

EDUCATION

The Commission is referred to the Conference on Education for Progress with Special Reference to the Needs of the Coloured Community convened by the Institute in January, 1971 and held in the Hiddingh Hall, Cape Town.

The Conference was preceded by the publication by the Institute of Muriel Horrell's book The Education of the Coloured Community in South Africa.

After the Conference the main discussions and findings were summarised by Professor Hansi Pollak in a booklet entitled Education for Progress, which is attached as Appendix 5. The main papers read at the Conference are mentioned therein and are available to the Commission if required. These papers and the findings represent the views of the Institute on Education, and in the present representations the Institute will do no more than stress certain points, and raise new matters which have become evident since then.

Socio-Economic Aspects

In the first instance the Institute stresses that the education of the Coloured community cannot be seen other than against the general background of the socio-economic situation of the community. Both Professor S.P. Cilliers and Mr. M.C. O'Dowd referred to these factors in their addresses and pointed out the effects of general poverty, lack of amenities, the gross shortage of housing, and the general practice of discrimination against this community at almost every level and in almost every sphere of activity. The Institute is convinced that educational standards and the quality of teaching will not be able to reach their full potential while these communal difficulties persist. Reference is made to the "culture of poverty" in these papers and the Institute stresses that this is a very real problem which prevents both teacher and pupil from giving of their best, and from achieving full potential.

An important finding of Conference was that the attitude of White South Africans to those who are not classified as White acts as a powerful brake on the progress of the Coloured people and Conference called upon the government to give special attention to developing attitudes at all levels which would respect human worth and dignity.

Recent Developments

The Conference report refers on pp.10 to 14 to the provisions which have been made since 1964. These developments are welcomed and much appreciated by the Institute, which holds the view that the Department which controls the education of the Coloured people is doing much dedicated work with the resources at its disposal.

The Institute also welcomes the announcement by the Minister (since the Conference was held) that compulsory education for Coloured people is to be introduced and to be implemented standard by standard over a period of years. The Institute has repeatedly pointed to the severe consequences of not compelling Coloured children to attend school and is pleased that the government is now in a position to make this provision.

Accommodation

The Institute is alarmed at the position with regard to accommodation at the schools. In reply to a question by Mr. D.M.G. Curry at the recent session of the Coloured Representative Council, Mr. Bergins tabled the following figures:

Number of schools with double-shift classes:

| | <u>1969</u> | <u>1970</u> | <u>1971</u> | <u>1972</u> | <u>1973</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Wynberg | 47 | 55 | 57 | 64 | 72 |
| Bellville | 77 | 96 | 104 | 111 | 110 |
| Worcester | 11 | 30 | 48 | 55 | 64 |

Number of pupils in double-shift classes:

| | <u>1969</u> | <u>1970</u> | <u>1971</u> | <u>1972</u> | <u>1973</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Wynberg | 7132 | 8707 | 8882 | 9457 | 12962 |
| Bellville | 10597 | 12942 | 14832 | 15777 | 17037 |
| Worcester | 973 | 2232 | 4122 | 5067 | 5977 |

Number of teachers in double-shift classes:

| | <u>1969</u> | <u>1970</u> | <u>1971</u> | <u>1972</u> | <u>1973</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Wynberg | 205 | 250 | 255 | 278 | 343 |
| Bellville | 304 | 371 | 425 | 452 | 488 |
| Worcester | 29 | 65 | 119 | 146 | 172 |

In respect of the Republic as a whole, the figures are:

Double-session schools:

| <u>1969</u> | <u>1970</u> | <u>1971</u> | <u>1972</u> | <u>1973</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 262 | 367 | 430 | 475 | 512 |

Pupils (with number of teachers in parentheses):

| | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 33753 (965) | 47297 (1349) | 53850 (1534) | 58645 (1667) | 65867 (1882) |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|

These are extremely serious figures and display a complete inability on the part of the authorities concerned to build classrooms to meet the demand. In five years the number of pupils and teachers involved in double sessions has doubled without compulsory education.

This is an alarming situation because of the serious implications of having to teach and be taught under such conditions, but if the Department is to introduce compulsory education as from 1974, the situation is likely to be exacerbated. The Institute can only plead that this position be treated as one of extreme emergency and handled with measures resembling military logistics.

School "Drop Out"

The Institute wishes to stress the high rate of "drop out" after the early primary levels and more especially in the post primary classes. In 1969, for example, the total post primary enrolment was only 11.1 per cent of all scholars at school. Even with the introduction of compulsory education, this is a problem which will be long with us.

