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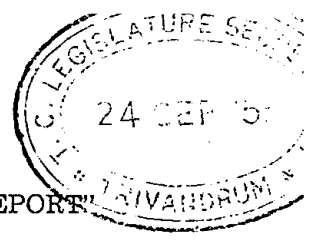
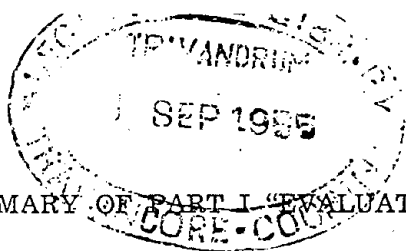
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Community Projects
(Summary)

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SUMMARY OF PART I EVALUATION REPORT

SECTION I.—COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND NATIONAL EXTENSION

(i) *General*

The Community Projects have stirred the mind of the villager, especially the cultivator, more than anything in recent history, and it has made him definitely more hopeful and more progressive. The adjustments of policy and administration on the one hand, and of practices and institutional conduct on the other are the moving things which have to be studied so as to make them more and more effective as instruments of that cultural and material change which it is the objective of Community Projects movement to achieve. This report concentrates attention on spotting and elucidating those significant features revealed by recent experience.—(Preface. Para. 3).

(ii) *The Problem of Co-ordination*

2. At the design stage of the community projects, their special and out of routine role was especially emphasised. The emphasis in this programme was to be on popular effort organized under the leadership of a specially selected band of officers receiving co-operation from normal official agencies. However, cooperation of the other departments in the programme did not in all cases flow at the right time and in the right measure. The progress of project activities was held up at several points and in a few cases the confidence of the people in the whole scheme was weakening. Fresh thinking on the whole subject of relationships among the several public agencies concerned with the programme had to be undertaken.—(Para. 5).

3. While all States tried to adopt the pattern of administration which had been outlined in the draft scheme of community projects, almost all of them had begun to realize the need of fitting in the new ideas and functions in the general (i.e. revenue) administrative structure.—(Para. 8).

4. The recommendation about drawing in the District Collector much more actively into the whole task of developmental organization, which had been made in the reports of the Grow More Food Enquiry Committee and the Planning Commission, was reaffirmed in the first Evaluation Report. At the most crucial point of

executive responsibility i.e., the block, it was suggested that throwing the post of a block or project officer open to members of more than one service would tend to emphasize that sense of corporate action among participants which is a *sine qua non* of any good administration, and especially of a community projects administration.—(Para 6).

5. The suggestion about making the Collector responsible for developmental work in the district has been universally accepted in principle, and is in the process of being fully implemented. While there are still some noticeable differences of emphasis and practice, it can be said that the Collector is well on way to becoming the principal developmental and welfare officer of the district.—(Para. 10).

6. The principal reason for the slow realization in practice of the principle of the Collector's responsibility for development which has now been accepted by all in theory, is the lack of personnel and of suitable administrative reorganization of the total charge of a Collector. If the Collector is to be in fact, and not only in name, the principal developmental officer of his district, a strengthening and reorganization of his staff will have to be brought about.—(Para. 12).

7. It will be wrong to believe that the problem of inter-departmental coordination has been solved. Especially on the level of the block which is the effective unit of action, considerable uncertainty and lack of coordination still obtain, with regard to the relations between their superior officers and the block level technical officers, and these latter and the Block Development Officer. No satisfactory answer has been found to this question of coordination. From complete absorption by one department to toleration of parallel authorities of several departments all variants are being tried out in staffing at the block level.—(Para. 13).

8. The normal working of the executive-*cum*-developmental officers at the block level has yielded disappointing, but by no means unexpected results. The fact that the Collector has been made responsible for development and that National Extension is to be the normal form of rural administration, has been interpreted at least in a few cases to represent a tacit approval of what are called 'revenue' methods.—(Para. 15).

9. The most basic question, of which it is more easy to lose sight of in a democratic than in a bureaucratic form of government, is in regard to the popular character of the programme of community development. The bureaucratic and semi-bureaucratic schemes of

rural development undertaken in the past had no elements of vitality, dynamism and creativeness in them for the basic reason that they were not popular in these respects. It is the realization of this truth that presumably marked the beginning of the community projects in their present form. For some months this realization seemed to be vivid. But as the principle of popular action was occasionally seen to work haltingly and sluggishly a reaction in favour of official drive seemed to have set in, in some quarters.—(Para. 40).

