

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

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FROM: AJW

DATE: February 20, 1952

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COMMENTS:

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Underdeveloped areas

SUBJECT: Conferences on India and Pakistan

There are three areas that the conference should consider;
(1) Political, (2) Technical Assistance, and (3) Other International Agencies.

From the Foundation's viewpoint, the most important of these three is Technical Assistance because any Foundation activity in those countries would be in this field. However, to aid successfully in this area requires something more than money and a sincere desire to assist. The political future of these countries is important - if it is possible to foresee it. Other international agencies are important considerations in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and imitation.

The problems of India and Pakistan must be solved locally and by the inhabitants of those countries. Outside agencies can help. The greatest handicap in all underdeveloped areas is the lack of technical personnel. There probably would be no need for technical assistance as conceived by Point Four except for the lack of competent personnel. If those countries possessed a numerical sufficiency of technical personnel, they themselves could "prime the pump" for the necessary technical developments. It is axiomatic to state that no country can solve its problems of technical personnel until it becomes self-contained to the extent that it can provide within the country itself facilities for training the required technical personnel. Therefore, the paramount problem to be solved in any underdeveloped area is how to assist it in becoming self-contained in the various fields of professional training. A second problem is how to organize administration in technical fields within the economic practicability of the country.

The failure of colonial administration to solve these two problems is one of the chief reasons why underdeveloped countries have remained so although they were administered by highly developed countries for more than one hundred years. Support to either technical projects or

February 20, 1952

the demonstration of technologies in either health or agriculture or other welfare activity, unless it be undertaken within the framework of these considerations, will fail in becoming nationally reduplicable.

The experience of the IHD over a period of more than thirty-five years pretty clearly demonstrated the validity of this argument. The approach of the GEB in the Southern United States was a more solid and fundamental one although a long-term one and therefore a less spectacular one. It is no problem, with many and able personnel, to do a limited spectacular program in almost any field, but its benefits are also limited and transient.

Both the GEB and the IHD provide experiences that should be of great value in the future planning of program by the Foundation.


A. J. W.

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