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ABSTRACT

A tour to obtain a broad picture of the state of development of adult education in cities of the United States, of Canada, of India, and of the United Kingdom is described. The objectives of the tour were to examine: (1) the provision made for residential adult education overseas (the U.S.); (2) the relationship between the various agencies providing adult education, and, in turn, their relationship with the formal structure of education; (3) examples of the provision of adult education "at a distance," that is without the presence of a tutor at the point where the students are studying; and (4) the use of frequency modulated broadcasting in adult education. The introduction discusses the use of the term "adult education" in North America and the British usage. Areas of education included in the term "adult education" are External Degrees, Continuing Education, and Liberal Education. Other topics discussed in the report are: Residential Adult Education; Workers' Education; The Use of Technical Resources; Co-operation between Agencies; Adult Education at a Distance (discussion group programs, correspondence programs, the Open University); and financing Adult Education. Two appendixes present a List of Organisations Visited and Individuals Interviewed, and a Submission to Committee of Inquiry into Frequency Modulation. (DB)

# ASPECTS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN

A Report to the Winston Churchill Memorial Foundation

by

Charles F. Bentley
1970 Churchill Fellow

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## FOREWORD

At the outset of this report I should like to place on record my gratitude to the Winston Churchill Memorial Foundation for the opportunity it afforded me by the award of a Fellowship, to observe the practice of adult education in North America and the United Kingdom during the period September 1970 to March 1971.

I should like also to acknowledge the generosity of the Workers' Educational Association of New South Wales which granted me leave of absence to accept the Fellowship, and to my colleagues in the W.E.A., who during the period of my absence overseas added to their own already heavy load of duties those additional ones necessary to keep the general secretary's office functioning.

There are also many others overseas who did a great deal both in the pre-tour arrangements and in making information accessible to me, and in providing generous hospitality to my wife and myself, all of whom helped immensely to make the tour both more enjoyable and more rewarding. I shall mention in detail those whom I visited in due course.

Charles F. Bentley

Sydney.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE TOUR

I left Australia on September 3rd 1970 and returned on March 10th 1971. During this period, setting aside travelling time between continents, I spent approximately two months in the United States, two months in Canada, and two months in the United Kingdom.

The specific areas that I visited were as follows:

*In the United States of America*

Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Barbara, San Francisco (Berkeley), Davis, Santa Cruz, Madison, Chicago, East Lansing, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Rochester, Atlanta, Washington D.C., Maryland, Syracuse, Boston, Durham, New York.

*In Canada*

Vancouver, Banff, Saskatoon, Quetico, Toronto, Montreal.

*In the United Kingdom*

London, Oxford, North Wales, Liverpool, Manchester (and nearby centres), Nottingham (and nearby centres), Sussex, Kent.

*In India*

The Indian Adult Education Association - New Delhi

As will be obvious, such an extensive tour permitted only a brief stop-over at most of the places mentioned, and, therefore, only a superficial examination of the programs of adult education carried out in those cities. However, my aim was to obtain a broad picture of the state of development of adult education in the areas visited rather than to examine in depth one particular geographical area or type of organisation. Such an approach was inherent in the objectives I had set before the tour, which were, briefly, to examine

1. The provision made for residential adult education overseas.

2. The relationship between the various agencies providing adult education, and, in turn, their relationship with the formal structure of education, and

3. Examples of the provision of adult education "at a distance", that is without the presence of a tutor at the point where the students are studying.

I planned that my major focus within these general fields would be on *liberal adult education*, thus providing a further limitation on the extent of my observations.

After I left Australia I became aware that the Australian Broadcasting Control Board had set up an enquiry into the question of whether provision should be made for the introduction of FM broadcasting into Australia. Believing this to have some relevance to the future provision of adult education in Australia, I devoted some time to

4. The use of frequency modulated broadcasting in adult education.

## INTRODUCTION

*Adult Education Is ...*

Like the term "education" itself the term "adult education" provides the source of endless discussion among educational theorists about its meaning. Generally speaking practitioners of adult education have become thoroughly bored with the discussion and frequently respond that they have no time to waste in attempts to define the term. They prefer to get on with the job of providing adult education.

It is, of course, a nice way of escaping from the problem and very convenient for the functionary who is concerned to have his success measured by the amount of activity he creates.

But clearly if one is providing something called "adult education" then it is very difficult to know what you are doing, or even whether you have done it, if you are unable to describe what it is that you are supposed to be doing.

One effect of my tour has certainly been to make me more than ever determined to establish a definition of adult education. It seems to me crucial to the development of this critically important field of human activity that it should not be so meaningless as to be applied to almost any kind of adult activity.

Perhaps an anecdote will reveal the nature of my concern.In Atlanta, Georgia, I attended a conference of professional adult educators from throughout the United States. As I left to go to the airport I shared a taxi with a woman who had also been attending the conference. "What field of adult education are you in?" I enquired. "Consumer Education" she replied. "Oh", I said, a little facetiously, "One of Nader's Raiders!" "No", she said "I'm with Sears Roebuck".

I find it difficult to accept that the sort of consumer education that one of America's major department store chains is likely to provide involves the inculcation of the ability to make critical judgments about the merits of different products, to be proof against the wiles of false advertising, to be alert to the gimmicks of crafty merchandising - in short the important content of any program that I would regard as being consumer <u>education</u>.

What is immediately obvious to a person making a swift journey

across the adult education scene of the North American continent and the United Kingdom is that the term "adult education" is understood in different ways in those two areas of the world.

Obviously these different uses arise from the process of historical forces. One is tempted to take the position therefore that though the term means different things in the different continents there is no reason to suppose that either definition is better than the other. However, this does not take account of the consequences of the difference of definitions, it is this particular problem which I wish to examine here.

*The North American Usage*

Generally speaking the term "adult education" in North America is seen to embrace any educational activity that is undertaken by adult students. In the United Kingdom, however, the term is used specifically to refer to liberal adult education and not to vocational education at the adult level. Vocational adult education is embraced by another term, "further education". However, the scope of adult education in Britain has recently been changing particularly in the provision of professional refresher courses carried out by the Extension Departments of universities which, though vocational, are not courses directed towards the award of a qualification. At the other side of the picture is the development also of courses which are not vocational, but not considered to be liberal either. These are mainly courses for leisure time activity, often courses which involve the learning of particular skills, but not for a vocational reason.

Out of these different attitudes towards the concept of adult education important differences have arisen in the way in which the activities are financed. In North America, because of the stress on vocational utility, the provision of adult education has tended to be supported almost entirely from the fees paid by students; which seems fair enough when the students obtain some monetary benefit themselves. In Britain, however, because of the development of adult education departments in universities, and other agencies, around the concept of liberal education, with no particular vocational end in view, the work has been largely supported by grants from public funds and the fees paid have been kept very small indeed.

Partly because of the financial arrangements and because of the linking of adult education in the early 20th century to a crusade to redress social inequalities resulting from a lack of educational opportunity, the student body of adult education classes in Britain

to be, originally, from among those who had a minimal formal schooling and were seeking to repair this inadequate adolescent experience by undertaking classes in adulthood. However, it is not to be thought that because of this "remedial" role that the adult education given was simply providing primary or secondary education. It was remedial in the sense of providing higher education for those who lacked a formal secondary education and for whom, therefore, learning the university disciplines had to proceed from a different formal base than with undergraduates.

By contrast, in North America, the extension work of universities tends to be in the provision of vocational skills, especially professional or para-professional skills, and therefore directed very largely towards the better the better educated part of the community. Adult education in other agencies contains a large element of vocational material also though in this sector recreational activities have a part to play as well.

Another important difference in North America arises from the historical development of adult education from the agricultural extension movement. This has meant that where universities had established adult education departments for agricultural extension they subsequently began to include general extension programs but the attitude and philosophy involved, one of community service, tended to be the philosophy for the general extension programs as well. Thus there has been a strong attachment in North America to "community development programs".

But despite the historical differences which resulted in different *organisational methods* and different *definitions* of adult education, underlying the two approaches is a deeper question that is often brought to the surface in the form of a debate about whether *education* and *training* can be distinguished from each other.

*British Usage*

One of the most useful statements on the difference between vocational training and liberal education has been put by the Professor of Adult Education at the University of Nottingham (Professor Wiltshire) in the evidence he gave to the Russell Committee.(1) Professor Wiltshire has this to say about the division:

> *"It is commonly held that the vocational/non vocational distinction is false and misleading, that we only con-*

(1) A committee of Enquiry, under the Chairmanship of Lord Russell, was established by the British Government in 1967

*fuse ourselves in trying to make it, and that the concept of 'non-vocational' education is not one which can lead to fruitful discussions or rational policymaking. (I think that it will be found that many of my colleagues in university adult education are of this opinion, and no doubt some of them will represent it to the committee.)*

*The argument is to a considerable extent emotional rather than rational in its origins. Vocational and technical education have certainly been undervalued and neglected in the past, and no doubt we are right in trying to correct this injustice and to concentrate resources upon those types of education which seem likely to contribute towards balancing the budget or increasing the gross national product. But this has bred a feeling of resentment against the over-privileged position which non-vocational education has been accorded in the past and a suspicion that any support for it now is an attempt to re-establish the snobberies of the past; a vestigal relic of the Greek distinction between the education of a free man and that of the slave, or the English distinction between the education of a gentleman and that of the artisan.*

*Insofar as the argument is rational it usually takes the form of an assertion that the vocational/non-vocational distinction cannot in fact be drawn, that there are no "vocational" or "non-vocational" subjects since every subject can be used for either purpose, and that there are no easily distinguishable "vocational" or "non-vocational" purposes since every student is likely to be motivated in some degree by both at once. This is to assert that if differences are not absolute they do not exist: that since there is an infinite range of shades of green between yellow and blue, yellow and blue must be the same colour. It may well be true that there is no sharp dividing line between "vocational" and "non-vocational" subjects (just as it is impossible to say precisely where green ends and blue begins), but it is nonetheless true that the non-vocational significance of such subjects as dentistry*

*and packaging seems remarkably thin compared with that of history or biology. And it may well be true that students' motives (like most human motives) are usually mixed, but there plainly is a difference between the behaviour and attitudes of the 90% vocationally motived student at one end of the continuum and those of the 90% non-vocationally motived student at the other.*

*It is precisely from such differences in motivations that the whole rationale of non-vocational adult education derives. The student whose motivation is primarily non-vocational is usually older; his needs tend to be related to the crises of adulthood rather than those of adolescence or early manhood; he sees the subject as significant to him as a man or citizen rather than as an examinee or a functionary; he adopts the role of student voluntarily; he has to face tasks of unlearning as well as those of learning; his attitude to his fellow students tends to be co-operative rather than competitive; he may be older and richer and more experienced than his tutor; and so on. All of these differences imply and necessitate different methods of organisation, of class structure and of teaching, and all are specific to non-vocational adult education.*

*Non-Vocational Education and Recreation*

*A second basic source of confusion is the common identification of non-vocational adult education with recreation, and perhaps no other single factor is more responsible for the low regard in which non-vocational adult education is frequently held. It is quite widely assumed that education like medicine, must be nasty if it is to do you good, and that, like medicine, it will only be taken if the reward is substantial: thus "real" education is that which is directed towards examinations, qualifications, and academic or vocational advancement. Any education not directed towards such rewards is regarded as "recreation": a harmless pastime,*

*but not useful or examinable and therefore not a fit object for serious educational concern or substantial educational expenditure.*

. . . . . .

