experienced sharp decline in prices when they harvested good yields. In the absence of guaranteed and incentive prices, in his wisdom the cultivator reverted to traditional practices with an orientation to produce to meet his family needs, rather than for the market with uncertain prices. This all adds up to the conclusion that inadequate and partially implemented land tenure legislation and consumer-oriented foodgrain prices did not provide the essential conditions for opening up new economic opportunities for the depressed classes to advance either socially or economically.

A third national condition regarding opening up new opportunities for the disadvantaged groups to earn a decent living

was the lack of realistic policies and very weak implementation of a limited number of rural works programmes. While each of India's Five Year Plans discussed the desperate plight of the disadvantaged groups in the villages of India and projected rural works programmes, efforts to implement rural works programmes have always been half hearted and never on a scale adequate to provide temporary relief or provide new opportunities for the disadvantaged groups. So to this date, the middle of the Fourth Plan, India lacks the experience—the knowhow—it should now have in how to mount a national rural works programme so essential if the government is to meet its responsibility to the people—provide all who are willing and capable working an opportunity to earn a decent living.

For most of the fifties and perhaps even into the middle of the sixties, the disadvantaged groups lived on hopes and promises. To many, having schools and health centres for the first time was partial and significant fulfilment of some of the promises. But by the middle sixties, the disadvantaged group began to be restive, seeing little or no evidence that they are better off after 23 years of freedom from foreign rule. What they see in the future is continued denial of access to economic opportunities to earn a 'decent level of living.'

The restlessness of the disadvantaged group is certain to spread through all the villages of India. While a modernising agriculture can provide for intensification of labour and therefore more days of work, at the moment what the landless labourers and the holders of non-viable economic acreages see is the very great economic advances being made by the medium and large land holders resulting in their position being relatively less favourable. Unfortunately, research is lacking to provide guidance on alternative economic opportunities in the vast areas of India where agriculture is presently the major occupation and production is based on uncertain and limited rainfall.

From a social, economic and political point of view, there presently seems to be no alternative to political leadership facing up to the necessity of land reform legislation assuring security of tenure; that rental agreements are favourable to the tiller-tenant, and that land ceiling be based on acreages essential for economic viability. Nothing could be more detrimental to the disadvantaged group than to provide all with non-viable land holdings. To do so would immediately destroy the agricultural production base of India and

place all with the non-viable units in a position of permanent poverty.

But if the nation now provides for the needed conditions—legislation, effectively implemented guaranteeing security of tenure; assures tenure rates favourable to the tenant; mounts a national rural works programme; continues with a foodgrain price policy incentive and producer oriented and fails to revitalise Community Development with significant new terms of reference, village people will still lack the needed alternative opportunities to make permanent their temporary gains under a national rural works programme. The result will be the disadvantaged groups will move from their present level of frustration and uncertainty to another level of uncertainty and intense frustration.

The needed new terms of reference for Community Development should be an integrated balanced agriculture and small industrial rural development programme having as its objective developing alternative economic opportunities for all to be gainfully employed and for the area to provide for the people the essential socio-economic institutions and services. The above suggested terms of reference for a revitalised Community Development programme are very close to the design of the original 75 pilot Community Development projects. There is little to be gained by debating why the Community Development Blocks which followed the original 75 pilot projects were watered down with emphasis on extension and voluntary contributions for building schools, digging wells and constructing roads. What is important, is to recognise what is now needed is known and that the 75 pilot projects as originally concerned can, with appropriate modifications, provide the model for the future.

India cannot afford two more decades of neglect of the disadvantaged groups in the villages. These people won't tolerate further neglect. Before they see another generation of their children denied access to opportunities to earn a 'decent living' and have an opportunity to be educated, they will act and in ways they think to be in their self-interest.

India's developmental journey brings the nation sharply to the 'Y' in the road. If democratic institutions and democratic methods are to survive, the disadvantaged classes of India must without further delay be brought into the mainstream of development. They must be both participants and beneficiaries in building the new nation. This is possible and achievable if—the needed land reform

legislation is implemented to the advantage of the tiller, keeping in mind the necessity of a viable agriculture; the required rural works programmes are implemented vigorously, urgently and to the advantage of the disadvantaged classes and on work programmes that contribute to the development of the infrastructure and the economy; guaranteed foodgrain prices continue to be an incentive to the producer; and Community Development is revitalised and updated with an orientation toward integrated area development around growth centres, emphasising balanced agriculture and small industry development and parity of socio-economic services and institutions.

The objective must be to provide for all the people in the villages alternative economic opportunities beyond direct involvement in tilling the soil, and providing the socio-economic services and institutions required of the people who are to continue to live in the rural areas. Finally and crucial to the above will be that all the educational institutions in the area accept two common objectives—educating the people to be effective in earning a living and to live effectively in the rural areas. Only as India's disadvantaged groups experience economic and social achievements can India move into the seventies with confidence it can count on the support of the people to back a government committed to democracy, freedom of the human spirit and social and economic equality for all.

Transition From A Traditional To A Modern Society

My formal training as a Rural Sociologist and my early experience in the United States with socio-economic status groupings contributed to an understanding of India's complex caste structure and how it permeates all phases of Indian life—social, economic and political. My orientation and understanding of caste is similar to the way I understand the nature and working of socio-economic status groupings in the U.S.

One experience from my U.S. involvement with socio-economic status groups will bring me into communication with my Indian readers as I discuss the way Community Development and Panchayati Raj were influenced by caste. Before going to India in 1951, I was in charge of Extension Evaluation in the United States Federal Extension Service. One of the problems presented to me for study was to find out why membership in the Home Economic Extension Clubs was not significantly increasing year after year. The research revealed, the Home Economic Extension Clubs were drawing most

of their members from the upper and upper middle socio-economic status groups. The women in the lower middle and lowest socio-economic status group felt ill at ease when attending club meetings dominated by women from the upper status. Furthermore, the needs and interests of the women in the lower middle and lowest socio-economic status groups were significantly different from those of the upper status group. The recommendations for increasing enrolment in Home Economic Extension Clubs was to accept as one of the facts of life people in the United States do group themselves into clearly defined socio-economic status groups—upper, middle and lowest. This being so, if the objective was to increase membership of Home Economic Clubs, then new clubs should be organised within the socio-economic status groupings—upper, middle and lowest, thus tapping leadership for each status grouping and having programmes which serve the needs of each status group.

Socio-economic status groups in the United States and caste groups in India have many things in common. Both have become what they are out of long experience and initially through informal associations. Over time these associations have become traditional ways of thinking and functioning. Patterns of behaviour have become institutionalised. One can successfully argue neither the Indian caste structure nor the socio-economic status groupings of the West make for an egalitarian society and therefore neither are to be held as desirable for perpetuation. On this issue I find myself in agreement with Gandhi, who said of caste and class:

“Man, being a social being, has a desire for some method of social organisation. We in India have evolved caste, they in Europe have organised class. . . . If caste produced certain evils, class has not produced anything less.

“If class helps to conserve certain social virtues, caste does the same in equal if not greater degree.”¹

While recognising, as Gandhi did, the desirable features about both caste and class such as providing a “method of social organisation” and in helping conserve certain social virtues, he was as uncompromising as am I in holding untouchability—a stigma assigned to the Harijan caste—totally unacceptable. It was to remove the stigma of untouchability from the Harijans, Gandhi pleaded for changes in attitudes and worked relentlessly, hoping his efforts

1. *Hindu Dharma*, by M.K. Gandhi, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

and identification with Harijans would some day gain them a new status—status of their too being accepted as ‘God’s children.’

In discussing the ways Community Development and Panchayati Raj influenced and in turn, were influenced by caste, I do not point a finger of scorn. But one must not take the role of the three monkeys who saw no evil, heard no evil and spoke no evil. In reflecting about caste in India, it is important to know its historical basis for being; to accept as a fact it still exists and understand it will, with many modifications, continue to be a part of India’s social structure into the indefinite future. India’s caste structure and untouchability were not wiped out by the framers of India’s constitution. India has not abolished untouchability from the minds of the people of India any more than the United States did in abolishing slavery, remove the deep seated attitudes and prejudices about blacks from the whites in America.