10. It was only natural to expect that if executive officers are judged almost exclusively by accomplishments of physical targets they should be led on imperceptibly to adopt the several items of the programme as their set tasks and to use their familiar methods to discharge them.—(Para. 41).

11. At all stages, it is the role of officials, and even of non-official outsiders to assist people by supplying knowledge, materials and techniques to arrive at the most favourable decisions. But the programme has to be popular, with officials participating, not the other way round i.e., an official programme of set quantitative measures in which the people are asked to participate—(Para. 43).

12. The transition from the line indicated by old frustrations to one which will lead to new ones is yet not crossed; but in at least a few places it is about to be crossed, and the sooner leaders pause to appraise the likely significance of their acts, the better for the future of community projects.—(Para. 43).

13. It is necessary to state that not only for the present, but practically for all time, the roles of the Tehsildar and of Block Development or Extension Officers must be kept separate. The Tehsildar (or his equivalent e.g. Mamlatdar) is the 'executive' par-excellence. He more than any other officer of the government represents in the minds of the villagers the coercive authority of the civil government. Promotion of group thinking and voluntary group action is not his forte and it would be unwise to entrust the task of community development to him.—(Para. 51).

14. The arrangements made for the training of Block Development Officers can only be a small palliative of an evil which though at present only inceptant, is organic viz., that of non-specialized coercive agency trying to build up a programme which should be based on the value of popular initiative, progressive outlook and community action.—(Para 44).

15. Excessive emphasis at lower official levels on physical targets, rapid multiplication of blocks and a misunderstanding about the new role of the Collector, which is that of the Chief Development and Welfare Officer, not that of the captain of the revenue and magisterial teams put into developmental action, have in some places checked the healthy progress of community projects. —(Para. 45).

16. Taking the Collector's total responsibilities as they stand after introduction of the development programme, their distribution among his officers and other staff must be rationally worked out with due regard to the quality and quantity of work involved. It must be specially made clear that in his capacity as head of the developmental organization, he is expected normally to act through special staff right down to the village level, whose sole responsibility it is to assist him in carrying out the developmental programmes. It should be as exceptional for the normal revenue staff below the Collector, and in States where the Sub-Collectors hold an almost independent territorial charge below the level of the Sub-Collector, to be called upon to discharge developmental functions as it would be for the developmental or extension staff to be called upon to discharge revenue functions. The two sets of staff, although they would converge at the point of the Collector, must be kept distinct and separate below that level.—(Para. 12).

17. While at certain stages of the evolution of a system of public administration, a combination of functions is appropriate, both on account of the quality of work involved and of the availability of differentiated skills, normal progress must be towards expansion and specialization.—(Para. 48).

18. While ensuring coordination in developmental policies and plans at all levels the normal working of the several departments through their own organizations and staff should be encouraged. It is in this way that all departments will be geared to a developmental plan, not by bringing them under a common developmental or general control.—(Para. 48).

19. There is every reason why the practice of appointing agricultural officers to the post of Block Development Officers should be more widely followed. Ultimately the Block Development Officer would be the chief extension officer of the block with agricultural extension as his major responsibility. For present efficiency and future transition it would be best to accustom competent agricultural officers to their wider responsibilities. This would be true of selected officers drawn from other development departments (e.g.,

Cooperation) as well. As a beginning, it would be worthwhile fixing a certain quota of these posts which should go to officers drawn from developmental departments. To a corresponding extent the practice of appointing revenue staff to Block Development Officers' posts should be curtailed.—(Para. 14).

20. The practice of attaching block officership as an adjunct to the other duties of revenue officers should be given up as absolutely unsuitable. If the experience of well-run community projects for two years is any indication, it may be asserted with confidence that while people may still fear a magistrate more than an extension officer who is not a magistrate they respect and confide in the latter to a much greater extent.—(Para. 65).

Expansion of C.P. and N.E.S.

21. The scheme of rapid multiplication of NES was adopted not so much on the strength of satisfaction with existing and prospective forms and content of developmental organization, but more under pressure of a type of popular demand. Granting the existence of a strong demand for increase in the number of community projects, the most legitimate way of meeting this demand would have been educating the electorate in the merit of a scheme of only gradually multiplying units of intensive and comprehensive scheme of community development. This scheme represented a deliberate decision taken by the Planning Commission and the Government of India on the strength of earlier experience culminating in the findings of the Grow More Food Enquiry Committee's Report.—(Para. 59).