*Now it is true that almost all non-vocational adult education is perforce undertaken during leisure, (although it is not therefore education "for" leisure). And it is true that much of it would not be undertaken and persisted in unless it were enjoyed, and may therefore be regarded as "recreation" as opposed to "work". But non-vocational adult education is a special (and somewhat eccentric) way of using leisure and enjoying its use, and it is these special characteristics which are important, which mark it off as a specific educational activity from other enjoyable leisure time occupations. The chief of these is the presence of a conscious attempt to learn which is reciprocated by a conscious attempt to teach which expresses itself in formal teaching/learning situations, that is situations in which there is a mutual acceptance of the role and obligations of the student on the one hand and the tutor on the other. I understand non-vocational adult education to imply a fairly formalised teaching/learning activity of this kind, and it is in this sense that I shall use the term; it seems to me clearly distinguishable from "recreation" or "leisure-time occupation" as these are normally understood. This may seem a narrow view and I certainly would not wish it to be interpreted as imputing a low value to non-educational leisure-time activities, in which the enjoyment of doing rather than the enjoyment of learning is the prime objective. The distinction does not imply a value judgment; but unless we make and maintain this distinction I do not think that we can present a cogent or compelling case for non-vocational adult education. (1)*

(1) Professor H. C. Wiltshire, A Future for Non-Vocational Adult Education, December 1970 Duplicated.

It seems to me that Professor Wiltshire, in this important discussion, highlights some attitudes which help us to understand the nature of the debates about the meaning of adult education which have recently been active in Australia. It has particularly been the case that the attempts to confine the definition to liberal adult education - the traditional definition - has produced a feeling of resentment in those who have been concerned especially with leisure-time courses such as those dealing with the skills that people are interested to acquire in pursuit of their hobbies. It also has more recently been a debate that has arisen in connection with the argument that by restricting the term to liberal adult education the important work done by training officers in industry has been wrongly excluded from the field.

Whatever practical advantages there may be in extending the range of activities embraced by the term "adult education" there remains the difficult problem that once the term is extended to cover vocational training or leisure-time activities it does make more difficult the development of an adequate approach to the teaching skills required. The basic attitudes of enquiry and critical judgment that tend to be the focus of programs of liberal studies are less significant when the courses provided are concerned with the gaining of particular skills.

There has also been, in recent years, a tendency to regard the important function of adult education as being to provide individual adults with the opportunity to express themselves in a "creative way" and to regard academic subject boundaries as obsolete or irrelevant. It is often said that it could be equally important to the development of a person to work out for himself the method of painting a picture or weaving a basket as it is for him to come to understand the way the political system operates or to appreciate the finer qualities of a good novel. And from this the next step is to regard all pieces of knowledge as equal.

This view[1] is a dangerous one for the continuation of an educational attitude in a community. When it goes further and seeks to establish that one person's views are as good as another, or that one set of facts are as good as another, then it denies the very basis of an educational approach which is concerned with the ability to separate the false from the true, to develop a coherent theory which can be applied to a new set of facts in the

(1) The view is examined critically in a private paper given to the author by Professor Trevor Wigney, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

future and in the long run to produce in the person the capacity to discriminate between what is important and what is trivial.

I am aware, of course, that Professor Wiltshire's concern has been to discriminate between "vocational" and "non-vocational" education and that I have tended to equate "non-vocational with "iberal". I admit immediately the theoretical distinction but in practice the alternatives frequently seem to be between a liberal approach and a vocational one. I have never been able to accept in an unqualified way the dictum and vocational training would be the better if it were taught in a liberal way. It seems to me characteristic of the training situation that the student is primarily interested in masterin a certain set of skills as quickly and as effectively as possible. To regard, for example, the objective of a course for radio mechanics as being primarily to search for the truth would, it seems to me, be an impossible way to go about the training of radio mechanics. Such an approach is best left to a course that is not primarily interested in training people how to maintain radios.

*North America Again*

Professor Robert Peers visited America during the mid 1950's and described the adult education scene there, in the book he subsequently wrote, in these terms(1)

> *". . . the outstanding feature of this society is the driving force of individual opportunity. Here is a country of vast material resources, as yet inadequately exploited and therefore offering untold possibilities of personal advancement to the individual who can fit himself to seize the opportunities that are offered to him. Education in general, and adult education in particular, have been tuned to this spirit of individual striving - to the idea that no one, whatever his situation or initial handicaps, should be denied the chance of bettering his position. Against this, and the dangers of extreme individualism, there is a more recent movement which stresses group action and group responsibility within the larger society; and through all this there is a growing consciousness of the need for adjustment to changing conditions, especially on the part of those who are ill-*

(1) Peers, Robert: Adult Education: A Comparative Study, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959.

*equipped to take their place in this evolving mass society, or to understand or cope with its complexities.*

*All of these influences have had their effects on the character and development of adult education in the U.S.A. and account for the variety and uneveness of the provision in different states and in different kinds of communities.(1)"*

Peers goes on to take up the problem of reconciling the definition of adult education as it is used in America with the practice in Great Britain and notes some of the problems which I have pointed to already. He says

*"There is an initial difficulty if one is to attempt any comparison in this field between the United States and Britain. The term "adult education" in our country has come to have a limited meaning because it is normally applied only to non-vocational studies for adults. In the United States, on the other hand, adult education means simply the education of adults through part-time studies of any kind - technical, professional and liberal - and within these fields, theoretical or practical or both. It ranges from the simplest course for illiterates, through instruction in recreation and domestic crafts and vocational and professional courses of all kinds to advanced graduate studies. Indeed, so little is the distinction maintained, that any reference to liberal or humane studies as the essential content of adult education is met in discussion with a certain lack of comprehension; and American educators fail to understand the reasons for the rigid line drawn between vocational and non-vocational adult studies in Britain.(2)"*

Peers is pointing to the same problem in 1956 that I encountered in the United States of 1970 of having a useful discussion about liberal adult education with American colleagues. They see liberal education in terms of subject content and refer to it usually

(1)(2) Peers, R.: Op.Cit.

as "the liberal arts". In fact, I saw very little in the places I visited in North America of any liberal studies programs of magnitude.

Peers goes on, towards the end of his remarks on the American scene, to point to another feature which is of some importance. He comments on the lack in the United States of any "consumer participation in policy making and control" and on the absence of any voluntary organisation which reflects the needs of adult students for adult education. He goes so far as to comment that there is an ". . . absence of . . . any general effort to ensure that what is provided is related to a specific student demand".

I would not go so far as to say that in 1970 there is this peculiar lack. But the method of searching out the student demand is more the method of a market researcher than of the adult education organisation interested in getting feed-back. And yet, ironically, Peers notes that the plan for the development of adult education that was being published at that time by the Adult Education Association of America places

> *"the whole emphasis on community centred adult education, a reflection of the present concern in the United States about the growing complexity of social groupings, the changing character of the local community, and the relative weakness of group action and of the community spirit."*
>
> *"This concern is also reflected in the great vogue which is at present enjoyed by what is known as 'Group Dynamics' the name given to the study of the forces which operate within groups and which help or hinder them in the achievement of common ends, and of the procedures by which they can be made to work more effectively. There is everything to be said for a scientific study of this kind and for the use of the information gained as a guide to social action. Many of the conclusions reached by experiment in the field of group dynamics are, it is true, the common places of democratic practice: for instance, that groups function more effectively when they are agreed upon a common purpose; that a feeling of group responsibility for the attainment of particular ends is more effective than the offer of inducements or the*

*imposition of external pressures; that conclusions reached by group discussion of the relevant facts and considerations are more likely to influence individual behaviour than the mere communication of the facts through lectures or by other means."(1)*

The remarks being made here have a peculiar echo in the United States in 1970 where the current concern is not with group dynamics as such but with an outgrowth from it in the form of *T-Groups* and *Sensitivity Training*. A further development from the essential concern of T-groups and sensitivity training with the proper operation of groups are the *Awareness* and *Encounter Group* programs that have become legion in the United States and are concerned less with the behaviour of the group than with changing the behaviour of the individual through group experience.

In regard to group dynamics (and the same might also be said about some aspects of sensitivity training) Peers goes on to say

*"the tendency is to minimize the importance of knowledge, on the ground that it does not of itself break down obstructive habits or change individual behaviour. 'Role playing' takes the place of serious study or training, conferences which resolve themselves into 'buzz groups' followed by reporting back what must be superficial conclusions are substituted for continuous efforts to communicate the essential facts and to bring out the different and sometimes irreconcilable conclusions to be derived from them. The aim, although it is not always conscious or explicit, appears to be to secure conformity and to train 'leaders' in the methods of achieving it. What is not realised is that adaptation to particular situations, e.g. through role-playing, does not necessarily make for adaptability in general, that is, the ability to deal with new problems and changing situations. Ability of this kind, so urgently needed in our democratic society, can only be achieved through a continuing pursuit of knowledge and the power to use knowledge for the elucidation of situations and the solving of problems. Leadership is not merely a matter of personality and techniques;*

(1) Peers, R. Op. Cit.

