

REPORT ON SEMINAR ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (INVOLVEMENT)

Some expectations of the participants:-

- 1) "By what practical means, as an individual or a group could we make the Black People unite".
- 2) "To know what kinds of methods would be most effective to counteract establishments with die-hard traditionalists who more often than not are stumbling blocks to progress".
- 3) "To meet new people and form good relationships".
- 4) "Have some knowledge of tactics used in making blacks more self-reliant."

INTRODUCTION:

By way of introduction it was suggested that the most practical thing to do was to isolate a particular problem in a given society and attack it effectively.

This would then mean good leadership and initiation. Good leadership is defined within the context in which a leader is able to make responsible and positive decisions.

INTRODUCTION

Community development schemes frequently, if not always, are geared simply towards helping a given community in as much same way that a welfare organisation does. Very little attention is given to some very important points in these communities. Emphasis is mainly directed at agricultural and, even then the community is merely used as a labor reservoir for some industrial entrepreneur or other; alternatively, such a community is seen mainly as a social research object. The result is that, as soon as such research has been completed, the community is left back on square one whilst the researchers themselves are awarded doctorates or other academic degrees, leaving no trace whatever of their work.

This is however, to a large extent, to be expected since any planning on such projects is usually confined to facilitating the conduct of research. It is true that many such communities, people have become progressively aware of the advantage taken of their plight and are becoming increasingly unco-operative. This latter observation may lead to serious complications for a group of individuals who are sincere in their attempts at firing the given community's development. It is also true that sometimes such a community acquire a certain amount of self-reliance in a certain area for example, the community at Botha's Hill, which has made tremendous strides in agriculture under the supervision of Mr. Mazibuko. But agricultural skill and knowledge is by no means the only feature of community development. It is no doubt, very important, but attention should also be directed at other aspects of the community's life during the planning of a development scheme.

There follows a brief analysis of some aspects of community life which should be given greater consideration in planning the development of any given underdeveloped society.

AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

DEFINITION

The term "Community Development" designates the utilisation under one single programme of approaches and techniques which rely upon local communities as units of action and which attempts to combine outside assistance with organised local self-determination and effort, and which correspondingly seek to stimulate local initiative and leadership as the primary instrument of change ...

(U.N. Document E/CN 5/291, 'Programme of Concerted Action in the Social Field of the U.N. and Specialized Agencies').

(a) Self-reliance

The main aim of a community development scheme should be to engender within the community a determination to be self-reliant. Such self-reliance implies a sense of individuality through which each person sees himself as an essential entity in the whole process of the development of that society. Such individuality is

impossible if people and continually at the receiving end of hand-outs and perpetually depend on the good will of outsiders, who, though well-meaning, never give the people a chance to do anything for themselves. The result is that individuals become over-dependent on outside help instead of inter dependent with suitable foreigners. This makes apathy not only possible but inevitable. They lose all interest in self-determination and the expression of their individuality for the development of their community:

"People cannot become self-reliant unless they are also self-determining unless they are autonomous, free of external coercion".

It is easy to see how external coercion can come about; a given community becomes entirely dependent on the good will of an external agency. Thus it is reasonable to conclude that, should the people refuse to co-operate, the external agent either withdraws (if the people are not too dependent on its services) or coerces them by means of threats of complete withdrawal if the people are, in fact, dependent to a large extent on that agency for vital commodities. This stunts the development of the people toward self-determination and self-reliance.

(b) Leadership:

Community projects very seldom take account of leadership training in the society. There is obviously some type of leadership in an underdeveloped community but the leadership we are concerned with here is that concerned with the social, political, and scientific development of the people. The need for competent leadership is obvious. A strong, informed, competent leadership, embodied either in one person (for a small community) or several individuals can do much to the realization of self-sufficiency; at least it can do much to help cultivate the desire for self-reliance and the determination to work for it.