In a very real sense, India’s caste structure performed a very meaningful role in the nation’s struggle for independence when emphasis under British rule was on *status quo*. I have often thought without the existence of India’s caste structure and the sense of identification and emotional security it provided, life in the villages would have been unbearable. Since the emphasis was on *status quo*, not change, to accept one’s status in a caste meant security and peace of mind. Individual’s purpose for being were caste defined.

One further point needs to be made about caste in setting the stage for an analysis of ways Community Development and Panchayati Raj interacted with caste. This has to do with the relation of caste to the village. Here I draw upon the wisdom of Dr. Irawati Karve, who meaningfully observes:

“A caste is in many ways, a cell-like structure, which for many purposes is separated from other similar cells and lives a life partially independent of them. Caste society is made up in such a way that a very large proportion of the activities of the individual is confined to their own group. This is especially true of the social and cultural aspects of their life.”

In relating caste to the village, Dr. Karve observes that while “the caste had a cell-like structure for subsistence as a caste it needed a certain type of contract and give and take with people of other castes. A village was the most perfect cell as an area of sustenance which was self-sufficient, independent and isolated from others through its individuality. In the village, the articulation of each

caste to the others became defined and through this was developed an amazing system of self-regulation which needed no central supervision and withstood all central interference."²

In understanding and being sympathetic about the complexities of interactions between Community Development and caste, one must appreciate the almost total fixation of relations within and between caste in India's 550 thousand villages at the time Community Development was launched in 1952.

While there was early widespread acceptance, Community Development was the government's instrument for improving the conditions of village life, in reflecting about the interactions between Community Development as both an approach and process for initiating and evolving change, I would be sure few of India's planners, political leaders or administrators visualised the many tensions which purposefully induced change into India's village would bring about. Community Development was a change agent and advocated changes in outlook, attitudes, values, leadership patterns and replacing traditional ways of thinking and methods of earning a living with modern and scientific methods. Few who supported Community Development appreciated the implications of changes in the caste as the village as the universe for both the people and their caste changed to wider functional areas, encompassing the block, the district, the state and the nation and world. Little was thought about the implications of introducing into the minds of the people in India's villages such thoughts as: Now that India is free, all its people are free to think, express their grievances, plan and take action to improve their conditions. The village people must learn to work together to solve their age-old problems. All schools must be open to all castes. Wells must be for all the people, regardless of caste. Cooperatives must be people's institutions and serve the needs of all sections of the community. Panchayat officials will in the future be elected and all sections of the community must be represented. The people must decide what they want and government must be thought of as a resource not to dominate and direct the people but to help.

Looking at Community Development from within a caste and the established relations of the various castes, one with another in India's 550 thousand villages, little thought was given to the implications

2. Hindu Society—An Interpretation by Dr. Irawati Karve, Deccan College, Poona, India.

of people as individuals—not as members of a caste—having a voice, having a vote and in interaction with government in deciding on priorities for the village and joining together as a village community in building schools, digging wells and constructing approach roads.

Dr Karve's discussion of the role of the individual vis à vis the caste says:

"The historic process is one continuous accretion. There does not seem to be a stage where a choice was made between alternatives, a choice in accepting one alternative and a definite final rejection of the others.

"This is seen not only as regards worship of Gods but as regards almost all aspects of social behaviour. The new has not meant the rejection of the old.

"There are certain aspects of life in which great freedom is allowed to the individual but the variation of behaviour is not due to personal liberty. A person moved within rather narrow boundaries behaviour, traditional to the group of which he is a member.

The source of behavioural variety is this group (caste)."

Community Development placed great stress on decisions being taken through the democratic process in which all the people in the villages were to have an opportunity to be heard and decision taken on the basis of understanding, acceptance and support of the majority of the people. Here Community Development functioned in the middle of contrasting forces. Within the village there were established ways of decisions being taken by and within caste and the acceptance of one caste over another. This caste orientation was directly the opposite of the philosophy and approach advocated by Community Development. The democratic process of involving village people in decisions about matters in which they were later to be the beneficiaries, was totally foreign to Indian administrators who had been trained by the British to make decisions at the highest levels and pass orders down.

With respect to the voice of authority, Professor Humayun Kabir said in his Mahine Lectures given in 1961:

"There can be no denying that throughout India's long history, Indian society has been basically authoritarian in structure and attitude. Society was hierarchical and each individual has his place in the hierarchy.

"The same authoritarian structure is seen within the Indian family.

“Authoritarianism, denial of opportunity to all and restriction of knowledge to selected groups have been three of the major forces for India’s misfortune in the past.”³

Community Development’s basic philosophy, approach and methods were designed to modify and correct “the three major forces for India’s misfortune in the past”, Professor Kabir spoke about. There was no place for authoritarianism in Community Development since decisions were to be taken through the democratic process and programmes planned with the involvement of the people and implemented for the benefit of all the people in the village. With the coming of independence and the creation of Community Development all the people in all of India’s villages were to have equal opportunity for education and health services. Each was to have a voice in decisions and a vote in elections of all public officials. Through Community Development the Village Level Extension Worker was to be the window through which new knowledge on all matters of concern to the village was to come to the village and this new knowledge was to be available to all without regard to caste.

Professor Kabir endorsed Community Development’s objectives by stating:

“It is not surprising that with the attainment of independence, it became a major objective of the Indian people to build up *domestic institutions where equality of opportunity and universality of knowledge would guard against the repetition of the past tragedies of Indian history.*”

The development of people’s democratic institutions at the village level was a central objective of Community Development and largely for the reasons stated by Professor Kabir to provide for “equality of opportunity and universality of knowledge.”

One of the many ways the institutionalised functioning of the caste system has influenced Community Development and frustrated its supporters has been in the uneven, and in many ways, limited progress made in getting acceptance by the village community that the three basic institutions: schools, co-operatives and panchayats are for the benefit of all castes and not dominated by any single caste. As a sociologist, reflecting on the many complexities in making India’s caste structure more open, more responsive to the individual

3. Mahine Lectures, 1961—Lessons of Indian History by Professor Humayun Kabir, Department of Publications, University of Gauhati.

and change oriented, I am greatly encouraged with the progress Community Development has made in involving all castes in working together in schools, co-operatives and panchayats. Important, is how you ask the question. Two people can look at the same glass of water one third full. One can observe the glass is nearly empty; the other can see the glass as already being one third full. I see the glass as one third full and therefore, expect over time it will approach being full as the caste structure moves from its village orientation to wider horizons, and leadership patterns change.

Perhaps the greatest interacting force between caste in the village and between Community Development and Panchayati Raj is related to all of India's adults having been given the franchise. In analysis the effect of adult franchisement, Dr. N. Patnaik observed :

"The effect of adults suffrage and Panchayati Raj has accentuated the consolidation of numerous strong caste for dominance, political authority and power.

"Adult franchise seems to have given an element of power to the numerically predominant caste who as a result, seem to be showing a great interest in revitalising their caste organisation and in using it in the most successful way for political reward.

"As the old order began to change, consequent upon introducing adult franchise and Panchayati Raj, it introduced conflict in the horizontal line between the minority 'haves' and the majority 'havenots.'"⁴

Those who fault Community Development for having contributed to creating new conflicts within the villages of India instead of having solved already existing conflicts, fail to accept that caste continues to be a structural and functional part of village life. The new tensions and conflicts now viewed as being so disturbing are in fact, the evidence and manifestations of a chain of reactions resulting from change which Community Development was expected to bring about. If India wishes to achieve a more egalitarian society and continue its unqualified support of adult franchise, there must be an acceptance that tensions and conflicts will result as the role of the individual within the caste and the relations between castes undergoes far reaching changes.

Political leaders view with alarm the increasing visibility of the 'havenots' who are challenging the rights of the 'haves' to dominate

4. *Caste and Social Change*, by N. Patnaik, National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad.

politically, socially and economically. At the same time, political leaders are condemning Community Development for having opened up political hornet's nest in contributing to the 'havenots' being participants in the democratic process and democratic institutions, they are talking new readings and aligning themselves on the side of the poor, the 'havenots'. Power is shifting from the previously dominant and minority caste; to the lower status but majority castes. This is democracy in action.