*the dangers associated with that kind of leadership should by now be apparent to all; it depends rather on a deepening of knowledge, an ability to see beyond the immediate situation, to understand and appreciate conflicting opinions, and to achieve out of conflict a basis for common action. There are no short cuts to this kind of knowledge or to this kind of leadership."(1)*

It does seem to me that in the America of the 1970s the concern with technique remains paramount and the motivation within adult education is still very strongly the acquisition of credentials which will have some practical value to the student.

Aside from the experiences of Professor Peers it is instructive in looking at the American approach to liberal adult education to look at the way in which one very large extension department of a university, the University of Wisconsin, which formulated the "Wisconsin idea"(2) organises its department. It is, as I said, a very large department. It employs 823 faculty members and it will be readily seen therefore that with a staff of this size and an annual budget of something like 20 million dollars, in a state with a population of four million people, that some departmentalisation will result. The extension service of the University of Wisconsin is arranged in three major areas:

1. Liberal and professional studies
2. Human resource development
3. Economic and environmental development

Under each of these general divisions there are a number of departments. In the division of liberal and professional studies we find the following:

a. Teacher education
b. Programs for lawyers
c. Engineering and science programs
d. Foreign languages, literature and arts
e. Health professions

Human resource development includes six departments namely,

a. Community leadership development
b. Consumer affairs
c. Youth development.

(1) Peers, R. Op. Cit.

(2) That the boundaries of the University should be the boundaries of the State

d. Women's and family living education
e. Government affairs
f. School for workers, social work and co-operatives

And finally in the Division of Economic and Environmental Development we find the following departments:

a. Agricultural production and management
b. Agricultural marketing and utilisation
c. Business and industrial development
d. Community and natural resource development
e. Geological and natural history survey
f. Natural sciences

It seems to me clear from this way of organising the staff of the extension division into departments that the concept of a liberal education is a rather different one from that which is held in Britain or in Australia. There is little in the five departments that are listed in the division that includes liberal studies that one can specifically see as being at the heart of a program of liberal education.

*External Degrees*

One area of education, undertaken by adults, which is included in the term "adult education" in North America but not included in Britain or in Australia is external teaching for university degrees, usually by correspondence.

In Britain and Australia these are regarded as part of the normal function of the university, part of its undergraduate teaching program and therefore not part of the responsibility of the extra-mural division, whatever it may be called.*

Indeed, in Britain this year we have seen the opening of a university, the Open University, which is solely concerned with external teaching for university degrees. Furthermore, the Open University accepts only adult students and does not apply the traditional matriculation yardstick for entry. Yet it is not regarded as part of adult education.

* This usage has, however, recently been challenged in Australia and some adult educationists want to include external teaching for university degrees in "adult education". It is not yet a commonly accepted usage.

In my view it is right not to regard external degree courses as part of adult education. To do so only provides a further dimension that this already overworked term must seek to embrace. And clearly external degrees, if they are to be given a proper validity, must be regarded as being within the mainstream of university activity, different only in method and organisation from normal undergraduate work.

*Continuing Education*

In recent years many adult education agencies, and especially extra-mural departments of universities, have been changing their names at a merry rate. The current fashion is to style them "Continuing Education Centres".

This term, "continuing education", was coined by UNESCO's Paul Lengrand some years ago. The phrase in French is "l'education permanente". The concept which it sought to underline was that education was not a process that could be confined to childhood and adolescence. It was a process that must continue throughout life.

The recent recognition of the rapidity of the growth of knowledge brought an awareness also of the need for constant up-dating, especially in scientific and technological fields. This was another reason for considering education as a continuing activity since a man could not remain educated if he did nothing. He must constantly be educated to keep abreast of new discoveries.

Now adult education agencies have always complained about the marginality of the field. Adult education departments in universities, for example, seem always to be tacked on to the organisation, sometimes with reasonable skill so that the joins are not too visible, sometimes very tenuously so that the work of the extra-mural department enjoys considerably less than full stature in the eyes of the university proper.

The term "continuing education" naturally offered a fresh opportunity to beleaguered extra-mural departments, and indeed other agencies not connected with universities at all, to acquire a new status by adopting the new term. They are to be the providers of the important up-dating courses which make it possible for the educated to stay educated.

But if the concept of continuing education is to mean anything it must embrace the *whole* field - primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, *and* adult education. The term does not

help, therefore, to distinguish adult education as a special field.

*Liberal Education Declines*

I have made comparisons between the American and British scenes and it may seem from what I have said that liberal adult education is weak in America but strong in Britain. I wish this were the case. In fact, in Britain, liberal adult education is declining as a proportion of the total provision.

Many university extra-mural departments have moved away into "extension" work, providing vocational courses of various kinds and refresher courses for graduates rather than the more traditional courses in the university disciplines, but especially in the humanities, for a wide public.

It cannot be denied that there is a great and growing need for the type of courses being provided. It is a pity, however, that in turning to this work the universities have not shown more concern to maintain, even expand, their traditional liberal programs.

One obvious reason for the change lies in the availability of resources. Education today is a costly process and society, represented by governments, responds best to economic arguments, arguments that establish that economic growth is based on a better educated workforce. But such arguments tend to support forms of education that are concerned with man 'as a productive unit' of society rather than man as an individual. Extra-mural departments seeking resources for growth have found it easier to do so in the vocational or quasi-vocational field.

I suspect that there are other reasons also. Courses with a vocational orientation are much easier to organise. The target group of students is easily identified, easily contacted. Often, these days, they come knocking at the door. Frequently they exist in groups already established for professional reasons. Liberal education is an administratively more difficult field to work in. The interested people are harder to identify, more difficult to recruit.

Yet another factor may be that the professional courses can be more easily classified in terms of level, more readily justified to intra-mural colleagues. For the member of an extra-mural department made constantly aware of his marginal status it is comforting to have a program that is easier to identify with the intra-mural work of the university which becomes, each day, more and more concerned with professional training.

## RESIDENTIAL ADULT EDUCATION

Residential adult education is a form of adult education that is relatively undeveloped as yet in Australia although it forms a considerable part of the program of a number of agencies.

In order to understand residential adult education as a specific form of adult education and not simply a variation within a total program it is necessary to look at some of the major types of residential programs that are to be found in other countries. It is convenient to group these in terms of the time-span that the program of residential activity occupies and on this basis one can distinguish at least two major categories which are

(a) Long term residential courses, and
(b) Short term residential courses.

By long term I am referring to courses which run for one to two years, such as are conducted in Great Britain in institutions such as Colleg Harlech or Ruskin College, which provide a type of non-credit program of considerable depth in a range of subjects and thus provide the students with a general education similar to that which they would receive in a university in reading for a degree in arts. This type of residential adult education has been developed in Britain mainly in the liberal studies field. In Scandinavian countries, in a different social and demographic context, such courses have been offered for many years, though somewhat different in character. In North America such institutions do not exist. A number of long erm residential centres exist which have a vocational bias, such as the Crawford Center at Syracuse University, based around Diplomas in Public Administration and there are various degree-granting colleges which are reserved specifically for adult students.

The short term residential programs can be further sub-divided into at least three categories

(a) Those that have a complete course structure and last,say, four to six weeks.

(b) Short term unit courses of one to two weeks, which supply a concentrated period of study for students who are involved in study of the subject in other institutions, or privately.

(c) Brief residential experiences of two to three days which are usually based around a topic theme or are considered as supplementary to a program of studies which is being conducted within the normal weekly class program.

In Australia the residential idea was pioneered by the W.E.A. of N.S.W. which constructed the first residential facility in Australia in 1925 at Newport, N.S.W. This was a primitive and small scale building where students typically spent a weekend in something of a "camp style" atmosphere following an intensive program of lectures and discussions around a particular theme.

With the developments in adult education after World War II, and in particular with the establishment of the University of New England which had access to extensive residential facilities which were vacant during the university vacations, a different style of residential school was developed. At New England, and at other places too, courses of one to two weeks were offered taking a fairly concentrated look at a particular subject or a particular aspect of a subject. Some of these courses - especially those developed by the University of New England - had vocational application although they were not of a "credit" type. Others have been established by other authorities using tertiary institution residential facilities or, in some cases, (as in Victoria), guest houses, particularly during the off season. These have tended to be of a "vacation" style offering a variety of choices to the students ranging through the field of the arts, and natural history. Residential courses developed by the W.E.A. of N.S.W. and the University of Sydney at Bathurst regularly include also liberal studies conducted with a particular research or project orientation so as to avoid the problem of an indigestable amount of lectures for the students.

In recent years the W.E.A. of South Australia and the Adult Education Board of Tasmania have established residential facilities also.

Developments overseas seemed to me much more advanced than in Australia as is evidenced by the greater number of residential institutions that exist and by the almost universal practice of having these establishments under the control of a resident warden, and sometimes a staff, who are responsible for both the management of the centre and for the devising of the educational activities which go on within it.

It is convenient at this stage to look at the developments in North America separately from those in Great Britain.

*North America*

In North America the growth of residential schools came relatively late considering the extent to which educational institutions in the North American continent had been engaged in adult education during the earlier part of the century. After World War II the growth of residential centres of considerable scale has been rapid and some of the aspects of this development were pointed to by Royce C. Pitkin, President of Goddard College of Vermont, in an essay on residential adult education in 1956.

> *"After formal school, pressures on Americans preclude interruptions for lengthy periods for educational purposes. Hence United States residential programs are either remedial or tied to action or tied to some tangible result".*

Pitkin goes on to suggest:

> *"The tardiness of American educators in recognising the significance of the residential adult school may be due in part to our admiration for big scale enterprise and our desire to be associated with big things. Because a residential school is small it may not attract the attention and support of educational administrators, foundation executives and business managers. Yet to be effective it must be small . . .*
>
> *It would be quite unfortunate if some generous legislature or philanthropist, seeing in the residential adult school a means for a great educational crusade, were to establish a few huge hotel-like structures and call them residential schools. Though such hosteleries might serve usefully as convention centres and meeting places for citizens they would lack the intimate homely characteristics of a genuine educational institution".**

Pitkin had just recently returned from a visit to Scandinavia and Britain and had been greatly influenced by what he saw there of the adult residential school as it existed in 1956. At the time he wrote developments in the United States had begun to assume the characteristic which Pitkin regarded as being unfortunate. In

* Royce C. Pitkin: The Residential School in American Adult Education
CSLEA Notes & Essays #14 (1956)

other words, under the impetus of philanthropic funds a crusade had begun to establish residential schools which were, in fact, "huge hotel-like structures" and which were called "residential schools".