(c) Education:

This is another aspect of community development which should receive more attention. People see development schemes taking place in their land without understanding the nature of the problems which make such schemes necessary. It is true that, in some cases, school buildings are erected in the area. But in the majority of cases children have to travel for miles to the nearest school. Many simply don't find it worth the bother.

It is well known that the majority of adults in such communities are illiterate; most never having gone beyond Std II; some being in possession of a Std. VI certificate.

Usually, social scientists in the community are quite helpful in planning for the education of the people.

2. STATE OF THE COMMUNITY

The state of the community is usually the best known aspect and, in fact, normally presents the temptation to researchers or community development groups. Under this heading fall the following:

(a) Resources:

Here we are interested in the economic and scientific resources of the community. The economy is usually on a very precarious stand and the scientific resources are in the majority of cases primitive, if not entirely non-existent. It is these resources which determine, to a very large extent, the diet and hygienic state of the community.

(b) Culture:

Too many external agents completely ignore the cultures of the people whom they wish to paternalize. This often leads to either complete rejection by the people of their own culture or to open conflict with the foreigners, who attempt to impose their culture on the people, on the assumption that theirs is a superior civilized culture. It is true that with the advent of technology, many cultural traits vanish, but this is better understood as a result of lack of use of certain instruments or commodities previously integrally related to community life. That is understood.

What cannot be defended in any way is the total disregard that development groups frequently show to the cultural treasures of the people. Consideration of a people's culture in programming can reveal methods which will not only make development easier, but faster as well because the people then have a greater understanding of what the development scheme is all about.

(c) The Leadership

As is stated above, there usually is some form of leadership in such a community. The leadership, however, consists in the vast majority of cases of a man at the top guided by some counsellors. This upper echelon is usually not terribly political, seeking mainly to maintain their position. In some cases, this leadership also rents shacks to a large proportion of the community and thus wield a considerable amount of power.

It thus follows that they are the men approached by a development group. There is, however, a problem which not infrequently arises. Because of their general lack of awareness, it is frequently difficult to make them understand the urgency of the situation. They are often also difficult people to deal with.

It thus sometimes becomes necessary to approach other influential people in the community directly. Such people may or may not agree to discuss the matter with their leaders, depending on how amenable they are to reason. Here again, social workers have proved to be of invaluable assistance.

(d) Community Enthusiasm

The necessity for this paragraph stems from the attitude of the developers that they know what is and what is not good for the community, without consultation with the people. The group attempts to prescribe treatment for a disease of which the community is not aware - or, worse - does not wish to consider. Hence, the people reject schemes which demand physical involvement by way of digging trenches for irrigation, improving their sanitation, etc. They just don't see the point and are not interested. Thus all attempts should be made at creating and maintaining enthusiasm in the people

3. SOME APPROACHES USED

(a) Programmes implanted by external Agents:

The objective here is to implant a project or to develop a special programme in the community by an external agent. Such an external agent normally appears at the invitation of the local authority and seldom at the request of the people, most affected. Regardless of the agents' directive, he comes into the community as an expert in some area, e.g. agriculture, education, medicine. Various methods which lend themselves to employment are:-

- (1) a diagnosis of the community's needs, the prescription of a programme and a bid to establish this programme which he leaves for the people to use as they see fit;
- (11) persuasion of the people to use the commodity provided;
- (111) the agent discusses with the people the need for a project or programme and by means of propaganda tries to win the co-operation of the people.

In general, the trend is away from the crude methods of imposition of a project and towards winning the support of the community for the project. But, regardless of the methods used, the basic objective of the approach is to implant a particular project, the general nature of which is determined by the external agent. The criterion for the success of the work of the agent is the degree to which he can establish this project in the life of the community. He is concerned about the feelings of the people in respect to the innovation only to the degree that they support, and do not oppose, introduction and use of the project or service.