22. Instead of the intensive type of development promoted through a well-equipped and well-supplied organization a diluted version which will in large part depend on the existing operations of departments is to be rapidly spread over the country. In this process of achieving a wider organizational coverage, the chief merit of the intensive, comprehensive and democratic scheme which the community projects undoubtedly were proving to be during the first year of their existence, is in danger of being lost. An emphasis on organizational compliance and official responsibility is threatening to turn a state induced popular movement of rural regeneration into an official programme of tasks, in which the people are asked to participate. In their comprehensiveness and their emphasis on popular action, the difference between the C.P. and N.E.S. is not only of degree but of kind. The former is of the kind which after long trial and error was deliberately preferred to the latter.—(Para. 60).

23. In view of the many stresses and strains from which the community and extension programmes are at present suffering it would be desirable to regulate the pace of immediate expansion a little more cautiously. In spite of the fact that the central organization has frequently explained to the States that in matters of budget as well as of organisation the maximum possible latitude will be left to the States, several among them seem to have placed too great a reliance on published proformas.—(Para. 58).

24. The programmes and proformas issued by the C.P.A. are intended to be illustrative. It is not expected that they should be complied with formally if the more essential values are thereby sacrificed. Each State according to its own conditions should be free to suggest modifications of methods, and even of pace, in so far as the latter is compatible with the overall position of central financed.—(Para. 66).

25. In the interest of the ultimate success of a programme, on which the country has staked so much, a more pronounced emphasis on quality is of utmost importance. It is equally necessary that States should work out the essential purposes of the plan according to their intrinsic priorities in the best possible manner.—(Para. 61).

26. The main aim of the community project and extension programmes is to set free the creative energies of the people, so that they may build up through their own efforts and through their own institutions a richer and improving social life. Thus the goal is essentially cultural and moral, although it has a physical basis and content. These priorities are so vital to the future of community projects as an instrument of building up of a democratic culture in this country that any developments in their future planning and in administrative structure which endanger them must be halted without loss of time.—(Para. 61).

27. Fortunately, there is enough evidence to show that people are becoming more and more appreciative of organized action. The general enlightenment that has come in the wake of independence is largely responsible for this collective self-confidence of the people. Community projects have contributed to guide this confidence into constructive channels in at least two ways. Whether it is education, health or cultivation, knowledge and means of attaining better standards of life are brought within reach of the people. This has created a new hope and a new determination. The age long factions in our villages are crumbling before widening opportunities for constructive work and for betterment of the lives of all, which after long trial and error was deliberately preferred to the.—(Para. 63).

28. Never was a more hopeful outlook for building democracy from below available as when the community projects went into action. If we persist with the method, without straying into easy ways of formal official compliance and induced popular participation, a lasting service to the cause of democratic progress would be rendered. Popular leadership on which depends the success of community projects as well as of democracy cannot be called forth in any other way. (Para. 63).

(iv) *Local Bodies*

29. Most important of all is the need to bring the panchayats and other statutory local bodies into their own. More vigorous and sustained efforts to make panchayats increasingly responsible for all items of general administration and of national extension would lead to a fulfilment of democracy as well as of community development. (Para. 57).

30. What the villagers cannot achieve for themselves by unaided action of their own panchayats, can be achieved as far as possible through the action of the higher local bodies upto the District Board. There are legitimate possibilities of the executive and technical staff of these bodies being used for the genuine purposes of community development and national extension. (Para. 57).

31. The processes of administrative decentralization and re-organization must necessarily be built into the programme of emphasizing the responsibility of local bodies for as large a sector of public functions as possible. (Para. 64).

32. For some time officers connected with development programmes, apprehensive of the slow and allegedly factious operation of Panchayats, transferred their allegiance to ad hoc councils mostly as a concession to expediency. It was pointed out in the First Evaluation Report that such bodies have no element of continuity and internal cohesion, and hence are unsuitable for sustaining a new and progressive way of life among the people. The truth of these inevitable limitations became more obvious as experience over a longer period was gathered. (Para. 17).

(v) *Grama Sevaks*

33. There has been a noteworthy improvement in the training of Grama Sewaks. Even now, however, there are quite a proportion of Grama Sewaks who are not trained and many more who are inadequately trained. Even confining attention to the major task of agricultural extension, not many Grama Sewaks are capable of even a slight adaptation to varying conditions. A fair number are

unable to interpret correctly the full contents of the agricultural programme. This is due to nobody's fault. The pace of expansion of blocks is so high that better quality cannot be ensured. The same applies to selection of trainees. Mature, well-educated and rurally inclined candidates are the first choice for training as Grama Sevaks. But with rapidly increasing number of selections, the lowering margins which are reached in all these respects, often fall below the limits of minimum efficiency. (Para. 16).