The philanthropist was the W.R. Kellogg Foundation which in 1951 established at Michigan State University at East Lansing the first Kellogg Center for Continuing Education. It was followed in 1956 (at the time Pitkin was writing) by the Athens, Georgia, Center and subsequently a number of such centres have been established in various parts of the United States.

It is undoubtedly the case that the influence of the Kellogg Foundation has been to create a number of centres throughout the United States which are on a very large scale indeed and even though the Kellogg funds were limited to the establishment of nine such centres, similar centres were established by universities and other bodies using the Kellogg Centers as their model.

Typically these centres are very large scale indeed and carry large staffs. One that I visited was the quite well known Center for Continuing Education at Chicago. This centre, though it has a residential capacity of only 118 rooms, operates on a budget of more than one million dollars per annum of which only two hundred thousand dollars is concerned with the provision of the educational program, the remainder being in the physical upkeep of the centre itself.

Without exception these large scale centres are over-burdened with the problem of maintaining their economic viability. Because they are so large they require extensive staffs to run them - particularly the domestic and food preparation staffs - and as a result the management of the centre is constantly pressed by the need to keep the centre full of activity of an economic kind. Many of them accept almost any sort of activity (including banquets and wedding breakfasts). In some of them the dining room not only provides meals for the students in residence but is open to the general public as well. In fact, at the Chicago Center the dining room is so expensive that many of the residential students - even though they are on expense accounts - do not seem to patronize the dining room and thus one finds a very expensive staff of waiters and chefs providing meals principally for non-residents of the centre.

At the very handsome New England Center (the latest of the Kellogg Centers) the dining room deservedly enjoys a reputation in the neighbourhood and it is difficult, even if you are a student, to

obtain a seat at table unless you have booked in advance.

It is difficult, therefore, to regard these centres as being residential schools. They are conference centres and often quite lavish and expensive ones. They do not provide that intimacy and educational atmosphere which is seen by Pitkin, and by many others, as being the important factor in residential adult education.

It is not merely a function of size however. In Canada, at the world famous Banff School of Fine Arts, despite the fact that it is a very large institution, the residential atmosphere is effectively maintained. This is because the centre is in a remote site and is an educational institution in its own right. It maintains continuing courses for a whole variety of students. Though they reside on the Banff campus they each of them operate as a separate unit and every effort is made to see that that group of students does achieve some of the atmosphere that a residential setting offers. The Banff dining room is conducted on less lavish but still very satisfactory lines and the attempt to make each group a social unit is treated seriously and effectively. It seems to me that in the United States the approach to the residential centres has become a conference approach rather than a residential school approach. (1)

*United Kingdom*

The situation in Great Britain is quite different. Though large centres such as Colleg Harlech are to be found these are long term centres where students are in residence for from one to two years following an extensive program. There are, however, many small centres - the optimum size is generally regarded as about 60, 80 at the outside, which provides for two schools to operate concurrently.

The centres are normally in converted buildings, such as stately homes that have been extended by the addition of lecture rooms and sometimes additional bedrooms. They are usually comfortably appointed although few of them have the single study bedroom that is almost universal in the United States. Nevertheless, the wardens of most of the residential centres I visited in Britain agree that were they building afresh they would attempt to provide at least part of the accommodation on a single room basis.

(1) For example, the document outlining the fifteen criteria which guide the Kellogg Foundation in awarding funds includes this statement in the preamble:

"The peculiar characteristics of Continuing Education demand a special type of building which combines in one structure conference rooms, display space, auditoriums, communication systems, duplicating, and distributing equipment, over-night rooming quarters and dining facilities"(my emphasis).

Nevertheless the British colleges are comfortably appointed and every attempt is made to provide good lecture room facilities, common rooms and, typically, a good dining room and a bar. Great emphasis is placed on the importance of having a good dining room and a good chef, one who can operate a range of different menus depending on the nature of the client body or the type of student who happen to be in residence.

Typically they have a warden and a small staff who are responsible for the initiation and supervision of educational activities within the institution though where they are connected to a university the resources of the Department of Adult Education are also available for this purpose. The domestic side of the operation is usually under the control of the domestic burser who is still, nevertheless, subject to the orders of the warden.

Generally speaking the British residential centres are much more economically viable than those in the United States and one does not find them seeking non-educational uses of the building in order to make the building pay.

Naturally, in the United States, because of the large scale of the operation and also because of the typical business-like approach to the running of such centres, one sees a great deal more of business practice being applied in the operation. A good deal of paper work is involved in the running of the centre and a great deal is made of the procedures of planning and evaluating the programs that take place within them.

The "business approach" sometimes reflects a pervasive attitude. For example, at one very large centre, operated by a university, the manager counselled me on the way to go about the establishment of a residential centre. "First of all" he said "you need to decide what sort of use you can obtain of the centre and what charges this market will be prepared to pay. These factors will very much determine what sort of centre you can build and operate."

The approach in Britain, and the one the W.E.A. has used in its planning, would be summed up in a different sort of question:"How can we establish a centre that can be operated at a cost that will exclude as few people as possible for economic reasons."

*Canada*

One of the most interesting residential schools I visited was Quetico Centre in Northern Ontario. This independent centre was

initiated by a young man who had been engaged partly by the iron mines in Antikokan and partly by the city government as a welfare officer for the town. Not far from the small and rather primitive iron mining town was a national park and, on the shores of Lake Eva, a ranger station.

The welfare officer - Cliff McIntosh - learned that the national park authorities were withdrawing from the ranger station base and the plant there, consisting of a number of cottages and sheds, was shortly to become vacant. He made approaches and was successful in obtaining the use of these cottages as the embryo of a residential centre which has subsequently grown into a very beautiful, well-appointed, and very effectively run centre.

Since its establishment in 1958 Quetico Centre has been transformed from the original clutch of houses and warehouse buildings to a modern residential centre including first-rate accommodation in a number of dispersed "cabins" which are centrally heated and contain very well appointed bedrooms each with hand basin but no bath or toilet. Adequate bathrooms are provided on each floor. The teaching centre is very well appointed and equipped and consists of a series of small lecture or seminar rooms and several large meeting rooms where big assemblies can be held. It also has several specialist rooms for such activities as art which are equipped with the necessary sinks and other materials required.

The centre is well supplied with audio-visual aids including video tape recorder and camera. The dining room is well appointed and is attached to a recreation centre which includes a library, a reading room and a small bar and games centre which is currently being expanded to include an all weather swimming pool.

The funds for this development have been recruited from private industry, personal donation, and from government. One of the most important sources of funds in recent times, however, has been from the provision of courses under the Canadian National Manpower Act. Under this Act the centre is responsible for the training of unemployed people who are sent by the government to courses on the care and maintenance and running of heavy equipment (that is bulldozers, graders and the like).

Though these Manpower courses have been a source of financial strength, since they provide a continuous stream of students for whom the government pays the absolute running costs, including a proportion of capital charges, it has given rise to other problems. These students are of a different kind to those normally at work in the centre and as a result tensions have arisen and staff morale

has been affected.

The centre began with the aim of providing courses in the various arts,and in leadership, following the interests of the director the centre subsequently began to offer courses in management studies, and in particular "organisational development". A lot of the support for the centre is now recruited by the director who acts as a consultant throughout Canada on organisational development. Typically, at a time when he is out giving professional advice to organisations, he arranges for the staff of an organisation to come to Quetico Centre for courses concerned with management development.

When it is understood that the centre is relatively isolated (it is 120 miles from any major town and a considerable distance from the large cities of Canada) and it operates in a climate which, for a substantial period of the year, is down to 25°. below zero, it will be recognised that keeping this centre full of students takes a real effort. The fact that it has been able to continue to exist for some 13 years is a tribute to the effective management of the centre by the director, Cliff McIntosh, and his board.

The staff of the centre has been recruited in an interesting way. Typically they have been themselves students on courses provided in the centre and have come to the director and indicated their interest in taking up a position. The director's response, after consultation with colleagues, has been to offer a position in the following terms: "Well, we would like to have you. If you can devise a program which will be adequate to support both your services and the use of the centre then you can come along." Most members of staff have been recruited this way and it seems to have led to a very harmonious team.

Though the centre has the usual problem of maintaining itself financially it does provide courses for considerably lower fees than true cost for students who might otherwise not be able to participate in the centre's activities. Though it faces a continual problem of achieving financial viability it has not forsaken the original concepts on which it was created.

It is probably unique in that such a centre normally would not be able to function without considerable government support and one suspects that its uniqueness will exist for a considerable time. Were too many such centres to be attempted then they would tend to compete for the limited amount of resources that are available.

Undoubtedly this centre has been able to develop despite the unfavourable climate that one would normally expect to work against it mainly due to the dedication of the staff and in particular to the vision and organisational inventiveness of the director, Cliff McIntosh, who began the centre and for whom it has been the fulfilment of a dream.

*Design of Residential Schools*

In the United States, particularly, and in North America generally a good deal of attention has been given to proper design of buildings for residential schools. In the United Kingdom the great majority of residential adult centres have been converted from existing buildings of various types. Many of them are old mansions that have come into the hands of a Local Educational Authority or one of the other organisations providing adult education and they have made a conversion of the building to suit as far as possible the needs of a residential school. As a result the schools in the United Kingdom do not exhibit the same degree of architectural planning as one can see in the North American ventures. Nevertheless, I would hasten to add that in the United Kingdom the conversions are usually very well done and I am sure that were the same sort of resources available there as in North America that similar attention to defining the optimum physical characteristics of residential centres would also be seen.

I have spoken elsewhere of the approach made to the provision of residential adult education in general and, of course, the philosophy is to a very large degree expressed in the buildings. Thus we find in North America residential schools tend to be large scale. They reflect also the American "business approach" to the provision of residential facilities.