What is being witnessed is the working of democracy in which people who have political aspirations identify themselves with the causes of the people who have the most votes. One should not expect the 'havenots' to achieve social and economic justice except through the political process.

On the question of poverty, Professor Kabir observed:

"Mass poverty has been recognised as an outstanding feature of the Indian scene for several decades, but attempts to combat it are of more recent date. Hitherto we have sought remedies which are at best partial, with its allies—ignorance and disease—will not yield to any but the most comprehensive, serious and determined efforts we can make."

Community Development and the people's institutions it has fostered—schools, co-operatives and panchayats—along with adult franchise is bringing about far reaching changes which must be understood by planners and political leaders if India is to achieve its often stated objectives of developing a viable democracy and a viable economy in which all can achieve social and economic justice.

Through nineteen years of Community Development, ignorance and rigidity of caste are giving way to understanding of the importance of freedom of expression and the power of one's vote. The 'havenots' are learning, they can have influence, and that they need not forever be the 'havenots.' Increasingly political leaders are verbalising their concern over and about India's poor. It may take another national election before the 'havenots' can achieve enough political muscle to translate into programmes political commitments that are designed to remove the conditions of India's mass poverty. This time I see the glass of water half full not half empty.

In contributing to the development of freedom of the individual for self-expression, understanding the power of adult franchise for

new and wider social relations and change in occupational status, Community Development and Panchayati Raj have opened the door for change and started an irreversible process throughout the villages of India. To bring about significant changes in the functioning of caste there was need for a meaningful organisational base which extended beyond the village. This Community Development provided, by creating the Block as a new administrative unit, in involving people in co-operative that included a number of villages, involving several villages in joint efforts of constructing approach roads and creating Panchayati Raj to bring village people in working relation with other villages in electing officers and in planning and decision making at the district levels.

In considering how Community Development can foster the process of wider social and economic interaction within and between castes, I find Dr. Karve has given the matter deep thought in concluding:

"This quality of being comparatively self contained in social and cultural activities and at the same time being linked with other groups in economic activities is a fundamental characteristic of the group called caste.

"The social self-containment of caste is broken on certain occasions when all castes in a village appear to combine for achieving certain common ends like celebrating certain festivals, sometimes for common defence and sometimes for common representation to government.

"The social isolation is broken more often in the urban setting."

On the social, cultural and economic grounds, I find myself in accord with Dr. Karve's thinking about future trends in rural development, when she says:

"The trend seems to be for many castes to leave the villages and settle in the market towns. It has been pointed out life is lived between two cells, (1) the caste, and (2) the village. Everyone feels it necessary to break one cell (the caste)."

The author (Dr. Karve) thinks the other cell (the village) needs to be broken too.

"It would be better to accept and strengthen the new model of village groups around a market town with one or more small industries to offer employment, medical care in the shape of hospitals and dispensaries, education in the shape of good schools and entertainment.

"The social aim must not be isolation but building up larger communities where people can mingle in free uncompulsive intercourse."

In previous chapters I emphasised the importance of Community Development supporting the development of growth centres with clusters of 50 to 100 villages. The growth centre community is essential if individuals presently locked in rigid village castes are to achieve the status of being free spirits and if opportunities are to be created for greater social and economic interaction. The larger growth centre community will provide present 'havenots' greater opportunities for an education, adequate medical services and most of all, an opportunities to be employed and achieve the status of a self-respecting individual in a free society.

In reflecting on the nature and acceleration of conflicts and tensions Community Development is credited with having initiated and nurtured in India's 550 thousand villages the past twenty years, one needs an appreciation of the process by which change takes place. Few changes within institutions, political parties or India's caste structure should be expected without the emergence of conflicts and tensions. Conflicts and tension is the nature, yes, evidence of change. Change can be either induced by an outside force where the effort is to awaken people to the existence of problems they have accepted to be normal or natural, or it can come from within when enough people become dissatisfied with their situation and gain enough support and influence to challenge established leadership and traditional ways of doing things.

Think with me for a moment about the dramatic and traumatic experience the people of village India went through when Community Development advocated as well as responded to the people's request for a village school. Community Development funds for schools were to assist the villages which were prepared to provide a plot of land and contribute toward the construction of a school building on condition the school would be open for children from all castes to attend. This was as traumatic an experience for caste oriented villages as it is for many U.S. communities to accept desegregation of schools. Tensions and conflicts there have been, but the progress has been most gratifying in that increasing numbers of lower caste children are attending schools in the presence of other castes in villages.

Community Development has throughout the past twenty years,

faced stiff opposition impressing on the villages the importance of the co-operatives being supported by and serving the needs and interests of all castes. The introduction of Panchayati Raj and the replacing of traditional and inherited leaders by elected officials has, as should have been expected, created tensions and conflicts. Here we see the will of the majority replacing the inherited rights of the minority privileged castes.

Since Community Development was initiated as an external agent, charged with inducing change into all of India's 550 thousand villages, it should, after twenty years be evaluated and judged by the nature and degree of ferment and change it has brought about in village India and not condemned because it has succeeded in starting needed and desirable processes of change. There is abundant evidence that Community Development has contributed to initiating processes of change which will modify both the role and function of individuals and the base of caste orientation from the village to a complex of larger communities. But to create change for the sake of change is unpardonable. Those who are charged with the responsibility for giving leadership to change must be guided by clear policies directing the course of change. The forces of change initiated and unleashed by Community Development can now boomerang if they are not effectively directed in a framework of broad, comprehensive policies for the development of rural India.

In a very real sense, the past two developmental decades has laid the foundation for change. When Community Development was launched in 1952, village people operated within their prescribed caste role and the caste structure maintained its traditional form and function with the village. Today—two decades later—village people are change oriented. They are increasingly thinking, functioning and voting as individuals and the 'haves-nots' are making clear they expect political leaders to respect their vote by supporting policies and programmes which will free them from the bondages of disease, ignorance and poverty.

While planners and supporters of aid fostering development in the developing countries are increasingly recognising, there is more to the development than economic added up in terms of gross national products the economist continues to dominate both policies and resource allocation. On this issue, Professor M.S. Gore wrote in the introduction to *Problems of Rural Change*:

"Discussions on rural change generally proceed on the assumption

that the problem to be solved is, in the last analysis, an economic one.

"Sociologists and social workers must disagree with this definition of the problem of rural change. It is a problem of rebuilding an entire social world of which the economy is only one area. Moreover, limited change in economic institutions cannot be brought about purely through economic instruments. The change to be effected must be accompanied by, if not preceded by, changes in the motivational patterns and the social relationships characteristic of our rural society."⁵

While Community Development must contribute to strengthening the economic base, its more significant contribution is in providing the conditions for improving the quality of human life. The objective of Community Development and therefore, the basis on which it should be judged must be the contribution it makes in developing the competence of village people to function effectively as individuals and in democratic institutions fostering and giving leadership to integrated rural development.

5. *The Problems of Rural Change*, by M.S. Gore, Delhi School of Social Work, Delhi University.

Prime Movers Behind The Programme

Three persons in India, Prime Minister Nehru, Sir V.T. Krishnamachari and S.K. Dey shared in the conceptualisation and painted the big pictures projecting India's Community Development and Panchayati Raj programmes on the large canvas of India's 550 thousand villages. Prime Minister Nehru wanted a national programme which would have as its objectives: (1) involving the village people in the process of breaking the forces of traditionalism and the bondages of poverty; and (2) an organisational structure which would in meaningful ways relate the village people with government in building the new nation. Sir V.T. Krishnamachari saw in Community Development an opportunity and need for village people to be directly involved in both the formulation and implementation of India's Five Year plans. S.K. Dey was the architect who gave structural meaning and content to the process of involving village people in a national self-help Community Development programme and projected the role of government as a resource in providing

technical and financial support. It was the interacting and interrelating of ideas and intellectual commitments of these three men who gave India its Community Development programme.