34. Development authorities at all levels are aware of these shortcomings and no efforts are being spared to remove them. One important lacuna in training arrangements is the absence of adequate inspection. Responsibilities in this sphere need to be more specifically allotted and the necessary staff arrangements need to be made. In fact, the whole subject of training (of Grama Sevaks and other personnel), including content, organization, selection of trainees, inspection and evaluation need comprehensive resurvey at the hands of an Expert Committee. (Para. 16).

(vi) *The Experience with 'Integration' in Bombay*

35. A study of the so called integrated system in Bombay is of great importance, because of its significance for the whole scheme of community projects and also in view of its influence on the administrative systems of other States. (Para. 19).

36. What was noteworthy about Bombay was that they withdrew their fairly strong specialist staff of agricultural assistants and replaced them by a larger number of multipurpose Grama Sevaks. Later on, they replaced even cooperative and revenue officers by a common cadre of multi-purpose Grama Sevaks attending to all the three spheres of duty and operating under block and project officers who are also the corresponding revenue officers. In future also, the circle staff of the revenue department, agricultural assistants and cooperative supervisors will be 'integrated', trained and later appointed as Grama Sevaks in N.E.S. and C.P. blocks. (Paras. 20 and 34).

37. The introduction of National Extension Service in October 1953 was the main occasion to move towards substituting the specialists by the multipurpose principle. These transformations raise basic issues of efficiency of administration and of the success of extension programmes. (Paras. 20 and 34).

Results

38. The Collectors are receiving the unstinted cooperation of their own and other departmental staff at all levels and the many problems which arise are being faced in a realistic fashion.

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The decentralization of authority, administrative as well as financial, which is a striking feature of the Bombay system has helped in making the development programme a live one. An emphasis on activating popular initiative through popular institutions and on drawing in other departments as equal and responsible participants deserves to be sustained among Collectors, even by making special efforts to that end. (Para. 49).

39. Considering that the Collector is now directly responsible for development, that the Sub-Divisional Officer and Mamlatdar are in addition to their normal duties, Project and Block Development Officers, and that in due course the whole State is to be covered by the new system, the conclusion is inescapable that the field organization and implementation of programmes of rural development will be guided and controlled by the revenue department with the assistance of staff of other departments which is subject to its own control. Thus, the entire field staff of the three departments, at recruitment, training, service and promotion, will pass under the control of the Development i.e., Revenue Department officers. The admission of the multipurpose notion in a form and at a stage for which it is not appropriate will thus upset departmental balance and will affect the quality of service all round. (Paras. 35 and 56).

40. It seems necessary to state that not only for the present, but practically for all time, the roles of the Mamlatdar and of Block Development or Extension Officers must be kept separate. The Mamlatdar is the 'Executive' par-excellence. Promotion of group thinking and voluntary group action is not his forte. (Para. 51).

41. Probably, it was bringing in of the Mamlatdar, which almost as a corollary brought in the circle staff. The main proposition itself about the Mamlatdar is of unproved validity and hence it should be easier to allow the circle staff to concentrate on their general and revenue duties as hitherto prescribed. (Para. 52).

42. Almost by logical compulsion the institution of multipurpose Grama Sevaks brought in the Talatis (Patwaris) as their effective assistants in villages. This really puts the finishing stroke on the transformed picture where development, extension and organization of voluntary effort ceases to be anybody's special responsibility. This development would write 'finis' to all hopes of effective extension and free community action on the village level where extension will become one more among the already too numerous tasks of the talati. (Para. 53).

43. The agricultural assistants have not to deliver ready packets either of advice, information or supplies. A lively knowledge about the problems of almost each cultivator and a continuous contact with higher sources of technical knowledge is necessary in their case. They have, therefore, to be specialized officers, devoting themselves entirely to the task of agricultural extension. (Para. 54).

44. Even the present arrangements of cooperative supervision are by no means adequate, and the whole subject of providing for adequate and competent supervision is under consideration for some time. Further progress must be along lines of strengthening the supervisory staff and bringing more professional competence to them. A weakening of quality and concentration at this stage would prove disastrous. (Para. 54).

