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REPORT  
OF  
THE

CABE COMMITTEE  
ON  
POLICY

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
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## Chapter 2

### OVERVIEW

2.1 In its review of NPE, the NPERC was avowedly guided by the following principal concerns:

- i) Equity and social justice
- ii) Decentralisation of educational management at all levels
- iii) Inculcation of values indispensable for creation of an enlightened and humane society
- v) Empowerment for work.

2.2 These concerns are unexceptionable and are largely in consonance with NPE. However, we feel that the concept of participative educational order as outlined by the NPERC was rather restrictive. The NPERC had rightly underlined the importance of involving educationists, teachers and educational institutions not only in educational improvement but also in the overall process of development. However, the concept of participatory educational order should go beyond involvement of educational institutions and should extend to the community itself. NPE had enunciated that local communities, through appropriate bodies, would be assigned a major role in the programme of school improvement. The POA had elaborated some of the mechanisms for enlisting people's participation in achieving UEE such as Village Education Committee and Micro-planning. The TLCs have demonstrated the efficacy and the immense potential of community mobilisation for achieving educational goals. People's participation in education -- particularly elementary education and adult literacy -- should be in the form of informed facilitation of achievement of educational goals, and through a well formulated system of overseeing the laxities and under-performance of the system.

2.3 The NPERC made it explicit that much of what was contained in its report was dealt with by many committees and commissions; however, many of the ideas and concepts had remained on paper without being translated into action and, therefore, its effort was largely one of advising on possible alternative modalities. More specifically in regard to roles, goals and values in education, it acknowledged that it was in basic agreement with the NPE perspective and thrust and that it had only elaborated on certain "key result areas" that did not receive adequate ground level priority. Consequently only a few of the recommendations of the NPERC have policy implications. After a careful consideration of the recommendations of the NPERC as well as developments since NPE, we have come to the conclusion that while very little of policy requires reformulation the POA needs to be revised considerably. In the body of the report we have indicated which of the recommendations of the NPERC need to

be taken into account for the revision of the POA.

2.4 Of the few recommendations of the NPERC, which have policy implications, the following represent major departures from NPE:

- i) Enlarging the scope of Article 45 of the Constitution so as to cover ECCE (R.No.104).
- ii) Making the right to education a fundamental right (R.No.145).
- iii) Non-Formal Education (NFE): NPE suggested a large and systematic programme of NFE for children who cannot attend whole-day schools. The NPERC, however, opined that UEE is better achieved by a single system of non-formalised school and that a separate programme of NFE is not desirable [R.Nos.152(c), 153-155, 162-165, 170].
- iv) Adult Education : The NPERC diluted the emphasis on adult literacy and was sceptical of the "Ernakulam Experiment" (R.Nos.178, 180, 182 & 185).
- v) Vocationalisation : Both NPE and the NPERC held vocationalisation of secondary education to be crucial; however, NPE envisaged vocational education to be a distinct stream while the NPERC felt that dichotomy between academic and vocational streams was not desirable and that a core component of vocationalisation should be part of the curriculum for all students at the secondary stage. Further, according to NPE, vocational courses should ordinarily be provided at the +2 stage; however the NPERC suggested an integrated design of vocational education to be operated for classes IX to XII (R.Nos.188 & 189).
- vi) Navodaya Schools : The NPERC suggested three alternatives on Navodaya Schools all of which involved a major modification of the scheme (R.No.103).
- vii) National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) : The NPERC did not consider it desirable to set up a national level super body to co-ordinate the functioning of various bodies in the field of education like the UGC,, ICAR, AICTE, ICME, etc. It felt that two committees --- one of the ministers concerned and the other of secretaries -- would do (R.No. 219).

2.5 For reasons which are spelt out in the body of the Report we suggest reformulation of policy only in regard to Vocational Education, NCHE and AICTE. While we do favour retention of the present policy formulation in regard to a distinct stream for vocational education at the +2 stage, we find the idea of a core vocational course attractive. Generic vocational courses which cut across various occupational fields

and which are primarily non-occupation specific have many potential benefits. We are also in agreement with the view of the NPERC in regard to NCHE. We are of the view that it is necessary to amend the AICTE Act so that the role of AICTE is akin to that of the UGC. To that extent para 6.19 of NPE requires modification.

2.6 While we are in full agreement with the strategies envisaged by NPE/POA for achieving UEE and strongly advocate the operationalisation on a large scale of important components like the Village Education Committee, Participatory Micro-Planning and School Mapping, we recommend reformulation of para 5.12 of NPE which laid down the targets for achieving UPE and UEE. We have indicated in the report the important elements of the strategies for achieving UEE; the NPE/POA should be revised to suitably incorporate these elements.

2.7 Another area which requires policy concentration is secondary education. While UEE in totality is still an elusive goal and much ground has to be covered, the considerable investment the Centre and States made to promote elementary education has the inevitable impact on the demand for secondary education. A significant secondary consequence of the total literacy campaigns has been a further boost in the demand for elementary education as well as secondary education. We feel, therefore, that while UEE and adult literacy should continue to have an overriding priority, the time has come to bring about a planned expansion of secondary education facilities all over the country. Removal of disparities and equalisation of educational opportunities should inform such an expansion. It is because of this perception that we decided to make a departure from the structure of the NPERC report and devote a separate chapter on secondary education. We urge that the policy be re-formulated to bring about the new initiatives that are required in secondary education.

## Chapter 3

### EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S EQUALITY

3.1 The NPERC considered women's education to be a vital component of the overall strategy of securing equity and social justice in education. It rightly addressed the issue of women's education with reference to the special existential problems of women -- such as the prevailing cultural norms of gender behaviour and the perceived domestic and reproductive roles of women which restrict the access of women to education. The NPERC strongly advocated intervention on behalf of women by the State in all its manifestations -- the Central Government, the State Governemnts and the Local Bodies. The NPERC sought to differentiate its perspective from that of the NPE by contending that the NPE seemingly construed that education alone was an agent of basic change in the status of women, the thrust of NPE lay in the intervention within the education system and that NPE did not adequately address socio-economic and cultural constraints that were outside the school system and had a direct bearing on education. In essence, the NPERC's perspective is very much in tune with what NPE envisaged in regard to women's education. Paras 4.2 and 4.3 of NPE are very strong statements on the interventionist and empowering role of education. Inter alia, they emphasise the provision of special support services and removal of factors which result in discrimination against women at all levels of education. There is nothing in them to be susceptible of the interpretation which NPERC had made.