Without Nehru's deep concern for the plight of village people; his abiding faith in their resourcefulness and his unqualified commitment to Community Development, it would never have become a national programme involving all of India's 550 thousand villages within fifteen years of its inception. There is no question about it, Nehru's role in supporting Community Development was decisive. Basic to the success, let alone survival of Community Development, was that it had in Nehru the leadership and support of India's top political leader as well as the operating head of government. Nehru never waived in his faith in village people and his dogged determination to have government serve the needs of village people. While Nehru experienced many disappointments and was concerned that the process of improving village conditions was so complex and took so long, he maintained his faith in Community Development and Panchayati Raj as both a process of development as well as an institutional structure relating village people and government in a great nation building effort.

As the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Sir V.T. Krishnamachari played a meaningful role in interrelating all the technical and developmental branches of government to the needs of village people and in focusing Community Development's role in the development of three basic village institutions, i.e., primary schools, panchayats and co-operatives.

Dey's formal training as an engineer brought to the administration of the programme a methodical mind. His Nilokheri experience on the anvil of trial testing and of involving inexperienced people in the process of building a new nucleus growth centre to serve the needs of the surrounding farming area and provide employment opportunities in addition to agriculture, contributed a needed voice of experience. In addition to the ideas he contributed and the unqualified support he gave to Nehru's leadership and Sir V.T. Krishnamachari's role of integrating and interrelating government with village people, S.K. Dey's continuous leadership to the programme, seeing it through the process of involving all of India's 550 thousand villages—stands as a monumental contribution to the development of rural India unequalled in India's 24 years of independence.

Two other groups of people made a difference in the quality and character of Community Development. The first was Nehru, Krishnamachari and Dey; the second were State Development Commissioners. State leadership for Community Development was one of the first new programmes entrusted to the newly appointed Development Commissioners. As a group of men, the Development Commissioners were uniquely outstanding. They were experienced and competent administrators and gave strong support to Community Development. Without the qualities of leadership of the State Development Commissioners and the strong support they received by State Chief Ministers, Community Development would not have achieved the status it did nor would it have spread to India's 550 thousand villages. I cannot too strongly state the decisive role of these great Development Commissioners in getting response and cooperation from all the technical and operating branches of the State Government having responsibilities for programmes that reached out to the villages.

The third group whose presence made a difference in the launching and early gaining support for Community Development were the first 75 Project Executive Officers. It was this group that thoroughly tested the philosophy, concepts and methods projected for Community Development and proclaimed them workable and acceptable to both village people and the bureaucracy of government. These Project Executive Officers were a dynamic, intelligent group. They worked with devotion and zest knowing they were pioneering in a programme having great national significance. They responded magnificently to the challenge by demonstrating the competence and willingness of villagers to work together and apply the resources of government in solving the many complex problems of village India. They were doers and got things done. The very fact that this group of Project Executive Officers got things done by not conforming too closely to established governmental procedures presented Community Development in a false light in that expectations were greater than the bureaucracy was capable of delivering as the number of projects grew and future expectations mounted. These early Project Executive Officers demonstrated one thing that has not been appreciated and understood by the critics of Community Development and that is Community Development must be guided by strong and devoted leadership at the operating people's level. This is so largely because of the strong forces of traditionalism, caste and lack

of experience on the part of village people in thinking of government as a resource to help the people do what they want to do but cannot do without outside assistance.

In starting a new programme like Community Development there is always the temptation to want to have a set-up that provides freedom to experiment with the minimum amount of bureaucratic procedures and red tape. But if the programme being launched is to be projected for national coverage as was Community Development, its launching should be within the governmental institutional framework which will have to accept responsibility for spreading it if the early experience proves it is workable and has promise of meeting a national need.

Since Community Development was projected to become and function as a people's programme under governmental leadership and with the resources of government being coordinated at the district level, it was imperative to the functioning of Community Development that there be an administrative unit within bureaucracy that functioned close to the village people. To achieve this, the Community Block was officially created as an administrative and coordinating unit below and within the district. To stimulate village interest and participation in solving village problems and to serve as a channel for communicating technical information and recommendations at the village level, Community Development pointed up the need for a new village functionary—the Village Level Worker. Though continuously criticised for what he has failed to achieve, to village people he has become the chief source through which they get new ideas and assistance in bringing to the village the resources of government.

Administratively, Community Development has been weakened in its functioning by not giving tenure appointments to the many new functionaries built into the programme; by not giving the needed status to the Village Level Worker and backing him up with continuous in-service training and strong supervision; in the too frequent transfers of both block and district staff and in not implementing a policy decision to have each District Collector assisted by an additional Collector who was to takeover the Collector's regulatory functions so the Collector could devote himself to development. There is a close correlation between the leadership given to Community Development by the Collector and programme performance. The Collector's role in coordinating, decision making and following

through on implementation is a critical and decisive role for Community Development.

Community Development was forever a thorn in the side of India's administrative bureaucracy. At the time Community Development was launched (1952), India's top administrators were decision making and order giving in their orientation. Community Development was people's involvement in the decision making process and administrative sharing in assuming responsibility. That Community Development fared as well as it did functioning under India's administrative bureaucracy is what should be emphasised. I saw the evidence year after year during the nineteen years I observed Community Development of the very great contribution Community Development made to the administrator's approach to rural development and the increasing understanding and respect each level of administration had for the other. In a very real way, Community Development contributed greatly to humanising India's administrative bureaucracy and in making it more responsive and people oriented.

From its inception to the present Community Development has been under continuous evaluation of the office of Project Evaluation—a staff unit specifically created and which has continued to function under the Planning Commission. I think it is fair to say no national programme in any country of the world has been more continuously and openly evaluated and the evaluative findings more fully made public than the evaluation of Community Development. That this has been so has contributed to the strengthening of Community Development as well as having contributed to a weakening of public support from political leaders who were not always able to comprehend the underlying meaning and significance of findings which pointed up weaknesses and failures in the functioning of Community Development. The man who must be given credit for projecting the independent and constructively critical image of programme evaluation is Professor G.D. Karve, the first Director for Programme Evaluation. Professor Karve was a rare individual. He believed in village people and had faith in the capacity of government to evolve an administrative bureaucracy that would respond to and serve the needs of village people. He saw in Programme Evaluation a tool to strengthen Community Development by sharing insights its functioning with administrators, political leaders and the public at large.

It is important to record that the office of Programme Evaluation for Community Development was created to contribute to keeping Community Development experimental and innovative. Evaluation was looked to to help the planners and administrators know-how projected plans and operating programmes were in fact functioning.

One of the greatest strengths in Community Development came from S.K. Dey as the first Administrator and later Minister of Community Development in thinking in big and significant terms and being ever ready to try out untested approaches. The record is clear evaluation contributed to Community Development being an open and experimental laboratory in process of village change and development. India has no other national programmes so publically exposed as Community Development. It is interesting to speculate whether or not India might have earlier made many of its critical policy decisions in support of agricultural prices, credit and fertiliser had its entire agricultural production efforts been as completely evaluated and the findings as openly exposed as has been true with Community Development.

As I reflect on the many evaluative studies and reports which have been issued about Community Development over the past nineteen years, there has been one great weakness. None have put their findings into a time perspective. It is my contention that evaluation of a programme in 'process' must always be in relation to progress at any given time and not based on a false assumption that the programme objective should have been achieved at the time a specific evaluation was made. That the evaluation reports have not been in a time perspective has resulted in those who read the reports frequently drawing totally wrong conclusions; many times assuming the report documents failure when it in fact pointed up progress. It is my view beginning with the launching of Community Development in 1952, one has to accept that it will take three generations of time for India to move through the process of cultural transformation of village India from traditionalism to modernism and that this process has a distinct and direct bearing on all programmes being evaluated.

While evaluation is of critical importance to planners and administrators, to the political leaders and the lay public, an evaluative report more frequently than not is looked upon as a report that finds fault and this is the way it is treated by the press. Perhaps

two reports are needed—one for the administrators and planners which is openly frank pointing up the weak spots, the other an interpretive report to the public which points up progress and provides insight into problems which must be corrected. Five Year Plans set targets and lead the public to expect miracles. Evaluative reports should help the public understand what is involved timewise to achieve projected targets and goals and not set out to prove failures when all that has been promised was not achieved.