(b) Multiple Approach

This approach is concerned with the effect of a new technique on many aspects of community life. A team of experts seeks to provide a variety of services, e.g. education, recreational, medical, to deal with some of the problems which emerge or may emerge as the economic system of the community is altered. Thus, in

introducing a new industry in a community, the economists or industrialists may be accompanied by experts in other areas who would help people make constructive use of their earnings, to read and write, to take advantage of modern medical knowledge and skill, to improve their housing, etc. An effort is thus made to move the whole community in a direction which will permit the use of modern tools, techniques and methods of living. However, the multiple approach seldom provides for adaptation or adjustment in the area of the people's culture.

The multiple approach, however, is not merely concerned with technical change but attempts to provide for the impact of these changes - usually by education health and welfare programmes. There is a difference between 'social consequences of technical change' and 'technical change as a result of social action'. The former assumes that a technical change can be imposed or induced and that plans can be made to care for the community's reaction to this change. The latter assumes that the community must make its own adaptation and that this can be done only if the community itself initiates, works through and makes its own changes. These are obviously quite different points of view in respect to the ways a community may adjust and develop.

Many social scientists may advise on how the programme may be adapted to the culture, or how the culture may be changed if the programme is to be implemented. A social anthropologist will see, for example, that introduction of a public health clinic may sever old relationships with midwife and medicine man, will predict resistances and may recommend ways in which these latter may be cared for. The usefulness of the social scientists has been amply demonstrated in this way, for they see the underlying and fundamental web of a culture not apparent to the untrained observer.

(c) Inner Resources Approach

Here, stress is laid on the need to encourage communities to identify their own wants and needs and to work co-operatively at satisfying them. Projects are not pre-determined but develop as discussion in communities focusses the real concerns of the people. As wants and needs are defined and solutions sought, aid may be provided by national governments or international organizations. But the emphasis is laid on communities of people working at their own problems. In such an approach, technical change follows social change and not vice versa. Change comes as a community sees the need for change and as it develops the will and capacity to make changes it sees desirable. Direction is established internally rather than externally. Development of a specific project is less important than the development of the capacity of a people to establish that project.

The disadvantages here are: action is slow; the action taken is not subject to control by the technician; the programme that develops may not be the action which the government or expert feels is required; and even the action taken may move in unsophisticated fashion, oblivious to many effective ways of carrying out the programme. On the other hand, those who advocate the approach emphasize the importance of the people learning to work together at the problems they conceive to be important and the probability that such projects as the community does

undertake in this fashion will have a meaning and a permanence which imposed projects, no matter how subtly introduced, will not have.

CONCLUSION

This paper attempts to highlight some of the important aspects of community development which should be considered in the planning of programmes. A programme that ignores these is likely to lead people away from self-determination. Intensive preparation is needed before undertaking a project as failure, very often unavoidable, causes lamentable distress among those whom it wishes to help. Beginnings must, therefore, be small and careful and a pilot project is essential.

DISCUSSION ON PAPER:

Towards a re-definition of "Community"

The present traditional sociological concept of community is: "A group of households in a particular geographical area interacting in terms of economics, morals etc." This definition is too general and academic and therefore irrelevant. The essence of any community involvement is to establish within the black ranks a solidarity within an unlimited geographical context. People living in areas unlimited geographically can interact if they have common interests or problems. This interaction is the basis for establishing any solidarity. To maintain this solidarity there must be open lines of communication expressing common values.

A geographically or politically limited concept of community is essentially defined by external agents who have vested interest. Since it was not defined by the people who constitute such a community it cannot be true.

The biological analogy of animals and plants interacting harmoniously in order to exist is possible nearer the truth.

Towards a re-definition of "Development"

In South Africa the term "development" has many negative connotations for blacks. This made the need for re-definition very important. In-depth discussion brought to light a more appropriate word - "Liberation".

Some connotations of "Liberation":

- Realization of individuals potentialities.
- Awareness of oppressive forces.
- Awareness of "other" suffering and oppressed blacks.
- The need to work together for change.