3.2 The recommendations of the NPERC mainly relate to the logistics of implementation. Most of them, such as those relating to ECCE, availability of schooling, regional disparities, content of education and the gender bias, training of teachers, vocational education, and adult education are also reflected in the recommendations contained in the other chapters of the NPERC's Report dealing with these subjects. Our views on such recommendations are presented in the corresponding chapters. We present here our views only on those of the recommendations which are not treated elsewhere in the report of the NPERC.

3.3 R.Nos. 1 to 5 bring out the nexus between girls' schooling and access to water, fuel and fodder. The suggestion is that this nexus should inform educational planning and that the Department of Education should co-ordinate with other departments with a view to bringing about an improvement in the access of women to education. The criticality of the nexus highlighted by the NPERC cannot be exaggerated; however, the co-ordinating role is better discharged by the Department of Women and Child Development and the Planning Commission at the Centre, the corresponding agencies at the State level, and the agencies responsible for integrated planning and development at the district and sub-district level. It would not be realistic to expect the education department alone, whether at the Centre or in the States, to play the lead role for ensuring that women's

development occurs in a holistic manner. The NPERC's recommendations in regard to the gender bias in curriculum and textbooks (R.Nos.17 to 20), media (R.Nos.21 to 27), women's studies (R.Nos.41 to 48) and representation of women in educational hierarchy (R.Nos.49 to 52) are very much in keeping with the spirit of the NPE/POA. R.Nos.53 to 57 endorse the Mahila Samakhya approach which is a product of the NPE.

3.4 R.Nos.58 to 62 call for earmarking of resources for women's education not only in the allocations of elementary, secondary, vocational and higher education but also in the Special Component Plan (SCP) for SCs and the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for STs. However, there is a fundamental difference between SC/ST problems and the women's question. The problem of women's education cuts across caste and regional barriers. Therefore, while women's participation in education should be closely monitored and particular attention paid to remove the barriers impeding such participation, the earmarking of funds may not be administratively feasible.

3.5 To sum up, we are of the view that while the NPERC had rightly reiterated the importance of women's education, the NPE policy frame is adequate and the POA should be revised to take into account the recommendations of the NPERC.

## Chapter 4

### EDUCATION OF THE SCs/STs AND OTHER EDUCATIONALLY BACKWARD SECTIONS

#### NPERC Perspective

4.1 In keeping with its philosophic approach to the relationship between education and socio-economic development, the NPERC expressed the view that upliftment of SCs and STs should not be an isolated activity in individual departments but instead should be part of an "equity" package. Reforms in education should not be isolated phenomena but part of an all-round reform in all related areas. The NPERC was of the view that the participation of the weaker sections in educational process will be a far cry unless they were put in possession of means of production and livelihood through measures such as land reforms, meaningfully provided with essentials of life such as fuel, fodder and water, and assured of fair wages. While the existential dilemma highlighted by the NPERC is valid, the basic question is how to operationalise the equity package. In concrete operational terms the NPERC does not propose any departure from NPE/POA or come out with new strategies or measures different from those in operation. The NPERC had reviewed in detail the different schemes and activities and offered suggestions for improving their effectiveness.

#### Planning and Management

4.2 The point implied in the NPERC report that there is a two way relationship between education and socio-economic change is valid. It needs to be stressed that the District Collectors and all the agencies and personnel dealing with development in the districts need to be sensitised to the inter-relationships amongst the various programmes designed for the socio-economic amelioration of weaker sections. Another dimension that is critical for the delivery of educational services is the empowerment of local communities. To a certain extent, empowerment is promoted by a strong Panchayati Raj system, particularly at the village level. However, it should be ensured that weaker sections have an effective say on the functioning of these institutions. Experience with Mahila Samakhya has adumbrated the possibility of organising women's groups who are articulate and demand accountability of the educational system. Such organisations, when they take root, can ensure that the various programmes and activities are really accountable to the community -- a denouement which would make the delivery systems more effective.

4.3 The NPERC rightly highlighted the need for predicating the choice of strategies on the need profiles of different communities and groups. This view is not variant from what NPE and POA had prescribed. For example, NPE and POA suggested microplanning as an important strategy to achieve UEE. By microplanning what was intended was family-wise and child-wise design



of action to ensure that every child regularly attended school or NFE centre, continued his education at a pace suitable to him and completed at least five years of schooling, or its equivalent at an NFE centre. Such a design would indeed be based on household educational profile which can be aggregated to form a 'need profile' of different communities.

4.4 The NPERC laid strong emphasis on area-intensive approach and more vigorous monitoring, an emphasis conducive to the effectiveness of programme implementation. The recommendation of the NPERC that a single focal agency should be identified in each State for the purpose of monitoring and reporting to the Central Government is welcome. Particularly in regard to SCs, STs and minorities, there is a multiplicity of implementing agencies in State Governments because of the multiplicity of the problems. Many programmes are administered by the State Welfare Departments and some by the Education Departments. Even in Education Departments activities are spread over many Directorates. There is really a need for a State-level nodal agency which can have an overview of the various programmes and can assess what the programmes all add up to. Monitoring has indeed been the Achilles' heel of programme implementation. Effective monitoring systems therefore have to be established. Representatives of beneficiaries have to be associated with the monitoring system so that they can give a fillip to programme implementation from within the system. We also suggest constitution of a standing CAGE Committee on education of SCs, STs and other educationally backward sections; educationists from these groups should have representation in that Committee. The CAGE Committee should review the progress of the schemes and submit reports for consideration by the CAGE.

#### Curriculum

4.5 R.No.69 suggests a separate curriculum for the educationally backward sections. We are of the view that all students, irrespective of caste, community and religion, should have a common curriculum. While instruction should be child-centred and cater to individual differences, it is not advisable to differentiate students in the matter of syllabus and curriculum. Even the educationally backward would not agree to be segregated through a separate curriculum. They are likely to perceive such a curriculum to be second rate. Science and Mathematics, language competencies, and contribution of different communities, regions and women to the nation's life, culture and development should be inculcated in all students.