Naturally the greater amount of new building in North America has meant that more attention has been paid to setting up the desirable specifications for such centres. Of particular interest in this work has been the attempts to outline the desirable qualities of the actual teaching centres within a residential college. As early as 1958 some specifications were laid down for teaching rooms at the Kellogg Center at East Lansing. They were as follows:

1. Room is large enough to seat 25 people around tables (workshop style) without any suggestion of crowding.

2. Room is large enough to seat 50 people easily in rows of chairs (theatre style), plus table for speaker.

3. Chairs (probably armchairs) are comfortable to sit on for 8 hours a day over a period of several weeks.

4. Temperature is comfortable in all parts of the room despite the amount of sun or temperature outdoors.

5. Ventilation of the room is good even if all occupants are smoking.

6. Front(s) of room (when set theatre style) is especially well lighted without having lights shining in eyes of audience.

7. Doors (with quiet hinges and latches) are at the rear of the room.

8. Windows into room from corridor are capable of being screened with blinds.

9. Corridors outside room are quiet.

10. Partitions between rooms are sound-proofed, so that amplified sound can be used in all adjacent rooms without interference.

11. Partitions between adjacent rooms are moveable so that size can be doubled or tripled.

12. Lighting provides for any new room heads resulting from moving partitions.

13. Ashtrays are conveniently available for all people in rooms.

14. Room can be darkened in broad daylight to show films or slides.

15. Projection screen is mounted on wall.

16. Blackboards are mounted on wall.

17. Display boards are mounted on walls.

18. Apparatus (e.g. maggie bars) is readily available to set up special charts.

19. Electrical outlets are readily available for audio-visual equipment.

20. Enlarged room is capable of seating 100 plus people in rows of chairs theatre style.

21. There is also room for a moveable platform at head of enlarged room.

22. Incidental sound in room is minimised by carpeting, sound-proofed ceiling, draperies, etc.

23. Furniture is attractive, harmonious, durable, easily moveable, and easily storable.

24. Occupants are shielded from direct sunlight without drawing shades or curtains.

25. View from room is appealing but not distracting (especially should not look onto other activities).

26. Room is well lighted throughout.

27. Room contains at least one genuine work of art.

28. Decor of room is attractive to people with discriminating taste, without being extravagantly luxurious.

29. Design of each room (or set of rooms) is distinctive.

30. Atmosphere of room emphasises university level learning (should look as though learning should be interesting and important).(1)

(1) Document prepared by James Harrison, April 21st, 1958.

These specifications clearly indicate the degree of thought that has been given to planning. Nevertheless, since 1958 a good deal more work has been done and, of course, a good deal more experience in the building of new residential facilities has been gained.

One of the important considerations in the layout of lecture room accommodation is the module upon which these are built.

Obviously it is desirable to have a high degree of flexibility in residential teaching centres since they will have to accommodate a variety of program styles and teaching methods. At the Kellogg Center at East Lansing the bulk of the smaller rooms (they have a considerable theatre in the building as well) are set out in modules of 40' x 28', capable of being divided along the centre of the major axis by a folding wall which collapses into a special storage cupboard on one side of the room. Thus the 40' x 28' room can be in turn divided into two rooms with a similar ratio but of smaller size, i.e. 20' x 28'.

The staff at East Lansing feel, after many years of experience, that these modules can be regarded as satisfactory. They provide enough variety to cope with most situations and the type of dividing wall has proved quite adequate in terms of sound-proofing and ease of re-arrangement.

However, more recent structures have tended to adopt an octagonal or hexagonal module for lecture rooms and these are clearly in evidence in the most recent Kellogg Centre at Durham, New Hampshire, in the Western Co-operative College at Saskatoon, and also in the main lecture theatre which has recently been added to the old mansion which forms the nucleus of the residential college at Holly Royde, Manchester.

The argument for an octagonal or hexagonal module is that it provides an area which it is almost impossible to furnish in a stiff regimental style. It also gives the maximum seating with the minimum loss of floor space based on semi-circular mode, and is capable of being arranged in a variety of seating patterns to suit different activities.

The Western Co-operative College as Saskatoon and the new Kellogg Centre at New Hampshire are both entirely patterned on the octagonal/hexagonal module although in New Hampshire it is used in the residential blocks more as an architectural theme than in any really practical sense as the room shape. At Saskatoon, however, it is repeated not only in the teaching facilities but also in the sleeping quarters which are built in octagonal blocks with the

bedrooms surrounding a central octagonal common room.

It seemed to me that this may not be a good idea since the common room would provide a source of noise late at night and the constant traffic to the bedrooms might be an irritation to people in the common room. However, the Director of the centre assured me that after several years of operation he was still convinced that this plan was a good one. It was true, he said, that there was some noise but the great advantage to be gained, he felt, was that the residents of a block were forced to become part of the social unit very quickly. This was important in their situation where the schools were of relatively short duration and it was an educational advantage for the individual students to be brought into a social unit as quickly as possible.

One of the important things in the design of lecture rooms within a residential college is to provide for adequate sound-proofing between rooms and between the rooms themselves and in any associated common room or corridor areas. Since the desire of most residential school managers is to have as flexible an arrangement as possible, moving walls of one type or another are quite common. However, these also provide quite considerable problems in rendering rooms sufficiently isolated acoustically. It is not sufficient to dampen noise between one room and another. It is necessary to have an attenuation from room to room that is sufficient to block out the noise of amplified sound. Most of the accordion-type room dividers which one sees used in the normal dining room situation, even if they have lead membranes, are unsatisfactory in terms of the decibel attenuation through them. The most successful partitioning I have seen consists of moveable walls of a solid timber construction folding into a wall and with an air-seal above and below the walls, since it seems that at this point of joining to the floor and to the ceiling is where the normal partition wall allows a considerable amount of noise to be transferred from one room to another.

On the question of the arrangements for bedrooms the practice in America, almost universally, is to have each bedroom set up as a double room, but in many cases only to use them as singles. The standard in the newer buildings are almost always to first class hotel requirements both in terms of the size of the room and the appointments within them. Many residential centres have a television set in each bedroom and the usual inclusions of the first-class hotel. At the latest Kellogg Center in New Hampshire I even found a sun-lamp in my bathroom!

*The Future of Residential Adult Education in Australia*

The major development of residential adult education in Australia still lies ahead. At the present time the greatest volume of work is carried on in hired residential facilities - usually during the normal vacation period of the tertiary institutions whose facilities are used.

The W.E.A. of N.S.W. has drawn up plans for re-development of its school but lacks, at the moment, the capital necessary to carry out the re-development.

The W.E.A. of South Australia, whose residential school at Goolwa has been enlarged and developed in recent years, is finding it financially difficult to maintain the plant there and is seeking some arrangement with the South Australian Government either to provide financial aid for its maintainenance or to the purchase of the property.

The only other permanent facility owned by a recognised adult education agency is The Grange, in Tasmania, operated by the Adult Education Board of Tasmania. It is a very small establishment.

Clearly one of the great difficulties to be faced in Australia is finding the capital resources needed. There is no history of substantial capital grants to adult education organisations. Large philanthrophic foundations do not seem to exist, and to the extent that they do are not known to have any interest in this sort of work.

The recent establishment by the W.E.A.of N.S.W. of a city adult education centre costing $875,000 and largely financed out of income to be generated by the building in which it is housed may seem to point the way. But a residential school cannot possibly offer the same potential for income that a city building, with large areas of office space to rent, can provide.

Apart from capital resources, however, Australian adult education has another issue of policy to decide. So far residential work in Australia has been seen as just another part of the work of any particular agency. Organisations which have managed to establish residential facilities of their own have made no special provision for staffing them. Program planning, and management as well, has continued to be in the hands of the same staff as is responsible for the other forms of work undertaken.

In North America and Great Britain the almost universal practice is for a residential school to be in the charge of at least a warden, and frequently additional staff, charged with the overall management of the centre and with the supervision of the educational programs that are carried out within it. Residential adult education is seen as a special field requiring its own special expertise and, importantly, the constant thought and attention that is only likely to come from a full-time professional appointment for the purpose of supervising the residential program and the operation of the residential centre.

As far as I am aware Australian adult educationists, and adult education agencies, are rather reluctant to recognise the necessity of such a position.

Naturally such an approach to the organising of residential work introduces a new financial dimension. It means that residential centres can hardly be self-supporting except at very high fees. It is likely, therefore, that the future development of residential adult education centres in Australia will depend not only on substantial capital grants but on continuing financial support over and above the revenue to be gained from the activities of the centre.

WORKERS' EDUCATION

Workers' Education (or Labour Education as it is called in the United States) is a term that is capable of being applied to a number of different types of programs.

Two main approaches can be identified. On the one hand there is the concept that is usually embraced in the term "trade union education" and which involves providing classes related to the skills necessary for effective management of trade unions. Such classes are, naturally, aimed at the active trade union officers or members who have sufficient interest in the trade unions to become involved in their various committees.

The other type of workers' education is that which attempts to provide members of the working class with a general liberal education and is not concerned with trade union studies except insofar as these can become part of a more general liberal approach. It springs from the view that workers' education should have a remedial function, providing members of the working class with the opportunity to remedy the weaknesses in their own formal education which arose from their condition as an under-privileged section of the community.

This dichotomy is one that has constantly worried the W.E.A. both here and overseas, and in general the W.E.A. has tended to regard its function as being the provision of programs of general education for the workers rather than courses in trade union studies or in the practical aspects of trade union organisation.

Of course the distinction is sometimes hard to draw but about one thing we can be sure: in approaching potential students if one seeks them as trade unionists or as workers, and therefore through the trade union organisation, one is likely to get a different response than when providing courses which are designed for workers but open to the general public.

During my tour I looked at a number of different approaches to trade union or workers' education in both categories.

*The U.S.A.*

In the United States I participated in a seminar which was arranged by the Michigan State University at their Kellogg Center at East Lansing for members of a trade union. This was very largely a conference of the members of the trade union examining a number of problems internal to that union. I also visited the headquarters

of the Auto Workers and the AFL-CIO, both of which have large adult education departments with directors in charge of them. Perhaps the comment made to me by the director of the Auto Workers adult education department is significant. He said that in connection with the General Motors strike, which was then operating, the union had ruled that members of the union, in order to receive strike pay, must attend either an adult education class or walk the picket line. When I enquired about the nature of the adult education class I discovered that it was one in which the issues involved in the strike would be explained to them by union officers. Without denying that this is a very useful activity for the union to involve itself in it remains open to question, I believe, that this was an educational activity.

Of course, the normal day to day functioning of the adult education department of the major trade unions in America is not of this sort. For the most part their courses cover issues that are internal to the union and to do with methods of trade union organising, techniques of handling disputes, and sometimes more general courses dealing with the union's relationship to the economy as a whole or to other sections of society.