45. What is important in the community projects and national extension service is that additional staff—VLWs and others if necessary—should be appointed to carry out a more systematic and extensive programme of rural development. Mixing up existing staff to do multipurpose duties is not a compulsion, not even a suggestion of the community project or national extension scheme. (Para. 55).

SECTION II.—ADVISORY BODIES

46. The suitability of an 'advisory' body which is a group of representative persons, but has no representative character in the particular context of a planned programme of rural reconstruction, has been called into further question by the generally disappointing experiences of the second year of its working. Project Advisory Committees continue to be ineffective and in many projects they are virtually non-existent. (Para. 68).

47. The whole concept of the composition of these committees, though not of their functions which as the last Evaluation Report pointed out should in fact extend to full participation in project or block planning, would seem to require revision. In keeping with the emphasis on organized democratic action the only appropriate nucleus round which the Advisory Committees can be built up should be the executive committee of the corresponding territorial unit of local self-government. This should be further strengthened by suitable official members, and coopted or invited members from among legislators and the other categories of members who are now represented on the advisory bodies. It would be a good practice not to confine the presidentship of this Committee to the Collector, but to throw it open to chairman of local bodies principally responsible for all local planning and execution. (Para. 69).

SECTION III.—CO-OPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS

48. While progress in quantitative terms cannot be said to have been striking in any area the lines of progress and the variety of tasks attempted by cooperatives are such as should strengthen a feeling of confidence. The multipurpose type of village society is gaining ground, though there is need to make it clear once again that a 'multipurpose' society is a credit and allied purposes society. It is not intended to be an all-purposes society. That way lies danger. Anything that engages the general resources of the society in trading, production or construction has to be avoided. (Para. 71).

49. It is worthwhile recording that in the absence of adequate services for credit and marketing, the success of the purely technical or production aspects of national extension is seriously hampered. Only a small section of the people can take advantage of them and even they would do so much more enthusiastically and steadily if better marketing and credit facilities were made available. (Para. 72).

50. It is a depressing thought that in by far the larger number of States, little should have been done in promoting cooperation even in the more familiar channels of rural credit. When a high-powered, multi-pronged and nationwide effort at bringing the desire and knowledge of improved practices to all the villagers is launched through a special organisation, that many of the cooperatives should still function as privileged and subsidized associations of the better-to-do, is astounding. (Para. 76).

51. Unless an overall strengthening of the institutional structure of credit and allied activities is urgently undertaken extension activity will not reach below the upper layers of social and economic influence in villages. (Para. 77).

52. The unsuitability of departmental agency for operating a regular issue and recovery of loans on a wide scale is already being revealed in the form of large arrears. The cooperatives offering their services to all, who are ready to participate in the development programmes, and acting in harmony with social policy are obviously the appropriate type of institution to figure in schemes of development and extension. (Para. 78).

SECTION IV.—PANCHAYATS AND AD HOC BODIES

53. As a conscious beginning towards the creation of basic units of self-government, ad hoc bodies like development councils (or

Vikas Mandals) have a usefulness of their own. Where a developmental programme touches rural life at several points, and where the main emphasis is on people organizing themselves to achieve the means of their own progress the formation of discussion and operational groups to popularize and execute projects of reform must be encouraged as a healthy sign. (Paras. 79 and 80).

54. It used to be said that the justification for the formation of new ad hoc bodies is to be found in the state of village factions. Officially created ad hoc bodies have, as a rule, failed to keep together members of rival groups, and they have in several cases given rise to new causes of friction and division. Rarely does it happen that a village with a bad panchayat has a good Vikas Mandal for long. (Para. 82).

55. Enough experience has by now been obtained to indicate the weaknesses as well as the merits of ad hoc bodies. Spontaneous and popularly conducted bodies have a recognized place in the institutions of democratic progress. But, non-official auxiliaries created by officials and maintained as a formal channel for official acts is a pretence which has nothing to recommend itself. This lesson now seems to have received almost universal acceptance. (Para. 81).

Panchayats

56. Statutory panchayats have by now been set up in almost all States and where they have not already been set up necessary legislation is under consideration. There is also a general readiness to confer on these bodies as many functions of developmental administration as possible. In fact, sometimes the desire to avoid or divide responsibility in regard to urgent needs of the people, which are many and for which resources are limited, may hasten the process of decentralization beyond the capacity of local bodies to do justice to their new tasks. But if functions are matched by resources, provision for expert and trained services is made, and internal strengthening and safeguards are provided within the hierarchy of local self-governing bodies, any move towards building up strong basic institutions in villages must be whole-heartedly welcomed. (Para. 83).