#### Recognition of Minority Institutions

4.6 R.No.80 suggested that a standing machinery be established by the Government of India to closely monitor the issue of detailed guidelines by the States for the purpose of granting recognition to minority managed educational institutions; to review the pace of disposal of applications for recognition of these institutions; and thereby to ensure the

quality of education in institutions so recognised. Article 30 of the Constitution confers on minorities, whether based on religion or language, the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. There has been a plethora of case law on these issues. The establishment of the educational institutions is regulated by the State Education Acts. Therefore, recognition of an educational institution as a minority institution falls within the competence of the State Governments. In October, 1989, the Government of India formulated policy norms and principles for recognition of minority-managed educational institutions and communicated them to various State Governments. The role of the Central Government is advisory. We feel that monitoring is better left to the State Governments, as they are deeply conscious of the need for proper monitoring. At the Central level, many organisations like the Minority Commission already exist for this purpose of monitoring.

4.7 In addition to the two recommendations dealt with in paras 4.5 and 4.6 above, the NPERC made a wide range of recommendations covering incentive schemes, SC/ST habitations not served by schools, curriculum, remedial coaching, recruitment of SC/ST teachers, Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan, programmes for educationally backward minorities, and recognition of minority managed institutions.

4.8 We feel that no policy reformulation is necessary and that all recommendations, except R.Nos. 69 and 80, be taken into account while revising the POA.

## Chapter 5

### EDUCATION OF THE HANDICAPPED

5.1 The NPERC complimented the NPE for placing the education of the handicapped in the right perspective. The NPE recognizes the education of the handicapped as an integral part of the education process and as an important element of the efforts to remove disparities and equalise educational opportunities. The NPERC also appreciated the approach of NPE to the education of the handicapped, particularly in regard to involvement of voluntary agencies. The NPERC, however, felt that the NPE was inadequate in the following respects:

- \* NPE had not stressed the mobilisation of the total general education system for the education of the handicapped.
- \* Special schools had been treated in isolation from other educational institutions from the point of view of providing the educational supervisory infrastructure, leaving it to the Ministries of Welfare and HRD to co-operatively develop the same.

5.2 We feel that it would not be fair to fault the NPE on these two counts. As the NPERC itself noted, the POA called for establishment of special schools at district and sub-district levels; curriculum development apart from provision of infrastructural facilities; and specific target setting for universal primary education of the handicapped. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme was started in 1974-75 by the then Ministry of Social Welfare. In 1982-83, the scheme was transferred to the Department of Education. When the scheme was transferred, only 2,500 students were covered under the scheme. In 1987, the scheme was thoroughly reviewed and revised in pursuance of NPE. Coverage of the scheme was extended to 6,000 schools in 22 States. Special Schools cater to the children with grave handicaps, and with vastly different needs. These children required more individualised attention. The objective of Special Schools is to endow the students with daily living skills and to rehabilitate them. The supervisory infrastructure of general education institutions is not equipped to supervise Special Schools which have their own special requirements and needs.

5.3 The NPERC made very useful recommendations (R.Nos. 89-101) relating to the modalities of implementing programmes for the education of the handicapped. Inter alia, it had advocated

the use of media in creating awareness about the problems of the handicapped, providing support to every family with a handicapped child through incentives, dialogue and training and adopting a flexible approach to the education of the physically handicapped. The NPERC examined at length the needs of different categories of the disabled such as the deaf, the blind and the mentally retarded, and made specific recommendations. The NPERC had also made important recommendations on the role of training and of technological development in the education of the physically handicapped. We suggest that these valuable recommendations be built into a revised programme of action.

## Chapter 6

### COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM

#### NPERC Perspective

6.1 The NPERC considered the development of Common School System to be a very vital component of the overall strategy for securing equity and social justice in education. The Common School System was originally advocated by the Education Commission (1964-66), under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari (hereafter referred to as Kothari Commission). NPE, 1968 accepted the recommendation of the Kothari Commission for bringing about the Common School System. In the context of the national system of education, NPE, 1986 restated the determination of the Government to take effective measures in the direction of the Common School System. The concept of national system of education would imply, according to NPE 1986, that, upto a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location, or sex, have access to education of comparable quality. The NPERC noted that the Common School System still remained a concept even though mooted by the Kothari Commission over a quarter of a century ago and expressed the view that the educational disparities are being further accentuated by the failure to implement the Common School System. The NPERC advocated concrete steps to translate the concept into a reality.

#### Upgradation of Schools

6.2 According to the NPERC, the Common School System cannot become a reality unless the government and local body schools are upgraded through the provision of adequate infrastructural facilities and academic inputs. Without such upgradation educational disparities would persist and the well-to-do would continue to send their children to the expensive private schools. The NPERC, therefore, recommended significant increase in the outlay on elementary education and provision of special allocations for improvement of the school system in backward areas, urban slums, tribal areas, hilly tracts, desert and marshy areas, drought and flood-prone zones, coastal belts and islands.(R.No.102). In our view this recommendation is very appropriate. The prime objective of the Common School System is equalisation of educational opportunities; equalisation cannot be achieved without bridging the yawning gap between the few expensive private schools and the multitude of government and local body schools, at least in regard to primary education, to begin with. The NPERC advocated a ten-year time-frame to achieve the Common School System. We do appreciate the spirit underlying this recommendation. Given the magnitude of resources required, a ten-year time-frame does not appear realistic. However, there is no alternative to stepping up investment in education with an over-riding priority to basic education within the education sector. Our recommendations in regard to resources are set out in a subsequent chapter.