There are significant conclusions to be drawn from the above analysis, among the most important are: (1) A national programme designed to involve and develop the people's competence; develop people's institutions and co-ordinate all resources of government having a contribution to make in assisting the people, can succeed only if the operating head of government personally provides strong leadership and intervenes when and wherever his presence is required. (2) The programme administrator must report directly to the operating head of government to assure maximum co-ordination, involvement and continuous commitments of all units of government. (3) To keep the programme administrator from becoming too directly and too frequently engaged in resolving administrative jurisdictional disputes, the head of planning can play a crucial role in projecting programmes and commitment of resources. (4) If the programme is to evolve as a national programme covering the entire country, it must from its inception be built into the established bureaucracy. (5) The people entrusted with the direct administrative responsibilities for programme implementation must be carefully selected. They must be individuals of exceptional competence and be widely respected by the established bureaucracy. (6) Evaluation must be looked to perform two functions and therefore requires two different reports; one for the programme and administrative people which emphasises weak points needing attention and the other for the public which interprets the programme in process, pointing up what it has achieved and what is required for still greater achievements.

Community Development—The Next Two Decades

In my previous chapters, I analysed various phases and features of India's Community Development and Panchayati Raj programmes as they evolved and developed over the past two decades. In this final chapter, I will record what I believe to be the major lessons and conclusions to be drawn from the past twenty years of Community Development, which have application and implications in India's rural development for the next two decades.

1. Promising approach to solving India's complex socio-economic rural problems with its depressing poverty, is through national policies in support of an integrated, area-based, rural development programme.

2. It makes no difference whether the area being taken up for integrated rural development has assured water for irrigation or is in a limited rain-fed area, the development and modernisation of agriculture must be given top priority.

3. India can expect to progress in achieving a more socio-economic

egalitarian society through an integrated rural development programme which emphasises : (a) The development of individual competence and self; (b) The development of people's institutions motivated to serve the needs and interests of all without regard to caste; (c) Developing 'within the area' alternatives to agricultural employment opportunities; and (d) Providing parity of socio-economic services and institutions for all the people.

4. To maintain and sustain the people's concern, interest and participation in India's two highest priority national programmes—agriculture and family planning—it will be essential to have the leadership and resources of government working effectively with village leadership and village institutions.

5. The people living in India's 550 thousand villages can make their maximum contribution to national development by being involved in the management and working of people's institutions, especially panchayats, cooperatives and schools.

6. Integrated rural development offers an opportunity to reorient education with objectives of preparing people to earn a living and to live effectively in the rural areas, in contrast to preparing individuals to qualify for admission to the next higher educational institution. Within an integrated area approach, education can be a continuous process contributing to living and earning a living within the area of residence.

7. Panchayati Raj can be greatly strengthened and its role made more dynamic if the relationship between the panchayat as an institution of the people and the governmental staff at the district and block levels is clarified. The panchayats must see their role as being more dynamically developmental and the governmental staff must view the panchayats as a means of getting the people to accept and do the things the village people's leaders and the government feel to be in the best interest of the people and the nation.

8. Cooperatives can play an important role in integrated rural development if they are well managed, function as people's institutions and operate under policies which make them competitive—operating without subsidies or having a monopoly over an area of service.

9. As important as the panchayats and co-operative institutions are, they cannot take the place of the more informal and many times more special interest orientation of voluntary organisations like farmers' organisations, women's organisations, youth organisations and children's organisations. These voluntary organi-

sations won't just come into being and function effectively without some outside initiative, guidance, leadership, training and assistance in sponsoring programmes which attract people's interest and meet the needs of village people. The Village Level Worker and the Block Development Officer can make a significant contribution to the development of these people's voluntary organisations, and assist the organisations in understanding problems, weighing alternative solutions and taking appropriate action. Rural development should be judged by the increase in quality of village leadership, social relations, institutions, voluntary organisations as they contribute to improving the quality of human life.

10. If India is to avoid the ills of the Western pattern of agriculture oriented to the needs of the larger cultivators producing for the market and industrial development which has contributed to concentration of urban population creating the crisis of the cities, it must seek to provide the people alternatives to agricultural employment in rural areas.

11. Integrated rural development around growth centres can provide the conditions for the development of viable industries needed to provide alternatives to agriculture for employment.

12. An integrated rural development programme can through public works programmes construct roads linking the villages and the growth centre essential for marketing and providing services to the cultivators, both essential for a modernising agriculture.

13. Since financial resources of both Central and State Governments will never be adequate to do all the things needed in bringing parity of socio-economic services and communication facilities to India's 550 thousand villages these are no alternatives to having the people join the government as partners in rural development—the government providing supplementary resources and technology and the people the leadership, institutions, motivations as well as resources of the people to do for themselves what they can do and look to government for encouragement, back-up support and know-how. Given the nature and complexity of India's rural problems, the government and the people can have a meaningful partnership relation within a comprehensive integrated area development programme.

14. An integrated rural development programme will make possible planning, allocation of resources and implementation being and continuous process and therefore have more meaning and common

greater support both from the people in the area and general public. This will assure planning from the bottom and action where the problems exist.

15. The effectiveness of an integrated rural development programme will be related to its boldness, clarity of policies, leadership and response of village people, administrative machinery for coordination and implementation, quality of staff and how resources are allocated.

16. While policies, priorities and resource requirements should be examined and projections made afresh each Five Year Plan, it should be national policy that integrated, area-based, rural development is to be a continuing and long time commitment.

17. Research to back up and direct an integrated rural development programme must be assured by national allocation of research resources to support on a priority basis, research into areas where information and technology are crucial to planning, programme development, people's participation, strategies for change, co-ordination and administration.

18. If a national, integrated, rural development programme is to achieve its objectives of contributing toward providing parity of socio-economic services and institutions and creating alternatives to agricultural employment opportunities and life in the cities, planners and political leaders must understand the programme can succeed only if backed by bold national policies, passing and implementing of essential legislation assuring equitable land holdings and tenure arrangements, and providing needed finances.

19. Since a significant percentage of resources required to finance an integrated rural development programme will be centre funds, new approaches for making funds available to the states should be explored. The primary objective should be to fund well planned and effectively executed programmes in ways that will contribute to strengthening local leadership and institutions.

20. A national integrated rural development programme will require both the administrative generalist and the technical specialist. Technical specialists at the block level should be at least M.As and those at the district level should be Ph.Ds.

21. Selection, training and supervision of the field staff for integrated rural development is of paramount importance. Round pegs must be fitted into round holes, square pegs into square holes and misfits reassigned or dismissed.

Since integrated rural development must be viewed as a process of change and growth, continuous inservice training will be essential and supervision which seeks to bring out the best of one's talents is imperative. People must be trained to do the jobs expected of them and helped through supervision to succeed in their assigned roles.

22. An integrated, rural development programme with its growth centre industries, institutions and services related to and interacting with clusters of 50 to 100 villages, will significantly change the relation of the individual to caste and the relations between caste.

23. National leadership for an integrated rural development programme should come from the Prime Minister with the programme administrator reporting to the Prime Minister. India's experience with both an administrator and a Ministry of Community Development supports the conclusion the administrator is preferable to a ministry. The administrator should be given minister status.

24. The Planning Commission should play a key role in relating programmes of the various ministries to an integrated rural development programme and in allocating resources in ways to assure programme execution is coordinated and integrated into the area.

25. Within the states, the leadership responsibilities for an integrated rural development programme are of such magnitude and complexity as to require the full time attention of a Development Commissioner reporting to the Chief Minister.

26. Given the importance of the district leadership, both official and non-official, in an integrated rural development programme and accepting the key role of the Zila Parishad in the district, it logically follows the Chief District Executive Officer should, at the district level, play the same role as the Development Commissioner at the state level, functioning under the overall guidance and direction of the Zila Parishad. He should be an officer of adequate seniority, highly competent, and dynamic. Since it is within the district that all rural development takes place, it is essential the Chief District Executive Officer devote his full time to coordinating all development programmes within the district and giving leadership to the functioning of all the different agencies of government and the Zila Parishad. He alone can assure an integrated approach to rural development in its entirety.