It therefore becomes necessary to establish a consciousness that will advance blacks to this liberation.

1. Need for personal liberation from psychological hang-ups like an inferiority complex brought on by whites.
2. Recognise the importance of the environment and other blacks for this liberation.
3. An awareness of own values which will result in blacks becoming self-reliant.
4. To establish any feeling of unity among blacks it will become necessary to eradicate all black prejudices against blacks.

5. To respect themselves as individuals. It is clear therefore that development means liberation to blacks and liberation means creating a new value system.

CONSCIENTIZATION AS A MEANS OF MAKING BLACKS AWARE OF THE NEED FOR LIBERATION

Approaches of Conscientization:

1. Direct approach - It is based on the affirmation of our blackness and the need to create a value system based on black consciousness. Therefore the direct approach requires a high degree of:-
 - i) vocalization
 - ii) publicity of local issues simply but in terms of black consciousness
 - iii) slogans and symbols that evoke questions.
2. Indirect or Infiltrative approach - Any organisation in the community which can be used to conscientize people must be infiltrated. This infiltration must be a highly guarded and tactful process. There must always be a reference body which has a organised programme to which the infiltrators must report. It is important that all relevant information about the organizations to be infiltrated is known.
3. Re-orientation approach - Implicit in this approach is the re-evaluation of present values: e.g. education etc. Emphasis is placed upon re-evaluation of values in terms of their utility to the community. This implies therefore that values would have to change constantly. As they become useless new values will have to be created.

Since the present value system to which blacks refer is an oppressive one it will have to be destroyed and a new one created.

Re-orientation would therefore mean re-assessment of educational, religious, sports and ethical institutions. The obvious purpose of this re-orientation is to develop a mood of cultural consciousness amongst black people.

4. Self-Help Projects - Any community project must have as its ultimate goal the handing over totally of the project to the people.

The aim here is to force people to develop a pride in themselves and their potential - to show the relationship of their environment to themselves. This will increase self-reliance and inter-dependency.

The type of project will be determined by the particular (situation) and e.g. agricultural methods in co-operative farming in a rural area; burial insurance schemes run by the people in an urban area.

5. Shock Tactics - This method will be used to undermine the enemy and to force complacent "non-whites" out of their apathy. Tactics will be determined by the situation.

Some ideas for Projects and Programmes:

In any organization the co-ordinators must have specialised functions to undertake a project successfully.

- 1) Educational Programmes e.g. High school students.

Tutorials

Tutorials must be held at regular intervals in order to sustain interest. A rigid consistency must be maintained in the organisation of such tutorials so that the participants have a high regard for the project. Tutorials can take a number of forms so that interest does not wane.

- a) Relevant film shows
- b) Tape recordings of current topics
- c) Slides depicting comparative pictures
- d) Simple papers about community delivered by prominent people in community
- e) Relevant topics for discussion - aim: critical reflection
- f) Symposium
- g) Library with relevant books pertaining to change
- h) Creative workshops - drama, art, poetry, music
- i) Awareness and literacy programmes for adults:
e.g. papers on: Finance and budgets for housewives
Wages and the worker; Duty of bosses to worker;
civic pride; aged in community; youth in community etc.

Inclusive in the above should be time for discussion.

The findings of the project must be well publicised in high schools.

In the planning of such a programme boredom should be avoided. The project should extend over a year.

2) Community in General

- a) Newsletter that discusses local issues. The basis for all discussion must be black consciousness.
- b) Creation of curiosity slogans and symbols that evoke questions pertaining to black consciousness.
- c) Isolate grievances of people in a area and create issues of them by publicity, protests and mass meetings.
- d) Encourage cultural groups in area.

3) Sport

- a) Highlight lack of facilities
- b) Draw comparisons with white areas.
- c) Draw up detailed memorandum on lack of facilities as compared with those in white areas.

- d) Show how it is out of proportion in relation to the rates blacks pay
- e) Work towards black solidarity by encouraging involvement of other black groups.