## Neighbourhood Schools

6.3 The NPERC also put forth the view that as a step towards achievement of the Common School System the existing government, local body and government-aided schools have to be transformed into genuine neighbourhood schools; over a course of time private schools should also get transformed into such neighbourhood schools by making them freely accessible. The NPERC's conception of neighbourhood schools is at variance with that of the Kothari Commission as well as the normal usage. As is understood in the Western countries and as delineated by Kothari Commission, the term 'neighbourhood schools' implies that this school is attended by all the children in the given locality. In contrast to neighbourhood schools, the public schools are residential and draw children from far and near. According to the NPERC's conception, the neighbourhood school is a school which is closely concerned with the concerns of the community around, serves the community and establishes linkages with the community by, inter alia, connecting subjects and curricula of the schools with the situation and demands of the community. Unlike the NPERC, which envisages neighbourhood schools as an intermediate stage in the progress towards the common schools, the Kothari Commission considered the neighbourhood schools to be the ultimate objective. We consider it unrealistic to expect, as does the NPERC, that every school can tailor the subjects and curricula to the specific situations and demands of the community around. Given the resource endowment of most government and local body schools such an expectation is farfetched. Further, flexibility on subjects and curricula would cut at the root of the National Curricular Framework. However, there is merit in the idea that linkages should be forged between the community and the schools. Such linkages are particularly necessary in respect of the expensive private schools which tend to be alienated from the community around. By insisting that such schools accept social responsibility and by making it obligatory for the teachers and students of such schools to serve the community around, it should be possible to root such institutions in their social environment. These schools can be made more egalitarian by requiring that they fill up a proportion of the seats by meritorious students from the disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Enrolment of such students would be facilitated by provision of free scholarships.

6.4 Quoting the Kothari Commission, the NPERC had indicated that one of the features of the Common School System was that access to education will depend on talent. We find that the correct position is that the Kothari Commission did not link talent with access to education in common schools and had instead advocated special schools for talented children.

## Mother Tongue as Medium of Instruction

6.5 Towards achievement of Common School System, the NPERC had also recommended that it would be necessary to ensure

instruction for all through the medium of mother tongue at the pre-primary and primary levels, particularly for linguistic minorities; active encouragement of teaching the regional languages at the secondary level; and discontinuance of state aid to the schools imparting education otherwise than through the medium of mother tongue/regional languages. This recommendation, excepting the part relating to state aid is a restatement of Article 350-A of the Constitution and the Three-Language Formula. It also figures in chapters 11 and 12 of the NPERC report "Languages in Education" and "Content and Process of Education." It is universally accepted that adequate provision should be made for instruction in the mother tongue in the pre-primary and primary levels for all children including those of minorities, and for instruction in regional language in the secondary stage. Knowing that medium of instruction is a major hurdle in the achievement of the Common School System, we have given a great deal of thought to the feasibility of presuming that only mother tongue should be the medium of instruction at the pre-primary and primary levels. That is to say, use of English as medium of instruction at the pre-primary and primary levels should be prohibited except for those children whose mother tongue is English. Use of a foreign language for the medium of instruction at the pre-primary and primary levels does not make any sense, and does enormous harm to the creativity of children and to our national identity. However, the majority view is that given the objective conditions time is not ripe for stipulating that only mother tongue shall be the medium of instruction in the pre-primary and primary levels.

6.6 To sum up, effective measures need to be taken to implement the provisions of NPE 68 and NPE in regard to Common School system. To this end, disparities between schools should be ended as early as possible by upgrading the quality of ordinary schools and providing amenities for achieving minimum levels of learning. Both the Centre and the State should take determined action in this regard. The privileged schools should accept social accountability by sharing their facilities and resources with other institutions, taking up community activities, and facilitating access to children of the disadvantaged groups.

## Chapter 7

### NAVODAYA VIDYALAYAS

7.1 The members of the NPERC had, admittedly, sharp differences about this scheme; these are reflected in the recommendation which appeared to be hesitant and wanting in specificity. The NPERC enumerated at length the points in favour of and against the scheme and proceeded to present a recommendation (R.No.103) with three alternatives. The NPERC did not indicate any preference among the three alternatives.

7.2 The main considerations which weighed with those members critical of the scheme were the following:

- i) the cost-intensity of the scheme and the impropriety of incurring heavy expenditure on a relatively small number of students;
- ii) in reality, the scheme may be working to benefit the privileged few; the validity and reliability of the admission tests are in doubt;
- iii) it is an exclusive system inconsistent with the long-cherished Common School System;
- iv) teaching of science through English medium and of social studies through Hindi medium is pedagogically unsound;
- v) the legitimacy of Central Government operating in school education;
- vi) the unlikelihood of Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVs) playing the pace-setting role expected of them.

7.3 The points which were adduced in favour of the scheme were the following:

- i) It will be inappropriate to arrive at a decision on the NVs merely on the basis of aversion to elitism.
- ii) Operational deficiencies if any, e.g., the alleged bias towards students from better off families, could be remedied.
- iii) The existence of residential schools for talented children does not militate against the concern of the neighbourhood schools. No great harm is done if a small number of talented rural children are provided with opportunities to go to good residential schools.
- iv) Initiatives are needed at different levels to improve present standards of educational attainments; NV Scheme is one such initiative.



- v) NVs can develop linkages with DIETs, SCERTs and schools in the district and emerge as outstanding learning resource centres.
- vi) It is unfair to evaluate a scheme so shortly after its commencement, more so as adequate resources were not made available.

7.4 The three alternatives posed by NPERC were the following:

- i) No further NVs need be opened. The existing 261 NVs may be restructured, adequate resources provided and continued. The scheme be reviewed at the end of 1992-93. Restructuring should cover
  - (a) the re-definition of talent
  - (b) broadening the selection process
  - (c) changing the life style and value orientation of the NVs
  - (d) prescribing an income limit for admission, and
  - (e) providing for admission of students from districts not having NVs.
- ii) Transferring the 261 NVs to States for being run on the lines of the Andhra Pradesh model of residential schools. This would imply that fees could be charged from students who can pay.
- iii) Transforming NVs into broadly talent-nurturing and pace-setting institutions. This alternative would seem to imply combining the functions of a Bal Bhavan and DIET in one place in a district, along with a lead day-school serving only the particular village or community. If so, it is likely to be very complex and expensive.

We have given very careful consideration to these different points of view.

7.5 The majority view is that the scheme should continue and that a NV should be set up in each district as originally envisaged subject to the following observations:

- i) constant review to keep the scheme as cost effective as possible,
- ii) ensuring the continued validity and reliability of the admission tests by periodic evaluation and appropriate modification of admission procedure, and

- iii) more particular attention to the pace-setting role of these institutions.