Of course the industrial relations departments of many universities conduct a variety of courses in the field of what might be known in other places as trade union studies.

*Canada*

In Canada I came in contact with two interesting organisations which might be seen to be working in this general field. The first of them, the Labour College of Canada (College Canadien de Travailleurs) which is involved in providing each year two different programs. One of them is a correspondence program the other is a residential program which is held in co-operation with the University of Montreal. The college provides in its residential program a very substantial course lasting 6 weeks which covers such subjects as economics, history, sociology, political science, trade unionism and industrial relations. The course is by no means the bread and butter courses that one would find in trade union education more generally in Canada and from the descriptions of it it is one of the more interesting of the trade union programs that I encountered.

The people selected to attend the course are provided with scholarships which, in addition to paying for their accommodation and expenses, pays their tuition fees. The scholarships are worth $1,500 each. Some of them are made available by government but in

other cases they are provided by particular trade unions for their own employees or by other means.

The program of correspondence is made up of one unit only consisting of 12 lessons, 3 in economics, 3 in political science and 3 in sociology and also 3 special lessons which deal with the skills of scholarship; how to read a textbook, how to take notes, how to prepare written assignments and also something on elementary statistics particularly how to read graphs and on the basic elements of accounting. This course is undoubtedly providing a useful service to the trade union movement in Canada.

Another activity provided in Canada in this general field, although not specifically trade union, is by Frontier College based on Toronto but not confined to the state of Ontario. Frontier College has been in existence for some 70 years and it is one of the most unusual adult education agencies that I have found. In many ways it adopts the approach that is adopted by Volunteer Aid Abroad in the sense that people with academic skills are encouraged to go into the remote frontiers of Canada in order to make their skills available to the people who could not otherwise be served.

Frontier College is thus providing workers' education at a very basic and remedial level. It is not concerned with trade union education, nor is it concerned with higher level education. Its aim is to make it possible for working people to remedy some of their basic deficiencies and in many cases simply the inability to read and write.

Where the Frontier College is different from any other attempt to provide basic adult education is that it insists that the tutors involved must first of all become accepted parts of the community in which they go to teach. Thus, young men fresh from the university are recruited to go to the remote areas of Canada as "labourer-teachers". The Frontier College arranges for them to be given a job for which they are paid by the particular employer for whom they work. This job will usually be in some unskilled position in a mining or logging camp. After they have learned to be labourers, and their hands are tough, and they have lived among the labourers for some time, then only does Frontier College believe that they will be sufficiently accepted by the group they are working among to be able to teach effectively at this level. At the end of their two year stint as labourer-teachers they return to civilization and are provided with the sum of $1,200 to allow them to re-establish themselves. Very often, of course, they use this money to subsidise their return to university as graduate students.

*The United Kingdom*

In the United Kingdom the provision of courses related to trade union skills has in recent years been brought under the aegis of the trade union congress. The former WETUC (Workers' Education Trade Union Committee) was disbanded and the Trade Union Congress took a greater responsibility for the provision of training courses for trade unionists.

The W.E.A. on the other hand proposed, at the time of the transfer, to continue to work in the field of more general courses. By and large this division of function has been continued and more and more offerings by the W.E.A. have been made. For the most part these consist of "day-release" courses similar to those developed some 20 years ago with the National Union of Mine Workers in the Nottingham area.

The W.E.A. has, in order to service these programs, appointed a number of industrial tutors with special backgrounds which equip them to handle these courses. I observed a number of them at work in Manchester and Nottingham and was greatly impressed by the quality of teaching that was provided. Though in some of the courses a substantial element is still concerned with trade union skills (for example courses in bargaining procedures and aspects of the law affecting trade union activities) they are conducted in a very liberal way. Unfortunately, however, the day-release courses which are of a short duration, such as 10 weeks, provide less opportunity for the inculcation of liberal values than the longer courses of from one to two years. In such longer courses a great deal is achieved in the provision of a general education though it is done through subjects that are likely to be of interest to trade unionists.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to whether the provision of general liberal studies programs can be more effectively provided to workers through an approach to them as workers. In some ways it can be argued, I think, especially in Australia, that the person who requires liberal studies programs does not react to an approach made to him as a worker. It is more likely that he would react to such programs offered to him as a citizen.

Furthermore, the approach via the trade union office, is likely to provide a screen between the educational organisation and the potential student. Clearly the goodwill of the trade union office is desirable and useful but often the central office has not the resources to do more than give moral support.

*The Limitation of Language*

One of the basic problems that seems to exist in dealing with students who have received a minimum of formal education is to make courses in liberal studies at a tertiary level understandable to him. In this regard attention should be paid to the work of Basil Bernstein* of London University who, in connection with the education of children, has pointed to the limiting effect of language. Children, he argues, of working class parents are limited in their capacity to learn because of the limitations in the structure of the language they acquire in the home. Thus when they come to formal education they are less well placed than their middle-class peers to handle the language of the middle-class teacher. It may well be that a similar problem exists in providing academic courses for adults with a minimum of formal education unless it happens to be that in their experience of the world they have been able to acquire some of the ability to handle language of the level required.

There is a tendency among tutors in adult education - most of them are part-timers whose main experience is in teaching in more formal situations and to full-time students - to disregard many of the problems of the adult student and to credit him with rather more of the skills of studentship than is generally the case. This is probably more in evidence in the attempts to provide workers' education than in adult education of other types and may well account for much of the failure to develop satisfactory programs in liberal studies in the trade-union situation. The working man who finds his way into the programs offered to the general public tends to be already prepared for study to some degree through his own efforts at self-education.

It was noticeable among W.E.A. secretaries in Britain that they tended to define the W.E.A.'s basic function there not so much in the traditional phrases ". . . the higher education of working men and women . . ." as in terms of providing the opportunity for more advanced study to "people who left school at the minimum school leaving age."

I am inclined to come back to the view that one of the important first steps with this sort of student is the development in him of those language skills necessary to deal with the more complex and abstract thinking upon which the generalisations of most subject studies depend.

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* For a seminal article by Bernstein see "Social Class and Linguistic Development: A Theory of Social Learning" in HALSEY, FLOOD AND ANDERSON: Education, Economy and Society Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1961.

This is no easy task. It cannot be approached simply by trying to teach in a simplified form of language. That may be part of it,an initial part. But the student will not be well served if his linguistic skills are left in the stunted form in which he joins a course. What is needed is a progressive development of his skill in language going hand in hand with his progress in the subject matter of the discipline he is studying. For unless his ability with language improves, unless he is given an adequate control over the vehicle which must bear his thinking he will find it difficult to cope with the subject matter, at least outside the confines and the shelter of the lecture room.

We have little contact in Australia with literacy programs. But these form a large part of adult education in other countries, even in the United States. A literacy program is rarely successful if its objectives are simply the provision of the language skills. The adult must use these skills, must have a use for them to provide an adequate motivation. Literacy itself, therefore,is a condition that must be achieved along with an extension of knowledge, an extension of the ideas upon which the newly literate can test his skills and through which he will develop them.

One of the dangers for the adult educationist, it seems to me, is the tendency he frequently has to slide away from his role as educator to the role of social worker when dealing with this type of program. Seeing the problems he is prone to work to solve them for the illiterate, rather than the more difficult and time-consuming task, and one not always appreciated by the student, of teaching him the skills to be able to deal with his problems himself.

## THE USE OF TECHNICAL RESOURCES

The profession of adult education overseas, and particularly in North America, has made a greater use of modern technological aids than is the case in Australia. Naturally in North America one would expect this to be so with the emphasis on a business-like running of programs and with the large budgets of most departments. When you are selling courses at a high price the customer likes to feel that he is being handled with the most modern equipment. As a result, in many cases, the people who are telling the teachers how to teach in America are the salesmen of audio-visual equipment. There seems to be a case for a determined effort to be made by the academics of the United States to insist that the technologists build the sort of equipment they want rather than have technicians dreaming up pieces of equipment and then providing courses in how to use them. Nevertheless, there are some impressive developments in the use of technology to make real inroads into the difficult areas of adult education. One of the most interesting I saw was the University of Wisonsin's educational television network.

### *The Educational Telephone Network*

This network went into operation only in 1965 and has grown very rapidly since. In the first year of its operation it had 192 students and is now providing a service to somewhere in the region of 100,000 students throughout the state of Wisconsin. The general concept consists of linking together some 180 locations throughout the state with a telephone line which is really a massive party line. Groups of students can therefore participate in lectures which originate from Madison, or can be originated from any other place in the world, for that matter, by placing a long distance telephone call and plugging it into the party line. Alternatively lectures can be pre-recorded on tape and played over the system as required. At each receiving location where a group of students is assembled the room is equipped with a loud-speaking telephone and slide projector which, if the tutor requires it, is loaded with slide material which has been prepared in advance and sent out to an officer who controls the centre. As the lecturer delivers his lecture the slide projector in each of the centres is triggered by electrical impulses from the central control.

In addition to listening to the lecture the students may join in discussion either with the lecturer or with other students in

other locations.

The system was originally set up on the basis of an interest shown by the medical profession in providing a better coverage for post-graduate medical education and from this idea it was developed by the extension department to cover a large range of instructional and adult education material.

Since 1965 the system has grown rapidly to the point where the telephone network became overloaded and an ingenious method of extending the amount of traffic that could be handled is being employed.

The University of Wisconsin operates a network of FM radio stations throughout the state. One of the technical features of FM broadcasting is its sideband, or multiplexing, or sub-carrier capacity. That is to say, a station, in addition to broadcasting its normal program over its main carrier, can provide at least one and possibly two additional channels on either side of the main channel and modulate these without interference to the normal broadcast program. Under the FCA regulations in the United States the use of sub-carrier is limited to certain types of activity. It was originally made available to FM radio stations to permit them to earn additional income by piping music into restaurants, dental surgeries and similar locations. The important reservation is that the sub-carrier broadcasts should only be capable of being received by special receivers. The University of Wisconsin in a great number of the educational telephone centres, has installed such a receiver. Thus the lecture part of the program can be sent out over the radio and received on a receiver in the room. At the end of the lecture the centres are then switched to the telephone network so that the discussion can be conducted with a two way flow.