SECTION V.—POPULAR PARTICIPATION

57. Even in its restricted application participation has come to mean different things for different people, and hence either qualitative or quantitative measurement and comparison in the aggregate is ruled out. (Para. 85).

58. In view of the extreme importance of encouraging the augmentation of available resources for democratic planning the central idea of public participation deserves to be clarified. Obviously participation has to be voluntary, if it is to be something more than a tax in cash or kind. Secondly, the contribution even when voluntary must be in addition to resources already available for a purpose. Thus if the Panchayat whose duty it is to make a road or a tank contributes out of its balances some amount to an *ad hoc* body to get the work done more cheaply than through normal channels, it is not the panchayat's contribution which constitutes public participation, but it is the margin of sacrifice which the participants in the *ad hoc* efforts have suffered that is entitled to be counted as public participation. (Para. 86)

59. Official leadership and participation in the process of evoking and organizing public support to community causes ought not to be ruled out. But the less reliance is placed on development officers, and the more local bodies are themselves drawn in to initiate and organize an effort, the legitimate nature and extent of official participation in a predominantly popular effort will be more satisfactorily ensured. (Para. 89)

60. It is wrong to treat every act of official initiative, encouragement and organization as a coercive act. The development officers have been specifically exhorted to assume leadership in a programme which is designed to bring forth popular effort. In suggesting an idea and in backing it by their influence the development authorities do but their duty. It is only when influence attains the substance of coercion, which is pressure with a sanction, that the risk of a higher value, that of promoting the democratic progress of the people, being sacrificed to a lower one, that of obtaining a merely material result, clearly arises. (Para. 88)

61. Psychologically the conditions in the country as a whole cannot be said to be ripe for inducing large number of people to be far away from their normal habitations for a long period to go to work on a national project. The extension of the boundry of the village say to a district seems to be within the limits of practical possibility. (Para. 92)

62. The idea of a 'famine of employment' is easily understood by villagers, so also the need to bring about economic progress for the country as a whole. If confidence is inspired in a plan, if the non-exploitative character of the project is made clear, and if the executive organization can be trusted to be efficient it appears that fairly large works on something like a district or regional level can be organized as voluntary labour works in almost all parts of the country. (Para. 93)

SECTION VI.—SUPPLIES AND EXTENSION

63. As extension activity proceeds further within the older blocks, and as new blocks are being added to the old ones the strain on the supply lines deserves special study. The reputed success of new methods is already taken for granted by people everywhere, and now soon all areas will benefit by the 'new agriculture' is now a matter more of organizing the supplies, than of merely setting up an administrative or purely extension machinery. (Para. 94)

64. A net-work of seed-farms operating at different levels is an urgent necessity if the progressive character of the extension movement is to be maintained. As regards quantity there is almost a universal complaint of shortage. This is so in spite of the fact that total supplies have as a rule gone up, but they have not gone up as fast as the increase in demand. The same to a large extent is the experience with regard to fertilizers. In areas where monsoons are the major source of water, demand both for seed and fertilizers, but especially for fertilizers, tends to be erratic. In addition to the overall strains on supplies, those caused by such seasonal factors have also to be provided against. (Paras. 95 and 96)

65. Lack of adequate and satisfactory facilities for storage is a major obstacle to successful distribution of seed and fertilizers. This indeed is one of the principal reasons why the number of stores and co-operative societies handling these supplies cannot be increased. At least one good multipurpose society in each Grama Sevak's charge ought to be functioning as a fully equipped centre for the distribution of essential supplies. To enable these societies to operate to their fullest capacity assistance to build stores and godowns should be forthcoming. (Para. 99)

66. The more responsibility the state takes on itself or puts on auxiliary institutions such as co-operatives, it becomes most vital to the efficiency of the whole organised effort to have a sound system of accounting, checking, inspection and follow-up. Substitution of private by public effort makes vigilance more necessary, not less. The figures for the recovery of taccavi loans in some areas should also suggest the urgent need for an early review of the whole process of checking on the contractual and business sides of extension activity. (Para. 101)

SECTION VII.—PROGRESS OF EXPENDITURE

67. The permissible extension of the period of the first set of Community Projects to four years, and in extreme cases to four and a half years, has produced good results. The timely announcement of

this decision has produced a stabilizing effect on programmes of expenditure. At one stage it appeared that the performance of block officers would be judged primarily by the amount of money they were able to spend. (Paras. 102 and 106)