4) Self-Help Projects

- a) Clinics
- b) Literacy classes
- c) Burial societies - to obviate exploitation by insurance agents.
- d) Co-operative societies - e.g. shops etc.

5) Infiltration

The Infiltrator:

- a) Well trained in specialised duties
- b) Possess leadership qualities
- c) Must be able to take decisions
- d) Must be able to gain the confidence of others in group by doing the "dirty" work.
- e) Must be able to get himself into decision-making positions.

Organizations to Infiltrate:

- a) Youth groups
- b) Civic bodies
- c) Religious and non-religious groups
- d) Political bodies

Tactics:

- a) Undertake to do practical work in order to gain confidence and popularity
- b) Be tactful in dealing with others
- c) Selective in the type of body he infiltrates.

THE GROUP FORMATION

1. Whether the group is "amorphous" or not each member must have specific duties, and still have a knowledge of other duties.
2. There must exist a reference or "parent" body to act as a guide.
3. The group must be non-identifiable or exist with a "front".
4. Recruitment must be restricted to people who have certain influences in a particular area.
5. Members with specific interests must be exhaustive in their research input.

How to begin Programmes at group level:

1. First establish personal relationships with influential people.
2. "Evangelise" to people amenable to suggestions and then put them through tests.
3. Do not use people with controversial backgrounds or well-known people as co-ordinators.

1. Underlying Freire's views on education is the deep conviction that all education, all educative action must, of necessity, be preceded by:
 - reflections on man
 - an analysis of the concrete environment of the individual whom one wishes to educate (or rather, whom one wishes to assist in the process of educating himself).

In the absence of such reflections on man one runs the risk of adopting educative methods and principles which reduce the individual to the level of an object. But man's ontological vocation is a subject and not an object.

Without an analysis of the cultural environment one runs the serious risk of superimposing a system of education which is not adopted to the individual for whom it is meant. Consequently, becomes inoperative.

"No man exists in a void" for each individual is "situated" and "dated", in the sense that he lives during a particular time in history, in a particular place, in a particular social and cultural context ("man is a being rooted in time and space"). Thus, in order to be valid, education must take into account, man's ontological vocation and his environment.

More precisely, if education is to be a valid instrument, it must help the individual to become a subject, beginning with everything that constitutes his own life.

This idea is expressed in the following statements:

"Education is a valid instrument only if it establishes a dialectical relationship with the context of the society in which the individual has his roots."

"The nature of the machinery of any education system (and Freire states explicitly that by these words he means "something more than the mere preparation of technical frameworks for the development of an area) depends on the harmony obtained between this being, man, who is "situated" and "dated" and the particular conditions of the place and time by which he is limited.

All of Freire's ideas concerning education and his work in this field (as can be seen in north-eastern Brazil) have been based on this fundamental principle and deep conviction of his.

2. How can such an education system be developed? Let us consider Dr. Freire's second basic principle: by reflecting on his situation and on his concrete environment man becomes a subject. The more he reflects on reality and on his concrete situation, the more he "emerges", fully aware, committed, and ready to intervene in this reality in order to change it.

Only a form of education such as this -- one which aims at developing man's faculty of awareness and a critical mind, by means of which he makes choices and decisions -- can liberate man instead of enslaving, domesticating and adjusting him. (Too often, current educational practices, in many parts of the world are guilty of this. They try to adjust the individual to society instead of guiding him along the lines which his own inclinations indicate).

This is by no means a totally new idea. At the beginning of the century a friend of Peguy's addressing himself to educators wrote: "making peasants aware of their situation so that they themselves will want to change it, does not mean speaking to them about agriculture in general, recommending the use of fertilizers and agricultural machines, and suggesting that they form syndicates. It involves much more. They must be made to understand the mechanics of the type of agricultural production to which they subject themselves simply because of tradition, to examine and criticize whatever has become routine. Perhaps the most difficult thing for an individual to understand intelligently is his own life, because so much of it is made up of tradition, routine and unconscious acts. To overcome tradition and routine the best practical method is not to introduce foreign or remote ideas but to make those who conform to tradition and slavishly follow routines, examine their actions critically."