7.6 In coming to this conclusion, we take note of the information furnished by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti that 40 per cent of the NV students come from families below the poverty line, 60 per cent are first generation learners, 30 per cent are girls, 19 per cent Scheduled Castes and 11 per cent are Scheduled Tribes. The academic results of the first board examination faced by NV students, viz., class X CBSE examination, 1991, were very good. The composition of students and the class X test results adumbrate that objective of providing quality education to talented children from rural disadvantaged families is being realised. The validity and reliability of the selection procedure are central to the whole scheme; therefore, we advocate periodic evaluation of the admission tests and implementation of corrective measures.

7.7 We also find that the cost per student is reasonable in comparison with the costs of the "public schools," which predominantly cater to the urban children. However, a constant effort needs to be made to make the scheme as cost-effective as possible. We have reflected a great deal on the question of equity which is the main reason why some find it difficult to go along with the scheme. That talented children should be provided special facilities for quality education cannot be gainsaid. Equality cannot mean that all children are or can be equal in ability, or in merit; so long as the admission tests do not discriminate against the children from disadvantaged families and are a valid test of merit, the principle of equity cannot be considered to have been violated.

7.8 In our view, the most attractive feature of the scheme is the facility for migration of students from one region of the country to other regions. Some of us had the opportunity to personally visit NVs and meet the students who migrated from other regions of the country. We can vouch for the contribution such migration can make to promote a national outlook among the students and teachers of NVs and to spread awareness among the communities in the vicinity of NVs of the rich diversity and unity of the Indian culture and polity. In these trying times, the importance of national integration cannot be exaggerated. The scheme would in course of time create a group of well-educated people who have been brought up in an environment which is conducive to national integration, devotion to national ideals and to our Constitution and who are sensitive to the concerns of the disadvantaged groups of society and the rural masses having been largely drawn from such a background. This group, which would enlarge year after year, can be a great source of strength to the nation. The language policy and Central management of NVs are designed to promote this objective. If the scheme were to be transferred to the States, it would be difficult to ensure uniformity and consistency. Besides, the scheme would be subject to the financial and other compulsions which constrain

educational system in several States. We also take note of the fact that almost all States have evinced keen interest in taking advantage of the scheme and there is an increasing demand for more NVs.

7.9 It is also necessary to begin thinking about the future course of the scheme after NVs have been established in all districts with the requisite facilities and investment. A choice has to be made between establishment of new institutions and expansion of facilities in the existing institutions. Planning has also to begin for catering to the higher educational needs of students who pass out of NVs. A scheme needs to be formulated for central financial support to residential schools. In this scheme priority should be given to ST areas and areas predominantly inhabited by SCs.

7.10 During our deliberations, we were informed by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti of the measures that are being initiated to promote the pace-setting role of NVs such as total literacy campaigns in the neighbourhood of the schools, networking with other institutions in the districts and community health services. We attach considerable importance to the pace-setting role which is an important objective of the scheme and would provide cost-effectiveness to NVs. Greater efforts must be made in this vital area.

7.11 Some of us, however, cannot subscribe to the concept underlying the Navodaya scheme, particularly on the following considerations:

- i) it is inegalitarian
- ii) there are more compelling priorities like provision of minimal facilities in primary schools
- iii) The medium of instruction at all stages should be the mother tongue or the regional language.
- iv) Management of secondary education should be left to the States.

## Chapter 8

### EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

8.1 The NPERC considered NPE to be a historic document in that for the first time a policy document boldly recognized the importance of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and laid down the holistic principles on which the programme was to be developed. The NPERC strongly rearticulated the NPE's perception of ECCE as an important input in the strategy of human resource development, as a feeder and support programme for primary education and as a support service for working women from the disadvantaged sections of society.

8.2 The following three recommendations of the NPERC relate to policy :

- i) Enlarging the scope of Article 45 of the Constitution so as to include ECCE (R.No.104).
- ii) Inclusion of ECCE in Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) (R.No.106).
- iii) Transfer of ICDS and other related Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) for ECCE to the States and Union Territories following the completion of the present phase. (R.No.127).

#### Article 45

8.3 The NPERC interpreted Article 45 of the Constitution in a novel way. It held that all along this directive principle was interpreted narrowly as applicable only to the education of children from the age of six upwards and that it was never too late to acknowledge that, since care and education must begin at birth, ECCE was part of the Constitutional provision to provide free and compulsory education upto the age of fourteen years (R.No.104). According to the NPERC, Articles 39(f), 46 and 47 of the Constitution lend support to its interpretations. Consequently the NPERC recommended that the scope of Article 45 should be enlarged to include ECCE. While making a departure from an interpretation which was held all along, it would be necessary to consider the implications of the new interpretation. The nation as a whole and the State Governments in particular are still struggling for the achievement of UEE for 6 to 14 age group. Accordingly, the implied additional responsibilities of compulsory and free ECCE for the 0-6 group would impose an unrealistic target which would be difficult -- rather well nigh impossible -- to achieve in the foreseeable future. The NPERC itself, in para 5.11.0, noted the magnitude of resources needed for the universalisation of ECCE and concluded that government cannot conceivably mobilise such vast resources. According to the NPERC, even providing resources for the more limited coverage envisaged by POA would be difficult and it would be necessary to motivate non-governmental resources. In concrete

terms, the NPERC endorsed the coverage suggested by POA, viz., that at least 70 per cent of the children below the age of 6 should be provided with an essential package of services by A.D. 2000 (R.Nos.136 to 140). We feel that it would not be prudent to set higher goals in policy than what is feasible. Therefore, we feel it is premature to include ECCE in Article 45 and suggest that government should instead vigorously strive for achieving the goals laid by the POA. We strongly recommend that while expanding the coverage particular attention should be paid to the under-privileged communities as suggested by the POA (Para 7, Chapter I) and reiterated by the NPERC (R.No. 116[iv]).

#### MNP

8.4 The NPERC's recommendation to include ECCE in MNP is in keeping with its interpretation of Article 45 of the Constitution. We expect that this recommendation would be taken into consideration by the Planning Commission when the MNP is revised.