This system of providing adult education has a great many obvious advantages. Undoubtedly it is a less effective method of teaching than face to face lectures where the tutor can adjust himself to the audience he sees in front of him. However, it would not be possible to provide students scattered throughout the state with face to face lecturers. Clearly in many courses it would be possible to bring together in one physical location a sufficient number of interested people to make a course viable. And even if it were the case that sufficient people could be brought together it is unlikely that the academic resources could be made available at all of those locations on the particular evenings or times when the students were available. For example, one course that was being broadcast when I was in Wisconsin was for pharmacists. Obviously

there are only a limited number of pharmacists in any small town. In addition, since pharmacists in America usually stay open until late at night, the course had to be broadcast at 11 p.m., a time when it may have been difficult to have obtained university extension staff to lecture to them.

In addition, the peculiar qualities of the ETN network make it possible to bring in tutors from a great distance by placing a long distance phone call. Thus it is possible to bring to the students, at least occasionally, experts in particular fields that may not be readily available in their own area.

Clearly this type of provision has potential for a state like NSW or any Australian state where distance and a sparse population in relation to geographical area are a constant problem in making adult education resources available outside the main urban centres.

Wisconsin has been particularly concerned to explore and exploit all of the new technological developments that can be made to work for adult education. One research project that is currently underway there is concerned with the future use of the satellite for the transmission of educational programs and the problems that are likely to surround that sort of activity.

*Video Tape Recorders*

Now that video tape recorders are becoming more readily available in cheaper and more portable forms their use in adult education is increasing overseas. In North America they seemed to be used largely as a direct teaching aid in courses in which some particular skill was being imparted which the student could more readily monitor by seeing himself. For example, in role-playing, which is used a good deal in management training (and in trade union education), the video tape recorder is used to show the participants how they performed whilst giving them detailed criticism of that performance.

In Britain the video tape record was also much in evidence. Even quite small residential and non-residential centres were often equipped with one. But in Britain one of the major purposes is to record from air programs broadcast by the Further Education Service of the BBC.

The BBC strongly encourages the recording of its further education television and radio programs and goes to some pains to assist educational institutions to do this. Booklets giving helpful advice are published by the BBC and the recording and storing of

programs is permitted, and encouraged. They may be legitimately stored and re-used for a year.

This arrangement has considerable advantages for both the BBC and the educational institutions. On the BBC side programming is easier since the time of the broadcast becomes largely irrelevant, the broadcast being, directed mainly towards off air recording rather than live viewing. From the point of view of the educational institution timetabling is facilitated and lecturers now have the opportunity to preview material and integrate it more thoroughly into their own teaching program.

## CO-OPERATION BETWEEN AGENCIES

All over the world a concern is expressed, especially by the administrators of public funds, that where a number of agencies are working in the field of adult education there should be some attempt at co-ordination and co-operation so that "there will not be unnecessary duplication". It has always seemed to me that it is usually very difficult to provide unnecessary duplication of educational programs. Clearly if more than one agency can provide and obtain students to participate in courses in the same subject fields and of the same level then this simply means that the provision was in fact necessary in the first place. The natural control over "unnecessary duplication" rests in the voluntary nature of adult education which prevents, as it were, an over-provision.

Nevertheless, professional adult educators themselves are constantly concerned with the need to provide means of co-ordinating and co-operating one with each other. This arises first of all from the need to avoid clashes in timetabling of activities appealing to like interests, thus making it impossible to provide any effectively. The second concern is that the general public wishing to participate in adult education may have somewhere to go in order to find out, in general terms, what is available and to which agency they should go in order to have their needs satisfied.

Despite all the talk, however, there is very little that I saw that was effectively doing either of these things. I shall report briefly on the various organisations that I visited to give some idea of the different approaches that have been made and the degree of success they have enjoyed.

*The Adult Education Council of Greater Chicago*

This organisation sprang, apparently, not out of the need to co-ordinate the activities of different agencies so much as a feeling among the representatives of a number of protestant churches, concerned with the growing strength of the repressive Klu Klux Klan, that there was a need to establish some sort of program in the field of social and public affairs which would foster a greater awareness and knowledge among people of matters of public concern. Thus was created the Chicago Forum Council which brought to Chicago a number of famous speakers such as Bertrand Russell, and many other personalities to address meetings of local citizens. In 1928 the Forum Council merged with the Adult Education Conference and became the Adult Education Council of Chicago and thus added to its role of providing a panel of speakers the additional role of becoming a clearing house for information about the various

activities of the adult educational agencies that were then at work.

It was, therefore, to some extent a providing body itself and in addition to its lecture program or its lecture panel, which it made available to other organisations, it has traditionally provided some activities in the cultural sphere by bringing to Chicago renowned musicians and opera stars to give recitals.

At the present time the Adult Education Council still maintains its panel of lecturers but rather than organise the public lectures itself it produces a booklet in which it lists a panel of speakers and it acts as a mediator in arranging for these people to come to Chicago and speak under the auspices of other agencies.

One of its interesting activities is to provide a directory of adult education. It publishes and distributes 15,000 copies of this directory to people who have asked to receive it and it finances this out of the funds that are paid to it through membership fees and in other ways. It publishes a similar directory confined to activities within the arts and in this case the cost of the publication is met through the payments made by the various providers of concerts and lecture series in the arts for a listing rather than out of the revenue of the council itself.

It also promotes adult education in a general way through the preparation of radio scripts which it arranges to broadcast through existing radio stations.

It maintains a list, and arranges for its distribution, of people who are prepared to talk about the work of their own adult education agencies to other organisations who are interested in having guest speakers.

Thus it can be seen operating still as a clearing house of information about adult education in Chicago rather than as a co-ordinating council. It in fact exercises no control over the agencies and apart from publishing their programs it provides no real meeting ground for the agencies at a program planning stage so as to avoid overlap.

One noticeable feature apparent from the publications of the Chicago Council is the extent to which in this locality small volunteer groups are providing adult education programs alongside the larger established agencies.

*New York Adult Education Council*

I also visited the New York Adult Education Council which has been in existence for some 30 years and lists some 1,000 institutions as affiliated to it. The objective of the organisation originally, apparently, was the broad one of furthering public knowledge about the development of adult education and thus extending the range of opportunities available to people. Thus its role was originally seen as providing a clearing house of information also. More recently it has come to have as well the objective of an exchange of professional experience among those who are working in the field. Originally the Council maintained a counselling service to advise students who telephoned, or called, where they might seek courses to suit their particular interest and needs. This service no longer operates.

The council has in recent years been re-examining its role and there appears to be some tension within the organisation. The new members are critical of the fact that the council's activities are not action-based and are seeking to get the council to sponsor particular issues and projects within adult education. It seemed to me that, like so many other organisations of this type in adult education, it incorporates such a wide range of participants that the interests of the individual participants is diffused and it becomes more difficult therefore to get people to involve themselves in particular programs because they are not seen as especially relevant to their interests.

There also seems to be some tendency for a professional.v. non-professional polarisation of attitudes, which again is typical enough of adult education in other parts of the world. It is commonly met in other fields also, such as social work, where the activity is in transition from a voluntary base to a more institutional one.

Probably one of the frustrating factors in the New York situation is the fact that the various agencies are not officially represented as such on the council although individual members who work with them may be members. This means that many of the decisions of the council, which require action from the agencies, are simply not taken up.

*The Adult Education Association of the U.S.A.*

The Adult Education Association of the USA is a large organisation with substantial membership. Qualification for membership is simply an interest in adult education and it thus encompasses a wide

range of interests within its membership as seems consistent with the conception of adult education current in the U.S.

Nevertheless, its focus, in terms of activities and publications, tends to be in the areas of interest to professionals in adult education. To some extent there seems to be a grouping within the Association of people with like interests. For example, in a conference with a general theme professors of adult education might well meet in a separate syndicate, deans of university extension in another and so on.

The Association therefore acts as a clearing house for professional information in a substantial way and sometimes as a lobbyist for the interests of adult education rather than as a co-ordinating body in any sense. For example, when I was in Washington the government had just announced a cut in its education vote and one of the proposals for saving money was to close down the adult education clearing house of ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center). Seeing this as a blow to adult education in general the A.E.A. officials were very active in trying to get the U.S. Office of Education to reconsider this proposal.

One aspect of the Association's activities which made me feel critical was the conference I attended at Atlanta, Georgia. The value of conferences is always open to challenge and one must look to the program and organisation of any particular conference in order to establish its merit. It was difficult for me, as a foreigner, to make that sort of judgment though I did have the impression that the program provided very little opportunity for examination of problems in its planned sessions - though a good deal of discussion went on outside the meeting rooms.

What disturbed me most was the expenditure lavished on the conference. It was held at a highly rated convention hotel - The Regency Hyatt House - and though many of the 1500 delegates did not stay there those who did would be paying between US$30 and US$40 per night for a room, without meals. I calculated, very roughly, that the conference would have cost of the order of US$1.5 million and most of this would come out of the budgets of adult education agencies. I found it difficult to see how this sort of expenditure could be justified in terms of the contribution made to adult education compared, say, with spending it on the provision of programs.

*The Canadian Association of Adult Education (CAAE)*

The Canadian Association of Adult Education appears to have been going through a period of re-appraisal and adjustment in recent times and when I visited it was in the process of re-organisation. As with Australian national associations it has the problem of state-federal relationships to contend with, and the problem of vast distances. This seems to point to the need to have any such organisation operating at the state and local level and thus providing members with reasonable contact, combining at the national level for activities which are on a national scale.

During my stay in one Canadian provincial capital I attended a meeting of an informal committee which was seeking to work out the blueprint of a local organisation which would embrace the membership of the CAAE in that area as well as that of several other organisations which were also working in the field.

I felt that the discussions revealed an important problem which is common to organisations of this type, perhaps to all voluntary bodies. It was clear that the CAAE, whose membership covered a wide range of interests, had been having difficulty in getting members to participate - to attend meetings and local conferences, even to renew membership. The more limited, special purpose organisations, however, whose members were drawn from a particular area of adult education and thus shared many common interests and common problems, were functioning more effectively. As one representative from such a group put it. "Why should we link up with you? You (i.e. CAAE) are a bunch of losers. We have no difficulty getting people to attend our meetings. We have plenty to do. If we link up our members may not be as interested in listening to other people's problems."