The contributory factors to the "drop out" problem will also long remain with us: double sessions, overcrowding, high pupil/teacher ratio, poorly qualified teachers and dreary buildings. Even with compulsory education these factors will still cause pupils to leave school as soon as they can and the Institute calls for special crash programmes to meet these difficulties.

The main target should be in the post primary area where the numbers enrolled fall disastrously. The Institute points to "an army of under-educated and ill-equipped school leavers" as the present main output of the Coloured schools. Every effort should be made to attract as many scholars who complete their primary education to proceed with secondary education and the Institute suggests the provision of subsistence allowances to bright pupils whose parents cannot afford their continued attendance at school. This scheme should also be available at technical schools and training colleges.

Teachers and Teacher Training

The Institute lays great stress on the importance of the teacher in the whole system which stands or falls by the quality and motivation of the teacher. It points to low salaries as compared with what is available in commerce and industry, the disastrous rate of resignation

from the service (1 800 between 1965 and 1969 through 'causes other than marriage), emigration of some of the best teachers to other countries, and the general dissatisfaction of teachers with their conditions of service.

The Institute recommends the immediate and rapid narrowing of the gap between White and Coloured teachers' salaries and its complete elimination at the earliest possible moment, equalising the period to achieve maximum salary with that of White teachers, and the upgrading of teachers with professional training and a university degree. The Institute suggests that further enquiries be made amongst Coloured teachers to elucidate other causes of dissatisfaction, such as the regulations relating to misconduct, consultation with teachers' organisations in designing policy, syllabi, curricula and teaching techniques.

The Institute is concerned at the very large number of unqualified or underqualified teachers. During the 1973 session of the Coloured Representative Council information on teachers' qualifications was given in reply to a question by Mr. D. Curry. There are still 277 teachers with only a Std. VI plus three years training qualification, and 1727 teachers in primary schools with no professional training at all. There are 14,306 teachers in primary schools, so that, if all the above mentioned teachers were in primary posts, almost two-thirds of all the teachers would be insufficiently qualified - certainly they would not be accepted as teachers in schools for White children.

In the post-primary schools the position is as bad, if not worse. Only 248 teachers in such schools appear to possess both degrees and professional qualifications. 301 teachers have no degree or professional certificate and 560 possess only qualifications for teaching in primary schools. It is unfortunate that the accretion of teachers with a degree and a post-graduate professional qualification has shown such limited increase during the past 10 years, as have the numbers of university trained teachers holding the Lower Secondary Teachers Diploma.

The 1972 Education Conference affirmed that the minimum desirable standard for qualified teachers should be the senior certificate qualification followed by a three year teacher training course. It is recognised with regret that under the present conditions this minimum

could not yet be enforced but it should constantly be kept in view as the essential goal. The Institute is appreciative of the introduction in 1970 of the three year post-senior certificate Primary Teachers' Diploma course and also of the increase in the number of teachers who are pursuing part-time courses to improve their present qualifications. Despite these improvements the Institute is, however, extremely concerned that no less than 60% of the teacher trainees in 1971 had only J.C. qualifications (1,495 trainees registered for L.P.T.C., 762 for P.T.D. and 201 for T.D. III).¹

It is suggested that serious consideration be given to increasing the bursaries for teacher trainees registered for the Primary Teachers Certificate and the Higher Primary Certificate (at present R240 per annum) as also for those pursuing commercial and technical diploma courses at the Technical College (at present R300 per annum).

The above facts support the Institute's earlier suggestion that the main target should be in the post-primary area. Unless much larger numbers are trained to at least Senior Certificate level, the number of student teachers applying for training as teachers in secondary schools will remain disastrously low, and the standard of qualification for primary school teachers will remain below par.

The Institute wishes to emphasise very strongly the importance of immediate planning for the introduction of television as an aid to teaching. This innovation will very soon be available in South Africa and it could be of the greatest possible advantage to pupil and teacher alike if the fullest possible use were to be made of it. It could help to fill in the cultural backlog of many deprived children, assist overburdened and undertrained teachers to provide better and more interesting material, and generally relieve the congested and heavily overloaded system as it at present operates. The Institute suggests that a team of experts be sent overseas to study the methods used, especially in under-privileged communities.