68. A revision of the typical extension budget into a basic common programme of development which would be intensive but will be financed out of expenditure budget, and another which will be of productive investment in works depending on the prospects of productive investment in each sphere having a wider area of operation and a separate source of finance, is now called for. (Para. 102)

69. The two or three levels of planning for rural development—block state and the nation—must be more clearly integrated so as to ensure that major projects are appropriately planned and financed, and that they suitably support the work done in the project areas. Concentration on block programmes and budgets is sometimes apt to push more long-term considerations out of sight. The extension of period has given a fresh opportunity to redraw the targets and to rearrange them as between project and state responsibilities. (Para. 103)

SECTION VIII.—STAFF

70. The position with regard to staff has definitely improved. There are fewer unfilled vacancies and training arrangements are expanding. In view of the programme of expansion lying ahead, the schemes for instituting appropriate special courses for technical personnel in rural areas deserve early implementation. (Para. 107)

71. While post-appointment training arrangements, as for Grama Sevaks, Social Education Organizers and Block Development Officers have improved, they still continue to be too quick and short, and therefore, too superficial. The structure of curricula is adequate, not to say ambitious. But the actual instruction is, almost of necessity, too fleeting to be absorbed. (Para. 107)

72. So much is expected of the Grama Sevak, for instance, contacting every family and helping it to have a plan, that unless his charge is suitably reduced and arrangements for adequate guidance and supervision are made, he may settle down to a routine of formal compliance, relieved by occasional spurts to suit the tempo of official programme, much in the same way as the talati (patwari) has done. (Para. 108)

73. In a way development activity is still a bit of an adventure, and it is intended as somewhat of a mission. In these circumstances, it is most undesirable to change key personnel in the project staff

except on grounds of inefficiency or unsuitability. Officers who have proved themselves should not as a rule be moved during the initial period of three years or so. (Para. 110)

SECTION IX.—RECORDS AND THEIR USE

74. The feeling that maintenance of records is an unnecessary bother imposed by unimaginative theorists on practical men is gradually yielding place to a readiness to maintain what are conceded to be essential records. A series of relevant forms and registers have accordingly been approved by the Developmental authorities and these are awaiting actual adoption in selected areas. The sooner this step is taken, and the more the basic records are relied on for all quantitative reporting, the better will it be for the planners and administrators themselves. (Para. 111)

75. A more appreciative and constructive approach towards quantitative records is necessary. We would then not take so much liberty with them. We would also use them more positively both in our plan making and in our extension. More and more the enlightened farmers will want to know about, costing, prices, employment etc. Extension is a continuous and steadily improving process, and as people are becoming more factual and quantitative minded themselves, the demand for detailed and accurate records will become more urgent. Greater appreciation of the value of records and readiness to welcome special staff for the purpose are needed. (Para. 117)

SECTION X.—SOCIAL EDUCATION

76. In the initial stages there prevailed considerable misunderstanding about the role of the social education organizers who themselves, more often than not, found themselves to be completely frustrated. The more practical purpose of social education, that of educating the villagers in the ideology of community projects and national extension and of preparing the ground for particular items of their programme came to be recognized only gradually. (Para. 119)

77. In keeping with the general trend towards departmental integration, social education officers have been put in many States under some sort of control exercised by the normal education authorities. While the superior technical guidance coming from educational authorities is to be welcomed, anything standing in the way of a greater integration of purpose and usefulness between the social education officers and the rest of the project staff must be scrupulously avoided. (Para. 121)

78. It is now clear that important as adult literacy is, it is by no means the most promising means of spreading enlightenment among grown ups in rural areas. (Para. 123).