27. While it will take time to do so, the objective of an integrated, rural development programme should be to have the district divided into growth centre areas. However, until techniques can be perfected

for identifying growth centres and delineating the cluster of villages the growth centres are to interact with and serve, the block should continue to be the sub-unit within the district.

28. The Village Level Extension Worker holds the key that unlocks the minds and creates the conditions for village people to become concerned about problems and to examine alternative solutions. While the Village Level Extension Worker must know about alternative solutions, his job must be primarily one of creating village interest and desire to change, to improve and to try new things. He should know what the technical staff recommends in areas of agriculture, family planning and health and help the village people understand and apply technical recommendations.

But the Village Level Extension Worker should not be expected to function as a technical specialist. He represents the people's concerns and the need of the technical specialist to be in touch with village people. He encourages the people to examine and accept technical recommendations. In a sense, he is the communicator between the village people and the technical staff in relaying the people's needs and concerns to the technical staff and in relaying the technical recommendations to the village people. He should be trained in knowing how to get answers to village problems but not himself be expected to have all the answers.

29. Since the district, block and village staff giving leadership to integrated rural development must spend most of their time with the village people educating, encouraging, demonstrating and assisting in implementing plans and decisions taken, the kind and amount of reporting must be held to an absolute minimum. Too much emphasis on reporting achievements leads to falsifying accomplishments and makes paper workers out of staff who should be working in the field.

30. Programme Evaluation should continue to function under the Planning Commission. Evaluation should provide needed understanding of the changes in process.

While a wide range of criteria might be used to evaluate progress and effectiveness of an integrated rural development programme, some of the specific programme's objectiveness should be the focus of evaluation on the following areas:

(a) The area taken up for integrated rural development should be a growth centre area having the potential of developing into a socio-economic-cultural viable rural community. Evaluation

should look into the potential of the area to become viable and the evidence of progress in its achieving viability.

(b) An early and continuous objective of integrated rural development must be the involvement of the people through their leaders and institutions in all phases of development. Since development must be viewed as a continuous process, the people must see development as contributing to solving their problems.

Evaluation should examine evidence of people and people's institutions involvement; evidence development activities have significant meaning to the people and ways development gains are influencing changes in social and economic values.

(c) If the disadvantaged group—the landless labourers, the un-economic holders and the unemployed and partially employed—are to achieve social and economic security, they must have assured employment opportunities within industry, within the services and trades in the area.

Evaluation must examine evidence of growth in strengthening the economic base and employment opportunities, and then evaluate how economic growth is contributing to increasing the level of family living of all sections of the community; the quality of education and health services and a growing sense of security and freedom from the fear of hunger.

While Programme Evaluation will want to continue to evaluate specific programmes, it must in the future do so on the basis of examining evidences of change based on hypotheses expressed in terms of what changes are thought to be realistic and not base evaluation on the achievement of targets set to meet political, planning and administrative commitments.

Evaluation will also want to give continuous attention to changes in caste structure and function, leader-follower patterns, values and the role changes and achievements of the 'havenots' and the 'haves'.

31. If integrated, area-based, rural development is to become a long term commitment of government, as indeed it must, the entire staff assigned to the programme must be given tenure status and provision be made for built-in assurances for advancement and promotion based on merit.

32. If India is to put its millions presently unemployed or partially unemployed to work on public works programmes and these public works programmes are to contribute to the development of the economy, a strong case can be made for the public works programmes

being an integral part of an integrated rural development programme. Priority areas for public works programmes in an integrated rural development programme include construction of hard surface roads linking the villages to the growth centre, installing a water and sewage system for the growth centre, developing a modern irrigation and drainage system for the area, etc., etc.

Unless public works programmes contribute to laying the foundation for the growth and development of an integrated, rural development programme, little progress will be made in correcting the conditions which create poverty and produce the 'havenots'.

33. The objectives of integrated rural development should be: To contribute to the development of a strong economic base so the people will have most of the resources needed to do most of the things they want to do and needed to be done.

The development of people capable of making decision based on alternatives.

The development of institutions through which people can work and to which government can relate.

Provide parity of socio-economic-cultural programmes, services and institutions for all the people, regardless of caste.

Providing employment opportunities in agriculture and non-agriculture for all who want to and are able to work can do so and earn decent livings.

Improving the quality of human life of all the people.

34. Unless India calls a halt to what is already a visible trend toward urbanisation and growing unemployment in the villages hastening still further migration to the cities, there will be a continuing and continuous deterioration in the quality of human life in all of India.

Integrated rural development provides an alternative to growing urbanisation and mass poverty in the villages in that planning and development is for all the people and all the resources in an integrated manner, blends all of society together in a series of interlocking socio-economic politically viable rural-cum-urban area. The dichotomy between rural and urban fades as development becomes rural-cum-urban.

In integrated rural area development, people born in the villages can look forward to living and earning a living in the area of their birth and all can contribute toward culturally and economically enriching the area. Community Development and the Panchayati

Raj institutions provide the framework for government and the people to work toward a common objective of providing the conditions in all the people in all of India's 550 thousand villages to progressively and in meaningful ways achieve social and economic justice and move toward a higher quality of human life.

Appendix I

1. A VILLAGE UNIT. A village on the average will consist of an approximate population of 500 distributed in about 100 families. The village should have the following amenities:

- (i) Two surface wells or tubewells or tanks for drinking water.
- (ii) Adequate facilities for drainage.
- (iii) Agricultural extension service at the rate of one agricultural extension worker for every five villages.
- (iv) Veterinary services through a veterinary hospital at the headquarters of the project area and through peripatetic agencies.
- (v) Sanitary services through a Sanitary Inspector maintained at the Block centres.
- (vi) At least half of the agricultural land should be served with irrigation through irrigation canals, tubewells, surface wells, tanks and lift irrigation from rivers, lakes, etc.
- (vii) One-third of the area of the village should be kept reserved for village housing, grazing fields and fuel forests freshly planted, if not already existing. Culturable waste-land will be reclaimed.
- (viii) The road system on the countryside will be so developed as to link every village within the project area upto a maximum distance of half a mile from the village, the latter distance being connected by feeder roads through voluntary labour of the village population, only the main roads being provided for and maintained by the state or other public agencies.

(ix) Schools for primary education for all school-going children.

(x) Primary adult education and recreation centre in the open air or in the village school conducted by the village level worker with the assistance of the teachers of the school.

(xi) Centres for fisheries (where facilities exist).

2. A MANDI UNIT: Village should be linked up with a common market and a centre of other activities. Such units for the purpose of this project can be called the Mandi Units and, unless already there, can be located as a nucleus of 15 to 25 villages depending on population. The Mandi Unit should include :

(i) A middle or secondary school.

(ii) A small dispensary connected with the primary health centre through mobile services health unit and having a Lady Health Visitor, Midwives and Sanitary Inspector.

(iii) An agricultural extension service sub-headquarters.

(iv) A post & telegraph office.

(v) A transport service centre.

(vi) A marketing centre.

(vii) An arts, crafts and cottage industry centre.

(viii) A marketing centre and storage godowns for agricultural produce.

(ix) A shopping centre.

(x) A community recreation centre.

(xi) A model farm including a horticultural garden, a seed multiplication centre and a breeding centre for birds and animals.

(xii) An open air dispensary for paripatetic veterinary services.

N.B. Due to financial stringency, the Mandi Unit was omitted from the Government sponsored programme, it being hoped that the increased productivity in the project area as a result of the programme would in due course stimulate these centres through the private initiative of the local population.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT BLOCK. Four to five Mandi centres together with satellite villages should constitute what can be called a 'Development Block'. The headquarters of the 'Development Block' should be a rural-cum-urban township with an approximate population of 5000 distributed in 1000 families. The area of a development block will approximate a thana or a sub-tahsil in the existing framework of the State. The rural-cum-urban township should have :

(i) Residential accommodation for about 1000 families including latrines and baths.

(ii) Water works and a water distribution system for drinking water.

(iii) Electricity provided through a power station or a transformer substation as the case may be.

(iv) A shopping centre

(v) Cottage, small and medium scale industries and industries covering arts and crafts.