By different and richer paths (richer because of its wider perspective -- its concern for the total development of the individual) Dr. Freire has arrived at the same conclusion found in the above statement by Charles Guyesse. "Yes", writes Freire, "man's ontological vocation is a subject and not an object; its realization depends on the extent to which man participates actively, reflecting on the conditions of time and space, while exposing them to a critical examination."

3. Third Basic Principle: Man is able to lift himself to a higher level of awareness and become a subject in proportion to the extent to which he intervenes in his society, reflects on its context and commits himself to it.

This basic idea can be broken down into two statements.

A. Man is a related being.

B. Man becomes a subject through his relationships.

A. Man, because he is man is capable of recognizing that certain external realities exist. He discovers, through his reflections on reality, that he is not only "in" reality but also an integral part of it. He discovers that there is himself and other beings; he even learns that there are "different existential orbits": a world of inanimate things, plant life, animal life and other men

Such perception is peculiar to man and makes it possible for him to discover the existence of a God and to relate to him.

Man, because he is man, is equally capable of recognizing that he lives, not in an eternal present but in a time period made up of yesterday, today and tomorrow. This awareness of his temporal existence (which he owes to his power of perception) induces self awareness in an historical context. No animal can do this, since it does not possess that power of perception.

Finally, man, because he is man, and therefore capable of perception can relate to other beings. This characteristic is also peculiar to man. Whereas animals can only be "in contact" with reality, man can actually establish relationships or form ties with reality.

"Relationships" implies (which "contact" does not) the use of intelligence, a critical mind and ability ... in short, the sort of behavior which is more than "reflex" and of which, man, a free and intelligent being, is the only possessor.

B. Man, utilizing his powers of perception, finds himself confronted by reality, which is not only external .. (one can only relate to something or someone outside of oneself) but which challenges him, defies him and provokes him to action. Man's ties with reality and with his environment (whether it be his social environment or the world of nature) are confrontations: nature challenges man, and he in turn is continually defying nature; similarly, man's relationships with other men and with social structures are also confrontations, to the extent that he is constantly tempted in interpersonal dealings, to reduce others to the level of objects, things to be used for his own profit and advancement.

Thus, each relationship which man establishes with reality is a challenge to which he must respond in a different way. There is no formula or model for dealing with such challenges; instead, there are as many different answers as there are problems or challenges... Moreover, there are numerous possible responses to any one particular challenge (for example: the agriculturalist who is constantly faced with the problem of parasites among his plants, can deal with the problem in many ways: weeding, use of fertilizers, magic, resignation, etc.).

From the point of view of the worker, any attempt to make use of him, to treat him as an object, constitutes a challenge to which he might respond by passive resignation, performing inadequately, striking, obedience or revolt, organizing all the workers in that particular field, or by having discussions with the employer, etc. Moreover, each response could take numerous concrete forms.

The important point which one has to recognise is that an individual's response to a challenge changes not only the reality which confronts him but it also changes the individual himself. With each response the change is greater and his approach is different. "For this continuous game of responses", writes Freire, "the very act of responding constitutes a change in the individual". As he responds, the individual is raising his level of awareness and asserting himself --- as a subject, for this response demands critical thought, invention, choice, decision, organisation and action ... all the things by means of which an individual develops his inner self, and which make him not only adjusted to reality and to others but also integrated in society.

This is a cherished idea of Marxism and though Marx was by no means the first to express this view, credit goes to him for the forcefulness with which he recalled it: "It is through and in his actions as man that man becomes man."

One should also note that man's response to any challenge forces him, or at least, invites him to dialogue, and to relate to other human beings; not to dominate but to establish relationships based on sympathy and mutual understanding.