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79. The only normal role for social education is that of a participant in the actual popularization and implementation of the programme of community projects and national extension. If it concentrates on the routine jobs, like adult literacy and recreation alone, social education may soon exhaust its appeal. (Paras. 122 and 123)

SECTION XI.—VILLAGE CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES

80. Within the experience of the evaluation centres, there have been no really noticeable cases of improvement of the position of village crafts. This lacuna in the occupational coverage of the programme of rural development is now more or less freely recognized by planners and project staff. (Paras. 124 and 125)

81. The whole area of village industries is really an unoccupied area so far as community projects and national extension are concerned. This is so, for no fault of those who are responsible for either shaping or guiding these programmes. Whereas, in the case of agriculture, health or education there is some proved programme which the developmental and extension organisation can adopt, in the field of industry, except perhaps in the case of Khadi, there is no proved programme. Unless on the basis of an assigned sector of estimated total demand, production of village industries is fitted into the overall national programme of employment, investment and production, conditions cannot be said to be ripe either for industrial extension or for co-operation. (Para. 75)

82. It would be wrong to assume that the artisans desire to have no better ways of doing things than they are accustomed to or are at present enabled to. (Para. 128)

83. No plan for village artisans and rural industries which ignores the inevitable changes in demand consequent on economic expansion and the broadening of mind and expectations of the artisans themselves can now hope to possess any validity. The employment of non-agricultural village population, along with their resources and skills, must be treated as a part of the overall programme of gainful employment for the people of the country as a whole. Village industries ought not to remain a tolerated and subsidized section of the nation's economy. In the national plans for economic development a programme of progressive technological change consistent with provision of full employment at all stages must be drawn up. It is only when such a programme has been drawn up that the extension organization can set itself to its non-agricultural task with the same determination and hope with which it is now attending to its task in regard to the agricultural sector. (Para. 129)

SECTION XII.—TRANSITION TO NATIONAL EXTENSION SERVICE

84. As the day of transition to national extension service draws near it becomes very clear that in all development areas unless an institutional structure of panchayats and co-operative societies is built up there will be little spontaneity and continuity in the developmental process. In fact, there would be a serious danger of retrogression and neglect setting in, and undoing of all the hopefulness and progress built up in project areas during the initial period. This is one of the fundamental features of democratic growth which ought not to be ignored any more. (Para. 131)

85. Orderly and well planned measures of transition must be prepared and put into effect in time. (Para. 132)

SECTION XIII.—EXTENSION AND REFORMATION

86. Whether it is agriculture, or any of its allied activities such as animal husbandry, or it is health, in the Indian context the extension service ceases to be only a communication service. It is a comprehensive and well-endowed public organisation for enabling the mass of the people to find solutions to their problems, and to attain by stages higher and higher steps of welfare. (Para. 134)

87. At least in some cases the researchers themselves appear to have resented the representations of field-workers, mistaking them as accusations of ignorance, instead of treating them as challenges to their ingenuity. This attitude on the part of researchers is all the more surprising when it is realised that all that they have now ready to go into the extension channel is mostly a few generalised improvements and problems of special areas and of further progress remain unattended to. (Para. 135)

88. Almost immediately it is necessary to build well-equipped research centres in close proximity to the people. Both the scientists and the people will be better for this reform. In fact without it the elementary conditions necessary for the operation of an extension service will not be created in our country. (Para. 136)

SECTION XIV.—IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME

89. The progress which has taken place in several spheres of activity, and which has been recorded throughout this report, would not have been possible without a real appreciation by the people of the need and possibility of improvement through knowledge and practice of better ways. So often it has happened that extension agents who thought that they were fighting an uphill battle against popular

prejudice and apathy actually discovered that they were preaching to the converted, almost to the impatient. What people were waiting for in most places was not the prophecy but its fulfilment. (Para. 139)

90. As regards habits of co-operative action, the whole burden of much that is said in this report is to state that more emphasis must be placed on ensuring progress through collective and institutional action by the people. (Para. 141)

91. There has been a uniformly favourable response from the people to all really useful schemes of betterment in which the burdens and the benefits were equitably distributed. As regards the nature of participation experience indicates that where labour contribution is substantial, participation is quite high; but where the only type of contribution or, say, the more substantial part of the contribution is in terms of money, the extent of participation is low. (Para. 144)

92. Specific programmes for women and children are undertaken only in a few blocks. In most places, lack of clear-cut programmes for women is the main reason why they remain more or less untouched by these activities. Except, perhaps, the areas where women are still somewhat secluded; they have shown a distinct awareness and appreciation of, the general programme of improvement and of health, hygiene and education in particular. The position therefore gives ground for a hopeful response from women, if a more systematically planned programme is undertaken. (Para. 147)

93. From what has been made available hitherto it is clear that in regard to the intellectual, social and economic transformation of the countryside the community projects are playing a significant part. Further progress so as to cover all sections and all classes, and to draw in the people themselves through their own institutions into the process of building a better life for themselves is clearly called for. But no one is more conscious of this need than those who are participating in the effort. (Para. 148)