(vi) A post, telegraph and telephone office.

(vii) A transport centre.

(viii) Schools—primary, middle and high, preferably of the basic type.

(ix) An agricultural school.

(x) A primary health unit consisting of 15 beds equipped for mobile work in the villages.

- (xi) Administrative offices and a police station.
- (xii) A dairy and a poultry breeding centre.
- (xiii) A nursery.
- (xiv) A veterinary hospital.
- (xv) Social education and community activity centre.

N.B. Due to financial and other limitations the rural-cum-urban townships were omitted from the current Government sponsored programme. Instead, a Mandi Centre under the basic rural project has been provided at the headquarters of the block.

Appendix II

ANNEXURE

Technical Cooperation Programme Between the Government of India and the Government of United States of America.

OPERATIONAL AGREEMENT NO. 8

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This Operational Agreement is entered into between P.C. Bhattacharyya, as designated representative of the Government of India (hereinafter referred to as the 'Representative'), and Clifford H. Willson, Director of Technical Cooperation for India, as designated representative of the Government of the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as the 'Director'), pursuant to the Technical Cooperation Programme Agreement between the two Governments dated January 5, 1952. The provisions of such Programme Agreement shall be applicable to this Agreement and to the conduct of the programme described herein.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

The Community Programme will start approximately 55 projects of rural development located in selected areas in the several States of India.

The central object of Community Development project is to secure the fullest development of the material and human resources of the area. The attainment of this object in rural areas demands urgent measures for a rapid increase in food and agricultural production. Work will also be undertaken for the promotion of education, for improvement in the health of the people, and for the introduction of new skills and occupations so that the programme as a whole can lift the rural community to higher levels of economic organisation and arouse enthusiasm for new knowledge and improved ways of life.

This programme will be the first step in a Programme of intensive development which is expected over a period of years to cover the entire country. Increased food production and rural development are given first priority in India's Five-Year Plan for Economic Development. This is also considered necessary to lay the proper foundations for the industrial and general economic development of the country. To accomplish this purpose the Community Development Programme must reach as large a Section of India's population as possible. The present programme will be confined to approximately 55 projects which should provide a proper foundation for the expansion of the programme in the future.

Each project will embrace approximately 300 villages with a population of about 200,000 people and cover a cultivated area of approximately 150,000 acres of land. A project area will be divided into three development blocks, each comprising about 100 villages and a population of about 65,000 people. In areas where a full project is not considered feasible, one or two development blocks will be started for the time being. The 55 projects will include approximately 16,500 villages and over a crore of people.

The proposed projects will be of the rural development type including irrigation, fertiliser application, agricultural extension, health measures, and education. Six of the 55 projects, however will be of the composite type including, in addition to the foregoing, activities in small and medium scale industries, township planning and development, etc.

The following rural community development activities will be undertaken in such varying degrees within the limits of the available Programme Funds hereinafter provided, as will be advisable under the circumstances existing in each particular project area and development block.

A. AGRICULTURAL AND RELATED MATTERS

- (1) Reclamation of available virgin and waste land.
- (2) Provision of water for agriculture through irrigation canals, tube-wells, surface wells, tanks, lift irrigation from rivers, lakes and pools etc.
- (3) Development of rural electrification.
- (4) Provision of commercial fertilisers.
- (5) Provision of quality seeds.
- (6) Promotion of improved agricultural techniques and land utilisation.
- (7) Provision of veterinary aid.
- (8) Provision of technical information, materials, bulletins etc., on agriculture.
- (9) Provision for dissemination of information through slides, films, radio broadcasts, lectures, etc.
- (10) Provision of improved agricultural implements.

- (11) Promotion of marketing and credit facilities.
- (12) Provision of breeding centres for animal husbandry.
- (13) Development of inland fisheries.
- (14) Promotion of home economics.
- (15) Development of fruit and vegetable cultivation.
- (16) Provision of soil surveys and information.
- (17) Encouragement of the use of natural and compost manures.
- (18) Provision of arboriculture including plantation of forests.

B. *COMMUNICATIONS*

- (1) Provision of roads.
- (2) Encouragement of mechanical road transport services.
- (3) Development of animal transport.

C. *EDUCATION*

- (1) Provision of compulsory and free education, preferably of the basic type, at the elementary stage.
- (2) Provision of the high and middle schools.
- (3) Provision of adult education and library services.

D. *HEALTH*

- (1) Provision of sanitation (including drainage and disposal of wastes) and public health measures.
- (2) Provision for control of malaria and other diseases.
- (3) Provision of improved drinking water supplies.
- (4) Provision of medical aid for the ailing.
- (5) Antenatal care of expectant mothers and midwifery services.
- (6) Provision of generalised public health service and education.

E. *TRAINING*

- (1) Refresher courses for improving the standard of existing artisans.
- (2) Training of agriculturists.
- (3) Training of extension assistants.
- (4) Training of artisans.
- (5) Training of supervisors, managerial personnel, health workers, and executive officers for projects.

F. *SOCIAL WELFARE*

- (1) Organisation of community entertainment.
- (2) Provision of audio-visual aid for instruction and recreation.
- (3) Organisation of sports activities.
- (4) Organisation of melas (Village fairs).
- (5) Organisation of co-operative and self-help movement.

G. SUPPLEMENTARY EMPLOYMENT

(1) Encouragement of cottage industries and crafts as main or subsidiary occupation.

(2) Encouragement of medium and small scale industries to employ surplus hands for local needs or for export outside project areas.

(3) Encouragement of employment through trade, auxiliary and welfare services.

(4) Construction of brick kilns and sawmills to provide building materials for local needs.

H. HOUSING

(1) Demonstration and training in improved techniques and designs for rural housing.

(2) Encouragement of improved rural housing on a self-help basis.

Each development block will have a mandi unit. The mandi unit will be established as the centre of economic, social, and community activity for the villages in the development block and will be conveniently located within the development block in order to fulfil most effectively this function. The mandi unit will normally have a dispensary and health centre reaching out to the villagers through mobile units and will be serviced by a doctor, health visitor, midwife and a sanitary inspector. It will also usually have a transport and farm implement and equipment service centre, a centre for marketing and shopping, a storage godown for agricultural produce, and a veterinary centre. In addition, there will be established certain recreational and educational facilities. The mandi unit will also contain the residential housing and other facilities for the project workers.

It is recognised that in certain areas the development of small and medium scale industries will be warranted by the existing economic environment and will add to the sum total of the community development. Therefore expenditures from the dollar and rupee budgets hereinafter provided in the activities listed in item G (2) above will be made in 6 agreed projects. Such areas will be provided with some equipment (both for training and for use) for small industries and possibly small thermal power stations.

The Community Development Programme will be supported by a training programme for village level workers and project supervisors. The present plans are to establish a minimum of 30 training centres throughout India, to be associated as far as possible with a community development project so that the trainees can be given actual field experience in the villages as part of their training. The training of capable village workers and project supervisors is an essential part of the rural development of India because the success of the Community Development Programme will rest primarily upon the ability of these village level workers to mobilise the enthusiasm and co-operation of the people.

2. LOCATION OF PROJECTS

3. ORGANISATION FOR THE PROGRAMME

The Community Development Programme will be undertaken by the Govern-

ment of India and the Governments of the various States of India in cooperation with one another. For this purpose it is contemplated that the organisation for the Community Development Programme will be as follows :

(1) **Central Organisation**—Pursuant to paragraph 1 of Article IV of the Technical Cooperation Programme Agreement of January 5, 1952, the Government of India has designated a Central Committee to lay down the broad policies and provide the general supervision for the agreed projects and under it an Administrator of Community Projects.

The Administrator will be responsible for planning, directing and coordinating the community projects throughout India under the general supervision of the Central Committee and in consultation with appropriate authorities in the various states. He will be assisted by a highly qualified executive staff to advise him on administration, finance, personnel (training), community planning and other matters and operating divisions in the field of (1) agriculture, (2) irrigation, (3) health (4) education, (5) industries, (6) housing and (7) community facilities. This staff will work with the state, district and project-level workers in the interest of carrying out cooperatively the Community Development Programme.