4. Fourth basic principle. Man creates culture in the extent to which he integrates in his social and cultural environment, reflects on it and responds to its challenges. Man becomes a dynamic force in his world by establishing relationships, creating, re-creating and making decisions. He adds to it a particular "something" of which he is the author, and by that very fact he makes a culture.

The sense in which Freire uses the word culture is quite different from the meaning normally accepted, and indeed much richer culture (as opposed to nature, which is not a creation of man) is the contribution which man makes to nature. Culture is the total result of human activity, of man's attempts to create and recreate, of his efforts to transform nature and to establish dialogical relationships with other men.

It is also the systematic acquisition of human experience, but a critical and creative acquisition -- not a juxtaposition of bits of knowledge stored in the mind and not incorporated into one's entire being and whole life. In this sense one can say that man lifts himself to a higher level of awareness and creates culture in the very act of establishing relationships, in the very act of responding to nature's challenges, and in the very act of examining critically, assimilating and translating into creative action the knowledge acquired from the experiences of those around him and those who lived before him.

5. Fifth basic principle: Man is not only the creator of his culture by his relationships and his response to nature's challenges. But he also makes history, by this very response and his relationships with others.

"As man creates, re-creates and makes decisions, historical periods will be formed and reshaped."

History (in the fullest sense of the word -- the history of all people and not just that of armies and governments) is nothing other than a series of man's responses to the challenges of nature, the challenges of other men and of the structure of his society. It is nothing other than man's search (through response to challenges and relationships with others) for greater self awareness.

History then is only a series of epochs, each one characterized by aspirations, needs, values and "themes", in search of fulfilment. Only when man succeeds in finding, recognizing and grasping these themes and aspirations, as well as doing the work which is necessary for their fulfilment, can he be said to be participating actively in history.

An era is complete when its themes are grasped and its tasks are accomplished. An era is outmoded when its themes and tasks no longer answer the new needs. Indeed, what characterizes the passing of one era and the beginning of another is the appearance of new values which challenge the old.

Man can be said to be making history when, seizing the significant themes of his time he carries out the concrete tasks when he suggests changes in attitudes and behaviour: a new style of life. It must be clearly understood that man can only make history if he is able to grasp the trends of his time. If he is incapable of doing this he will be carried along by the events of history rather than making history himself.

6. Sixth fundamental idea and logical conclusion of the above: THIS education must be -- in its content, curriculum and methods -- adapted to the desired end, which is, to enable the individual to become a subject, to transform the world, to relate to other human beings (to establish reciprocal relationships), to mould his culture, and to make history.

If the desired end of education is that man should act and be recognized as a subject;
that he should be aware of his power to transform nature, and that he should respond to its challenges;
that he should establish mutual relationships with other men (and with God);
that through his actions he should create culture:

if the object then, is really to make man an integral part of the historical processes; to make him abandon his attitude of resignation and take the initiative; if, in other words, he is expected to make history rather than allow himself to be carried along by it, and (in particular) to participate actively and creatively during the transition periods (particularly important periods, since they demand fundamental options, vital choices for man);

if these are the desirable ends, it is important to prepare the individual with an authentic education: an education which liberates and not one which adjusts, domesticates and enslaves him.

This demands a complete revision of the traditional education system, programmes as well as methods.

Man can only participate actively in history, in society, in transforming reality if his education helps him to be aware of reality and of his own capacity to transform it.

One does not resist forces which one does not understand, whose importance one cannot estimate or the forms of which one cannot clearly distinguish; one tends to submit to them with resignation; one strives to reconcile oneself to them by submission instead of fighting. This is true of the forces of nature (drought, flood, plant or animal disease, seasonal changes). This is no less true of social forces: "the big businessman", the "trusts", the "technicians", the "state", "revenue", etc.: all the things about which most people have only some vague knowledge, except that they are all-powerful and cannot be changed by any action of the ordinary man.