#### ICDS

8.5 The NPERC while noting that ICDS is the chief vehicle for ECCE, had recommended transfer of the scheme and the other Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) of ECCE to the States after completion of the present phase and entrusting the management of the Anganwadi and other ECCE centres to voluntary organisations, local community groups, particularly of women. In coming to this conclusion the NPERC was no doubt prompted by its general approach to the CSSs as well as a study of ICDS centres. The NPERC observed that the ICDS had come to acquire rigidity, bureaucratisation, low performance, lack of community participation and insensitivity to local needs, patterns and socio-cultural conditions. The NPERC did note that, within the ICDS there was scope for a wide variety of models and flexible approaches to the vast diversity and complexity of situations it is required to respond to. The NPERC also envisaged ICDS's chief role eventually to be offering support to NGOs, local communities and women's groups through essential funding and to provide ECCE according to local needs. The observations of NPERC advocating a decentralised and participative management are avowedly in keeping with the principle laid down by NPE that local communities will be involved in ECCE. What is important is that in vital areas like ECCE there should be a meaningful partnership between the Union and the States for fulfilling national objectives. The Union should provide resource support and associate the States on a continuous basis in the formulation and implementation of policy and programmes. It is also necessary for both the Union and the States to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation systems so as to achieve the cost-effective programme outcomes. Considering that NPERC itself recognized the potential flexibility of ICDS and the imperative need to provide States with additional funds with the conditionalities of non-divertibility and accountability, we feel that the present arrangement with regard to ICDS and other CSSs in the area of

ECCE may continue during the Eighth Five Year Plan. We note that the NDC, at its 43rd meeting held on 23rd and 24th December, 1991, had endorsed the recommendation of the NDC Committee on CSS that ICDS should continue as a CSS during the Eighth Five Year Plan. Simultaneously, we strongly recommend that the Department of Women and Child Development should undertake a detailed review of these schemes in consultation with the States so as to facilitate implementation of the scheme in the light of the POA provisions and the NPERC recommendations. We envisage an expanded role for the Anganwadi workers who should be the focal point for a number of activities and support services for women and children, such as child care, family welfare, nutrition and health. The recruitment and training of Anganwadi workers should be so organised as to ensure that they have the necessary skills and motivation to discharge the expanded role.

### Implementation Modalities

8.6 The NPERC had delved a great deal into the fine details of implementation of ECCE which include:

- i) Development and testing of alternative models of ECCE,
- ii) Curriculum and content of ECCE,
- iii) Acceptable ratio of adults to children in ECCE programmes,
- iv) Service conditions, training and preparation of ECCE personnel,
- v) Linkages between primary education and ECCE,
- vi) Involvement of local communities in the planning and implementation of ECCE, and
- vii) Implementation of ICDS.

8.7 Excepting the recommendation suggesting the transfer of ICDS to the States the other recommendations of NPERC are largely a restatement and elaboration of the POA provisions. The NPERC's main concerns arise from the fact that implementation did not measure up to the policy and that co-ordination between various agencies at different levels extending from the Government of India to the field, was hardly adequate. Consequently the NPERC spelt out many operational details covering all aspects of the programme. The NPERC strongly reiterated the need for the principle of diversity, flexibility and design to inform all aspects of ECCE, a principle highlighted by NPE and POA. While reiterating the recommendation of POA that the Departments of Women and Child Development at the Central and State levels should be held accountable for the implementation of ECCE in its entirety, the NPERC had strongly urged close co-ordination between the Department of Women and Child Development on the one hand and the Department of Education on the other, both in the

Centre and the States. The NPERC had also suggested institutional mechanisms such as setting up inter-ministerial committees at the Central and State levels comprising representatives of the Departments of Labour, Health and Education to assist the Department of Women and Child Development in the planning, monitoring and coordination of the ECCE programmes. The NPERC also suggested preparation of a ten year action and resource allocation plan for the building of a national network of child care services on the lines suggested in POA. In our opinion, the importance of proper planning, monitoring, evaluation and coordination and of community involvement cannot be overstated. Specific and serious attention is required towards resolving the problem of inter-departmental coordination. We suggest that the recommendations of the NPERC should be borne in mind while revising the POA and that the agencies concerned should work out and introduce effective measures for implementing ECCE programme.

8.8 To sum up:

- i) The scope of Article 45 of the Constitution need not be enlarged.
- ii) ICDS and other CSS relating to ECCE should continue as Centrally Sponsored Schemes during the Eighth Five Year Plan. The Anganwadi workers should play an expanded role and should be the focal point for a number of activities and support services for women and children, such as child care, family welfare, nutrition and health. The recruitment and training of Anganwadi workers should be so organised as to ensure that they have the necessary skills and motivation to discharge the expanded role.
- iii) The other recommendations of the NPERC which broadly relate to implementation modalities should be taken in to account for reviewing the POA.

## Chapter 9

### UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

9.1 In the NPERC's view, the most fundamental problem of our education system is the continued failure to fulfil the Constitutional directive of providing education to all children upto the age of 14 years. The NPERC attempted a comprehensive analysis of the failure to achieve universalisation of elementary education (UEE) and came to the conclusion that urgent and sweeping changes were required in the strategy for UEE. The basic premises of the analysis were that so far there was hesitation to acknowledge the reality that more than half of the children and two-thirds of the girls were outside the ambit of education and that it was never too late to give up the hesitancy and to frankly admit the facts so that an honest analysis of the causes of the problem may begin. Given these premises, it is but natural that the NPERC sought to distinguish its policy perspective and strategies from those of NPE/POA.

#### Constitutional Amendment

9.2 The NPERC suggested that the Right to Education should be examined for inclusion among the Fundamental Rights guaranteed under the Constitution and that all necessary socio-economic measures should be taken for realisation of this right (R.No.145). While the spirit underlining this recommendation is laudable, we feel that a legalistic approach to UEE would not be desirable. The Constitutional guarantee can be effective only if the country is in a position, financially and politically, to take all measures necessary for enforcing the guarantee; otherwise, legislation would be cosmetic. We feel that what is needed is not so much a Constitutional amendment as the manifestation of a national will to achieve UEE. For reasons given in the Chapter "Adult and Continuing Education", UEE and adult literacy together have to be given the overriding priority in educational planning and administration. We call upon the Central and State Governments to bestow overriding priority to adult literacy and UEE and to provide programmes in these two areas total support -- financial, administrative and political -- a support to match with the priority assigned.