(2) **State Organisation**—Each State Government has established a State Development Committee or similar body consisting of the Chief Minister and Ministers in charge of departments concerned as he may consider necessary.

The State Development Commissioner or similar official will be responsible for directing community projects within the state and will act as the Secretary to the Committee. He will be responsible for assuring coordination of the heads of the various state departments concerned with the Community Development Programme.

Since he may also have the additional responsibility of looking after the general development in the State under the Five Year Plan, it may be necessary in states where a number of community projects will be in operation to have a Deputy Development Commissioner specifically in charge of community projects. He will enjoy the status of a Collector.

The Development Commissioner or other similar official will be responsible for the direction of the programme in his respective state and he will be assisted by a suitable operating staff. The Development Commissioner and members of his staff will work in close cooperation with their counterparts at the Centre and at the district and project levels in order to facilitate project operations within the state. Maximum emphasis will be placed upon the selection of the Development and Deputy Development Commissioner since the success of the programme depends, to a large extent, upon their competence.

(3) **District Organisation**—There will be established at the district level, where necessary, a District Development Officer who will be responsible for the Community Development Programme in his district. This officer will have the status of an Additional Collector and will be responsible for the execution of the community projects as well as the general development in the district. He will operate under the direction of the State Development Commissioner and will be advised by a District Development Board consisting of the officers of the various departments concerned with community development, with the Collector as Chairman and the District Development Officer as Executive Secretary.

(4) **Project Organisation**—Each individual project unit (consisting of a full

project or one of more development blocks where there is not a full project) within the district will be in charge of a Project Executive Officer who will be responsible for the community programme in the unit area. The Project Executive Officer will operate, as the case may be, under the direction of the District Development Officer of the State Development Commissioner. In the selection of the Project Executive Officers special regard will be paid to experience, general outlook, understanding of the needs and methods of community development and capacity for leadership as well as ability to secure both official and non-official cooperation.

In addition, there will be a Project Advisory Committee which might include, besides the principal officials concerned, leading public workers, a few representative agriculturists, the Chairman of the District Board, local representatives in the Parliament, and State Legislatures, etc. The Executive Officer in charge of the project will serve as Secretary of the Advisory Committee.

Each Project Executive Officer in charge of a full project will have on his staff approximately 125 supervisors and village workers who will be responsible for the successful operation of all activities at the project level. Project Executive Officers in charge of lesser units will have proportionate staff.

The above organisational pattern will be adapted to suit local conditions and needs as may be deemed necessary by the Administrator and the respective state governments.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMME

(a) The supplies, equipment, and all other necessary materials required for the programme from outside India will be procured by a procurement agency of the Government of India with the assistance of an appropriate United States Government Agency or vice versa or otherwise as may be agreed upon by the Representative and the Director.

(b) The Director and the Representative may make such additional provisions for and changes in the administration of this agreement as they shall agree to be necessary for carrying out the Community Development Programme.

(c) Any right, privilege, power, or duty conferred by this agreement upon either the Director or Representative may be delegated by either of them, provided that each such delegation be satisfactory to the other. Such delegation shall not limit the right of the Director and the Representative to refer any matter directly to each other for discussion and decision.

(d) The form and coverage of the quarterly report of operations and progress provided for in paragraph 3 of Article V of the Programme Agreement shall be determined subsequently by the Central Committee in consultation with the Director.

(e) All equipment, materials, and supplies acquired for and allotted to this programme shall be used only in furtherance of the programme.

5. FINANCING THE PROGRAMME

While the estimates given above will be generally adhered to for achieving

maximum results it may be necessary to vary the allocations as between different projects, as well as among the various activities contemplated in the programme. Where major variations are found necessary, the approval of the Central Committee will be obtained by the Administrator.

It is hereby agreed between the Representative and the Director that the amounts necessary for payments to be made outside of India in United States dollars for the procurement of supplies, equipment, services, and other programme materials and their transportation to India (exclusive of allotments from other operational agreements) will be \$ 8,671,000 and it is agreed that such sum shall be withheld in the United States of America from the deposits to be made by the Government of the United States of America to the credit of Fund A and shall be used by the Technical Cooperation Administration for making such payments. Such sums so withheld shall be regarded as having been deposited in Fund A.

The sum so withheld will be expended under procedure whereby the Technical Cooperation Administration in Washington, pursuant to request and authorisation by the Representative and the Director, will arrange for an irrevocable line of credit with a bank in the United States of America designated by the Representative and the Director under which letters of credit will be issued to potential suppliers on behalf of the Representative and the Director or their designated procurement agency or agencies. The Technical Cooperation Administration in Washington will, as part of the procedure, reimburse the bank for payments duly made pursuant to such letters of credit from the funds agreed upon herein to be withheld in the United States of America.

(b) The dollar funds provided under this Agreement for financing the Programme will be treated as a loan to the States to the extent deemed feasible and advisable by the Government of India, estimated at about 55 per cent of the total dollar funds, to be repaid upon such terms and conditions as may be determined. The proceeds of such repayments will be deposited into Fund B for the prosecution of further projects of economic development mutually agreeable to the two governments as provided in the Programme Agreement.

(c) The Government of the United States of America will make available, within the limits of available appropriations, from sources other than Fund A the funds necessary to pay the salaries and other expenses of the technicians employed by the United States Government for the purpose of providing technical assistance in the Community Development Programme.

6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Technical Cooperation Administration for India will provide technical assistance to the Community Development Programme as follows:

(a) At the Central level, the services of the Director will be available to the Central Committee as provided in the Programme Agreement (paragraph 3 of Article IV). The Director will be assisted by a Deputy Director for Community Development who will co-ordinate and expedite all technical assistance to the Community Development Programme. The Technical Cooperation Administration will also have specialists in Agriculture, Education, Health and other fields of Community Development. The Deputy Director and the specialists will

serve as advisers and consultants to the Community Projects Administration and the Ministries concerned of the Government of India.

(b) At the State level, T.C.S. specialists will be made available as advisers and consultants to the extent required. In particular, it is intended that the services of experts in each of the fields of Agricultural Extension, Vocational Training, Agricultural Engineering, and Extension Methods and Materials will be made available to individual states or groups of states. In addition, specialists in other fields of the Community Development Programme, such as, Health, Education, Irrigation, and Small Scale Industries will be made available as required.

7. SUPPORTING PROJECTS

The Community Development Programme is related to and supported in part by most of the other projects under the Indo-American Technical Cooperation Programme.

The fertiliser required by the Community Development Programme will be acquired and distributed pursuant to Operational Agreement No. 1, dated May 1, 1952. The iron and steel needed for farm implements and tools will be acquired and distributed pursuant to Operational Agreement No. 2, dated May 29, 1952.

The tubewells to be constructed in community project areas will be allocated from the project for ground water irrigation pursuant to the Operational Agreement No. 6, dated May 31, 1952.

Information and services with respect to soils and fertiliser application will be made available to the programme from the project for determination of soil fertility and fertiliser use pursuant to the Operational Agreement No. 4, dated May, 31, 1952. Similarly, assistance in malaria control in the community project areas will be forthcoming from the project for malaria control planned under the Technical Cooperation Programme between the two governments.

The training of village level workers and project supervisors for the Community Development Programme will be carried out under the village workers training programme by the two Governments and the Ford Foundation of America.

The necessary allocations of equipment, construction, supplies, information and other support for such projects shall be determined by the particular Ministry supervising the project and the Administrator. Each Ministry supervising the project shall be responsible for all necessary arrangements for the proper and effective allocation of such support to the Community Development Programme.

8. EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

A continuing and systematic evaluation of the progress of the Community Development Programme is expected to be undertaken by the Planning Commission in close cooperation with the Ford Foundation and the Technical Cooperation Administration.

The work on the Community Development Projects provided for in this agreement will commence immediately with a view to completion within three years.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present agreement.

Done at New Delhi, the duplicate, this the thirtyfirst day of May, 1952.
For the Government of India :

P.C. BHATTACHARYYA
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance

For the Government of the United States of America :

CLIFFORD H. WILLSON
Director of Technical Cooperation for India.

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