*Institut d'Education aux Adultes (ICEA)*

The Canadian Institute of Adult Education (that is, the one dealing with the French-speaking part of Canada) is, from my observation, the most effective body of this kind that I visited during my tour apart from the National Institute of Adult Education in Great Britain.

The institute was founded in 1946 and in 1956 obtained a Canadian charter (it was originally chartered only in the province of Quebec). It has a total staff of 14 which includes 3 research workers who work on projects which provide either a general service to members or, in some cases, a particular service to members

or member organisations who arrange to pay for the particular piece of research they want carried out. The Institute is financed by grants from the Canadian government and from the government of Quebec and to an extent much greater than any other similar organisation I have encountered elsewhere. Approximately two thirds of the $140,000 income of the association is derived from the government and the remainder comes from membership and particularly from organisational membership. The aims of the institute are

a. To organise and represent, both in Canada and abroad, the French speaking section of Canadian adult education.

b. To carry out, to stimulate, and to co-ordinate research and study in the field of adult education.

c. To act as a clearing house in the sense of compiling and publishing papers on the techniques of adult education and other relevant technical information for the benefit of members.

d. To assist in the training of adult educators to facilitate communication between the people engaged in the work of adult education.

e. To co-operate with both individuals engaged in a professional capacity in the field and also with the professional associations or groups that are working in the field.

The ICEA is not a co-ordinating body in the sense that I spoke of it in the beginning of this discussion. But in terms of the functions described in its charter it does seem to be working at a more effective level than most of the other organisations I have mentioned - though my own lack of facility in French may have made it less easy for me to judge the organisation.

It is, of course, financed more adequately than most similar organisations and this, I gather, is largely due to the political forces which exist in Canada in relation to French Canadian institutions.

However much of its success probably stems also from the fact that the major force in the government of the organisation is the representatives of the various organisations which are members. This means that policies thrashed out by ICEA are likely to be those upon which the various organisations have been able to agree rather than, in most other similar organisations, policies established by a body of individuals without regard to the practicability of

getting the organisations ultimately responsible for putting policy into practice to agree.

*The National Institute of Adult Education (England & Wales)*

The National Institute of Adult Education is another example of a successful organisation. It is primarily a clearing house for information and is based on organisational membership. Though not lavishly financed it nevertheless manages to gather enough income from its members and from the government to provide a reasonable full-time staff and to publish regularly a journal and ad hoc publications which serve the professional interests of adult educationists while at the same time engaging the interests of organisations.

It has been active in undertaking important pieces of research, or encouraging others to undertake such research with a view to its publication by the NIAE.

It probably owes a great deal of its strength and its development to its Secretary for many years, Dr. E.M. Hutchinson, O.B.E.. Dr. Hutchison has just retired and it will be interesting to see whether the Institute can continue to prosper without his leadership. Much will depend on the quality of his successor.

Clearly the NIAE has exhibited a great deal of skill in putting forward policy proposals since it does not appear to have estranged the various agencies though specific policy proposals must, in some cases, have been in the interests of some agencies rather than others - or at least to be more favourable to some.

*Summing Up*

It did not seem to me in my travels that there was any notable example of a 'co-ordinating body' for adult education which was operating successfully. The organisations I have mentioned have a very different function. In all the cases where I heard of co-ordinating committees which had been established in particular geographical areas to attempt to co-ordinate the activities of several agencies it was a story of failure, the committees quickly falling into disuse.

It seems that any co-ordinating committee needs substantial power if it is to have any effect. If it has such power then it is prone to erode the dynamic in the various agencies and, therefore, to cancel out any of the benefits that it was likely to achieve through the elimination of 'unnecessary duplication'.

## ADULT EDUCATION AT A DISTANCE

When I left Australia I was interested to observe, both in North America and in Great Britain, any examples that were to be found of systems of adult education geared to the needs of students who were unable to attend class programs either because of their geographical isolation or because of other factors which prevented them from engaging in a normal face-to-face teaching situation.

In New South Wales the University of Sydney provides a discussion group program through which small groups of people are able to follow a great range of courses in the liberal studies very largely at their own pace but with the constant guidance of a corresponding tutor. The lectures are prepared in written form and sent out to the groups along with a library of books and, where relevant, other material such as gramaphone records, slides, or prints. The Workers' Educational Association of N.S.W. is responsible for a program of a similar kind, developed in the University of Sydney, called Educational Kits. The Kits are very much like the discussion group program but the method of group learning is by doing things together rather than by discussion.

Unfortunately I could find nothing in North America or Britain which closely paralleled this type of teaching at a distance. I was able to talk to the administrators of a number of the correspondence programs in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. The North American programs were mainly traditional correspondence courses in which the individual student received written notes and completed assignments which were returned for correction and comment. For the most part, in North America, these programs were directed towards university degrees or some other form of "credit".

I have already described the operation of the Educational Telephone Network in Wisconsin which is a very effective method of teaching at a distance but one that depends on considerable capital expenditure to initiate.

Apart from this I encountered two programs which were based not on individual student response and not on credit courses. These were the Great Decisions Program and the Great Books Program. Both of them are of interest although as distinct from the programs in N.S.W. they depend on the group's own activities, based around prepared material. There is no corresponding tutor who helps the group to overcome any difficulties encountered and ensures, from regular reports, that the group is making the best use of the material provided.

*The Great Decisions Program*

The Great Decisions Discussion Groups are impressive for the number of people that they manage to involve entirely through voluntary activity. In and around Washington some 2,000 people are involved in groups organised, in the main, through a voluntary committee headed by an enthusiastic voluntary worker.

The program of the Great Decisions is directed towards the expression of attitudes by members of the public about specific issues of foreign policy. Attention is directed to these by sets of discussion material which are sold to the groups. The groups are encouraged to discuss the material provided and try to reach some sort of position themselves on the issues and then to make their views know to their local politicians by filling out ballots which give the details of the group's views on particular public issues.

The thrust of the program, therefore, is towards people forming views, after discussion about specific current issues and conveying these to their democratically elected representatives. This is clearly within the American tradition of "Action Oriented Education and Grassroots Democracy". The question which arises in the mind of an observer from my own background is whether, by taking issues in isolation in this way, the effect of the program is to destroy any tendency for a political philosophy to be developed. The program material, and the nature of the actual activity itself, does not direct people towards building up a general and theoretical view of politics and political events into which to fit their day to day experience, a political position from which to come to judgments on particular issues in the future.

*The Great Books Program*

The Great Books Program has more potential for a liberal education than many of the other activities that I saw in North America.

The Great Books Program has been in operation in the United States, and in Canada, for about 20 years and was originally begun with a grant(1) from the Ford Foundation which helped with the setting up of the scheme. It now operates solely on the basis of income from the Kits, and the books that it sells and the fees that it charges for training sessions for group leaders. It continues to receive minor philanthropic grants and donations from individuals. In 1968 the program had 13,000 groups at work.

(1) The Ford Foundation Grant was terminated about ten years ago.

The method used, ideally, is that when groups are formed they come under the charge of two co-leaders who are trained by the Great Books Program staff in the function of leading groups. A great many of these groups are directed towards children and operate in association with a school. Often they are staffed by leadership teams that consists both of teachers and of parents. Adult groups, however, may obtain material without necessarily involving themselves in the leader training program. The foundation, with some justification, regards these as less satisfactory than where the groups operate with trained leaders.

The problem in the adult field is that it is uneconomical to operate a training course for co-leaders unless there are about 30 participants. This means that there must be 15 groups about to form within one geographical area. It is only rarely that such a large number of groups is initiated in one area at the same time and thus provide the motivation for people to undertake the leader's course.

Since this problem has proved intransigent the Great Books Foundation has prepared a manual of instruction in some detail. This permits adult groups to appoint their own, untrained, leaders who, working from the manual, endeavour to direct the group. The reading material included in the Great Books Program consists of specially printed paperback editions of a number of books chosen because of the importance of the material they contain. They are all books, or parts of books, that have influenced man's view of himself and of the world around him and have come to be regarded as the yardsticks against which other books may be evaluated. They are, therefore, books which, both in terms of their intellectual content and their style, are regarded as classics. But despite the fact that the books are chosen for their content the whole thrust of the leadership program, and the manuals is the skills of being able to read critically, to be articulate in discussion, and to be able to listen intelligently to what others have to say. Here again, therefore, as in other parts of the American adult education scene, the stress tends to be on the process rather than on the content.

Generally groups consist of 15 to 18 adults, and they are kept as nearly balanced as possible between men and women. They meet every two weeks during the course of a single program. The leaders, either under the influence of their training course or because they are following the written instructions in their manual, are required to read the material at least twice in order to get a thorough grasp of it. Then they meet, that is the two

co-leaders meet, to discuss the material and to set up a number of basic questions which they can then put to the group in order to draw it out and have members express their own views on the basic questions. The co-leaders are encouraged to make these questions"talking points" about which they themselves may not have a final answer. It is felt that this is likely to ensure that the questions are significant ones and, therefore, lead to fruitful discussion.

The co-leaders prepare, alongside each basic question, a group of "follow-up questions" to use when they find that the basic question submitted to the group is either misunderstood or produces no adequate answer. This is to ensure that the lack of response is not due to a failure in technique (that is a failure to formulate their question in the proper way). If it is they can endeavour to make amends by a group of subsiduary questions which will lead discussion back to the main theme.

It was interesting to note that the emphasis in the Great Books Program was to put people into a situation of making rational judgments. There was a strong emphasis on logical thinking and, therefore, contrary to the strong movement in America today towards sensitivity training and similar methods where emotion rather than intellect is emphasised. The Director of the program, with whom I spoke, said that this step had been taken deliberately and not just by accident. The method used pre-dated the growth of T-groups and sensitivity training, but at an early stage they were urged by people who had been trained in group dynamics to include in their training sessions for leaders discussions about the nature of group dynamics. The staff of Great Books Program, after examining the proposal, came to the conclusion that to include such material in the course would divert attention from the real purpose of producing within the group the ability to think critically and rationally. It might tend to produce, it was felt, in the short training sessions that could be offered, only half-baked group dynamicists and, therefore, people who were potentially capable of doing more damage than good in their subsequent work as leaders.

In practice, he said, the people who become effective co-leaders, though they may not have a theoretical knowledge of group dynamics, do have a natural ability to deal with the problems that arise in a group and to get a group working in an effective way.