#### NPERC Perspective

9.3 The suggestions of the NPERC to remove the main lacunae of the present policy perspective and strategies are as follows:

- i) NPE/POA should not have shifted the emphasis from enrolment to retention; the policy should stress a continuing concern for improving both enrolment and retention. Para 5.12 of NPE should be modified for this purpose [R.Nos. 150 and 152(a)].
- ii) Socio-economic and cultural factors have played only a marginal role in educational planning. The school



stands alienated from the community; there is no convergence of support services and education. Para 5.5 of NPE should therefore be modified so as to cover, what the NPERC referred to as, "concerns" about (a) convergence of services, (b) linkages between the school and the community, and (c) decentralised and participative mode of educational planning and management. It would also be necessary to amend Para 5.12 to provide for disaggregated target setting in a participative and decentralised mode [R.Nos. 146 and 152(b)].

- iii) While giving due importance to the provisions of additional facilities to the schools, the Policy must also stress the role of teachers, the community and the social environment as key factors in improvement of the quality of school education (R.No. 149).
- iv) Following NPE/POA, non-formal education (NFE) was enlarged into a significant parallel sector. NFE is some kind of second grade education for the poor; the solution lies in non-formalising the formal school over a period of time and in integrating the non-formal and formal education systems so that their cadres, infrastructure and management structures would form an organic whole [R.Nos. 152(c), 153, 154 155, 162 to 168, 170].
- v) NPE certainly did well by emphasising the child-centred approach to education but the approach enunciated in Para 5.5 of NPE has inconsistencies and lacunae and needs to be modified (R.No. 148).

#### Access, Enrolment and Retention

9.4 The NPERC's analysis of the problems of access and enrolment is very detailed; it rightly highlighted the deficiencies of the data on enrolment, and the disparities in enrolment -- gender, regional and SC/ST -- brought out even by the existing data which inflates enrolment. The analysis led the NPERC to the conclusion that access and enrolment continued to be major issues. In itself, this conclusion is unexceptionable but in trying to be different, the NPERC made an issue of the emphasis on retention by NPE/POA, allegedly at the expense of enrolment. Notwithstanding the averments of the NPERC to the contrary, we note that NPE/ POA did not belittle the importance of access and enrolment. Para 5.5 of NPE specifically enunciated that new thrusts in education would emphasise universal enrolment and universal retention upto 14 years of age. The POA, which was faulted by the NPERC for laying considerable faith in the success of the enrolment drive taken up in the seventies and eighties, was, in fact, sceptical of the enrolment data. This scepticism comes out very clearly in its assertion that "enrolment by itself is of little importance if children do not continue beyond one year, many of them not seeing the school

for more than a few days." It is because of this scepticism that the POA suggested shifting the emphasis from enrolment to retention and completion by all children of at least five years of education. It is inconceivable to think that all children can complete five years of schooling without being enrolled in the first instance. POA sought replacement of enrolment drives by participative planning in which the teachers and the villagers would formulate family-wise and child-wise design of action to ensure that every child regularly attends school or non-formal education centre and completes at least five years of schooling or its equivalent at the non-formal education centre. The legitimate NPE/POA position cannot be better expressed than by the UEE equation set out by the NPERC

"ENROLMENT ≠ ATTENDANCE ≠ RETENTION ≠ ATTAINMENT."

9.5 The NPE/POA should be credited for trying to shift the policy away from a preoccupation with provision of inputs -- more schools and more teachers -- towards outcomes, namely, completion by every child of five years of schooling or its equivalent. A plain reading of NPE and POA as a whole would make it clear that the concerns of the NPERC were anticipated in NPE/POA. The modalities of achieving universal enrolment and retention envisaged by NPE/POA include decentralisation, creation of a spirit of autonomy for educational institutions, a greater role for heads of institutions, community mobilisation and ensuring a voice for women and disadvantaged sections of society. Therefore, our considered view on the recommendations of the NPERC relating to access, enrolment and "concerns" is that no further refinement of the policy is required; what needs to be done is large scale operationalisation of important components of the strategy outlined by NPE/POA such as community mobilisation, school mapping and micro-planning.

### Levels of Learning

9.6 We wish that NPERC had bestowed adequate attention to the important issue of levels of learning. Till recently planning for UEE tended to be pre-occupied with the extension of school facilities and enrolment targets. Little attention was paid to the standards of attainment in school. A recent study by NIEPA showed that in most schools covered by the study, children in class V could reach only mastery learning levels set for class II. UEE has, therefore, to be viewed as a composite programme comprising (i) access to education for all children upto 14 years of age, (ii) universal participation till they complete elementary education through formal or non-formal educational programmes, and (iii) universal achievement of minimum levels of learning (MLL). The endeavour has to be to delineate MLLs in terms of competencies in language, mathematics and environmental studies from class I to class V, MLLs to be determined with reference to the existing levels and corresponding over a period of time to nationally acceptable norms.

## Non-Formal Education (NFE)

9.7 Another major area of difference between NPE/POA and the NPERC is NFE. The NPERC was right in recognising that it was for the first time, in 1986, that an education policy had admitted that the school may not reach all children, and had therefore envisaged a major role for the non-formal stream in moving towards UEE. NFE, as outlined by NPE/POA, would have enough flexibility to enable the learners to learn at their own pace and at the same time would have quality comparable with formal education. The NPERC listed the special features of the NFE, such as, relating of the curriculum to the needs of the learners and the local environment, development of learning material of high quality, learner-centred approach, continuous learner evaluation and appointment of local, motivated persons acceptable to the community as NFE instructors. While appreciating these special features, the NPERC was of the view that these special features were as much relevant to the formal schools as to NFE and that, in the ultimate analysis, the primary difference between the formal schools and the NFE was one of timing only. Consequently, the NPERC took the position that NPE/POA could have as well suggested introducing the special features of NFE into the formal school system itself so that the schools serve all categories of children, instead of setting up a parallel system generally considered to be second rate. The NPERC's preferred strategy was to non-formalise the schools, over a period of time, through measures such as shifting of school timing to suit the majority of children, adjusting school calendar to the socio-economic conditions in the village, adopting child centred approach with concomitant reduction in school hours but an increase in learning hours, introducing 'ungraded class room' where children learn at their own pace and segregation of written and oral tradition into "morning" and "evening" schools. The NPERC recommended integration of non-formal and formal education system over a period of time so that their cadres, infrastructures and management structures would form an organic whole.