Reality can only be changed if man discovers that it can be changed, and that it can be done by him.

It is therefore imperative to make this awareness the first objective of education, for it is necessary, before anything else, to provoke a critical attitude of reflection resulting in action.

Faced with reality, man can respond many different ways, indicating a particular level of awareness. Freire, points out three levels or types of awareness which can be observed in daily life.

a. First, an "unreflective" awareness which can be found among ordinary people and in closed societies: it is characterized by a "quasi-impermeability" to the problems and challenges outside the purely biological sphere (food, subsistence, guarding against anything that might be a direct threat to the life of the individual or the community) by a partial absence of historical consciousness (the individual is somehow immersed in a time which to him is one dimensional:

only the present matters; he has only a vague awareness of three dimensional time --- yesterday, today and tomorrow) and by an outlook and an understanding of reality which is basically "magical" resulting in action, similarly influenced.

N.B. Freire insists that pure "unreflective awareness" does not exist. But frequently one does find a type of awareness in which the above mentioned characteristics do predominate.

b. Next, a "reflective-naive" outlook on life which is characterized by simplification in the interpretation of problems by a tendency to assume that the preceding period was better; by a tendency to underestimate the ordinary man; by strong gregarious tendencies; by a dislike of research and a distinct attraction to incredible explanations; by weakness and lack of depth in argument; by strong emotions; by a preference for controversial disputations rather than dialogue; by magical explanations (typical of the unreflective mind).

c. Finally, the "critical reflective" mind, characterized by depth in interpretation of problems, substitution of real causes for magical explanation, self-confidence in discussions, preference for dialogue rather than controversial disputations, receptiveness to new ideas (without rejecting the old), refusal to transfer or shirk responsibility.

The only way to lead the individual to a full realization of his ontological vocation and to make him an integrated member of his society --- in building it and also in directing of social change --- is to substitute his magical outlook a critical outlook on life, to help him make the transition from the level of unreflective or naive reflective awareness to the level of critical awareness.

This can only be done validly by using an active method, in an intense dialogue where the participants would be those who wish to learn and are seeking education, as well as those who wish to give their assistance.

Dialogue is a horizontal relationship, an intercommunication between two beings. It is a relationship based on sympathy (with a foundation of love, humility, hope, mutual confidence) which permits communication, group research, and which by its very nature engenders a rich critical attitude. Anti-dialogue by contrast, is a vertical relationship, which does not permit any real communication, mutual exchange or common research. The relationship of sympathy being "broken", anti-dialogue can not promote communication.

"An education which is not based on dialogue", writes Freire, "kills the creative power, not only of the student but also of the educator when the latter imposes, on the students, "formulas" and "statements", which they passively receive.

On both sides, creativity is lost and both teacher and student waste away intellectually. This is the very negation of education.

"Education", he continues, "is an act of love and for that very reason, an act of courage. It cannot fear debate and analysis of reality. It cannot flee from creative discussions for fear of being farcical.

How can one learn to discuss and debate with an autocratic education? "We do not exchange ideas; we impose our own. We neither debate nor discuss subjects; we are carrying on a discourse; we do not work with the student, we work on him. We give to him. We propose a discipline with which he does not agree but to which he must adjust. We do not provide him with the means to think authentically, because he holds on to the formulae which he receives from us, without any queries. They are not assimilated because assimilation is the result of research: research which demands some effort on the part of the person who undertakes it: he must become involved in re-creation, re-discovery and "re-invention".

"It is not possible, with an education of this nature, to mould men who will play an active role in the exciting process of developing a democracy: such education is directly opposed to the "emergence" of a people into public life."

These are, in brief, Freire's key ideas concerning education. As we examine how he has put these ideas into action, one should note that they have only been elaborated progressively, with constant re-defining and correcting dictated by what was actually done in practice. In this sense, it is possible to say that they are the result not only of a reflection on man in his concrete environment but also the result of action constantly reviewed.