Attention is drawn to the work of Miss Jill Wennan among African scholars in Cape Town. She is using a system of individualised teaching with some success for African teachers who wish to improve their qualifications by passing Junior and/or Senior Certificate

1. Report 70/1972, Administration of Coloured Affairs p. 14.

examinations. The Institute recommends that her methods be studied and evaluated for possible wider use. //

Programmes to Counter Deprivation

Bearing in mind the socio-economic background of the Coloured community already discussed, the Institute wishes to point out that a very high percentage of children are culturally deprived and therefore not able to gain full benefit from schooling. To assist in countering this problem the Conference recommended: the re-introduction of school-feeding; the interim subsidisation of voluntary societies now doing this work; a great increase in the provision of creches and nursery schools (to meet the needs of working mothers); investigation of systems of compensatory education practised in countries such as the United States of America and Britain; and further research into the appropriateness of the present educational environment to children from underprivileged backgrounds.

The School and the Community

The Conference also considers that there should be greater integration of the school into the community through the development of a network of services based on the use of the school facilities and equipment. Buildings, grounds and equipment are expensive items and should be so designed that they can be used to the fullest extent possible. The Institute does not see why a school should not become a community centre in the evenings and during the week ends, or why adult education should not take place in these premises.

These ideas are more fully developed in the Conference Report and include recommendations for the requisite amenities in new townships before settlement, provision of community services by local authorities and welfare societies, and for the better co-ordination of the work of various government departments concerned with rehousing such as those of Planning, Community Development, Health, Coloured Affairs, and the Provincial Hospital services. Other findings were that there should be improved involvement of the community by the development of strong parent/teacher associations, fully elected school committees (membership of which should not be confined to parents) and the provision of vocational guidance programmes in the schools.

Technical Training

Attention has been focussed on South Africa's shortage of skilled manpower. Despite the better facilities for the training of Coloured apprentices in full-time vocational schools and for the development of technical and commercial high schools the present provisions for technical and artisan training of Coloured young people are inadequate. Many of the customary and legal barriers to the free use of skilled labour are diminishing, but industry, commerce and the services are still handicapped by the problem of the basically untrained young person who cannot move into these skilled avenues because of his inadequate background.

The Department has initiated commercial and technical education but unless there be some very considerable increase in the number of teacher trainees for such courses the present plans cannot be implemented. It is alarming to note that in 1971 only 14 students were registered for the technical teaching courses at the Peninsula Technical Training College - of whom only 6 were in the first year. The position in regard to trainees for the commercial diploma was more encouraging - there being 41 first year students. The Institute considers that the lack of technical teacher trainees is a matter of the utmost concern. Whatever the difficulties may be, it is imperative to increase technical training by an emergency crash programme of training for staff and, as soon thereafter as possible, by other crash programmes of technical training for young people. It is urged that such training facilities be extended to the Transvaal and Natal and that they encompass not only the traditional building, engineering, mechanical and electrical fields but also the newer areas which are developing, such as electronics, television, computer maintenance and others.

It is pointed out that the present shortages of manpower in these fields will shortly be greatly exacerbated by the developments at Sishen and Saldanha Bay. As a long term policy it might be well advisable to contemplate the institution of a Technical College to serve the North Western Cape.

It is also considered that technical training institutions be provided with hostel facilities, so that not only the urban population of the metropolitan cities be provided for, but also the young people from smaller towns and villages. Such technical institutions

are particularly costly to erect, equip and maintain, so that they will be few and far distant from one another. Hostel facilities are therefore critically necessary.

University Education

The Institute reiterates its opposition to the legislation which precludes Black people from attending the universities of their choice. The Institute supports all those who have called for academic freedom at the University of the Western Cape. It is most appreciative of the appointment of Dr. R.E. van der Ross as the Rector elect, endorses the plea for greater employment of suitably qualified Coloured men and women to academic and administrative appointments and hopes that it will be possible for a considerably more representative election of members of the Coloured community to its Council.

Coloured students living in the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, Natal and the Eastern Cape have no option other than to seek their higher education at the University of the Western Cape, which entails considerable additional expense, or to use correspondence courses.

The Institute is constrained to state that the present provision of bursaries and loans to promising and needy students is quite inadequate. Bright students from poor homes are at a double disadvantage because they are not only costing their parents much money to keep them at university, but their families are being deprived of the income they might have been earning while attending classes. Another problem with such students is the necessity for many of them to take on part-time (evening) work as waiters, watchmen, etc. to supplement their money for fees and lodging. This prevents them from leading the full university life and devoting adequate time to study.

It is particularly urgent that adequate bursaries be provided to make possible a far greater enrolment of post-graduate students in the various academic disciplines. Unless this be done there is a very limited possibility of bringing about the desirable increase in the number of Coloured members of the academic staff of the University of the Western Cape. It is also urged that an extended bursary scheme for Coloured students should not be confined to those enrolled at the University of the Western Cape, but that it be extended also to those enrolled at the University of Natal Medical School and to Coloured students granted permission to study at the White universities.

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