9.8 Having recommended that formal school should be non-formalised, the NPERC considered at length the changes necessary in the appointment, placement and training of teachers as well as in the location of schools. "Para schools" would be organised as an integral part of the local primary or middle school catering to unserved habitations and to children unable to come to school in the regular hours. Instruction imparted in para schools would be mostly by "para teachers" who would, however, be interchangeable with regular teachers in terms of teaching responsibilities. The head of the institution would have the power to recruit the para-teachers from the local community. Educational qualifications can be relaxed for the recruitment of the para-teacher. On appointment they would be placed on probation and paid one-third to one-half of the salary of a regular school teacher. They would be entitled for absorption as regular teachers as soon as they acquire the required educational qualifications and "ensure a concrete move towards enrolment and

retention of all children in the community who were earlier out of school." The training of para-teachers would be based on the internship model. Before a school is non-formalised, the effective control would be handed over to a co-ordinated management system involving the school, Village Education Committee and the Educational Complex.

9.9 Central to the NPERC's recommendations on NFE is the belief that the school system, after appropriate modifications, can effectively cater to the basic learning needs of all children upto the age of 14 years. This belief is notwithstanding the recognition by the NPERC that a mix of strategies would be required for achieving UEE. In its analysis of child-labour, the NPERC classified out-of-school children into three categories and suggested a separate strategy for each category. Thus all the out-of-school children in the age group of 6-10 years who are not working on wages are to be brought into school system; out-of-school children in the 10-14 years age group who are in the labour market are to be imparted skills by "educationalising the work;" out-of-school children in the 10-14 years age group who are not in the labour market are not only to be imparted skills but are also equipped with minimum levels of knowledge. Juxtaposing this analysis with the recommendations on NFE, it could be inferred that the NPERC believed that a unitary model of a non-formal school can equally serve different strategies. In contrast, NPE had implicitly doubted the practicality of a single structure (viz., school) serving multiple strategies and opted for a dual model comprising the formal school system and the alternative system of NFE encompassing several models. Other things being equal, the basic questions that arise in the evaluation of the competing models would be --

- i) which of the two models -- the unitary model or the dual model -- would be more effective and practicable?
- ii) which of them can reach the "out-of-school" children better?
- iii) which of them has greater flexibility and can better accommodate multiple strategies for achieving UEE?

9.10. The NPERC had suggested large scale appointment of para-teachers in para-schools which would be an integral part of primary/middle schools. According to the NPERC, the concept of para-teacher is somewhat similar to the concept of Shiksha Karmis being tried in Rajasthan to reach out to unserved habitations. A close examination indicates that there are more of dissimilarities between the two concepts than of similarities. The only two common features are that (i) the minimum qualifications for appointment can be lower than those for a regular teacher and (ii) the recruitment would be, as far as possible, from within the local community. Shiksha Karmis are appointed in villages where schools have been forced to close down because of teacher absenteeism. The Shiksha Karmi Unit is in lieu of a school and the instruction it imparts is essentially

non-formal in nature. In contrast, the para-teacher, would be located in the local primary or middle school. The head of the school would appoint, supervise and guide the para-teachers. The NPERC report does not explicitly provide for involvement of the village community in the selection of para-teachers, which is a very important feature of the Shiksha Karmi Project. Para-teachers are to be imparted training through the internship model. On the other hand, Shiksha Karmis are backed by a strong training system that provides supervision, support and periodic training of a kind that teachers of regular schools do not have.

9.11 Shiksha Karmi Unit is a good non-formal model which can be extended wherever conducive conditions exist such as community support and a strong training support system. However, appointment of Shiksha Karmi type para-teachers in the regular school system, as suggested by the NPERC, is more than likely to formalise a good non-formal model rather than non-formalise the formal school as the NPERC would have it. Once a para-teacher is appointed on probation in the school system, has a job interchangeable with a regular teacher, is subject to supervision and guidance of the head of the school, and has a specific assurance that he would be absorbed in due course as a regular teacher subject to fulfilment of certain conditions, it is more likely that a para-teacher would consider himself to be a part of the formal school system. The service conditions suggested for para-teachers bristle with legal complications; experience all over the country of appointing lower paid instructors in the regular school system has not been happy. Such appointments had invariably led to extensive litigation on the plea that equal pay was being denied for equal work. Once the jobs are interchangeable, as those of the para-teacher and teacher, it is a moot point whether differential pay scales would be legally sustainable.

9.12 The NPERC has elaborated its views on the internship model of training in the chapter "Teachers and Students". We offer our detailed comments on the internship model in the corresponding chapter. Suffice it to say here that at the moment there are no well-documented experiences on the internship model and before it can be considered for large scale adoption, the practical aspects have to be considered by experts. The development of a proper training support system, without which the para-teachers would be dysfunctional, has to be gradual and evolutionary.

9.13 Though some of the suggestions of the NPERC to non-formalise school are vague (e.g., reduction in school hours but increase in learning hours) and some are of doubtful validity (e.g., "ungraded classroom" and segregating written and oral tradition into "morning" and "evening classes"), many are ideas which were under articulation for the last forty years or more but have failed to take root largely because of practical problems. Making the school more flexible has very much been on the agenda of educational reforms all these years. Flexibility would necessitate decentralisation of educational administration,

empowering of local communities, building up of local level capabilities for teacher support and supervision of schools and major changes in teacher recruitment policy and in teacher motivation. It is imperative to persevere with these measures; however, one should not lose sight of the fact that making the school system more flexible -- not to speak of transforming, as the NPERC desired, the school into an institution with rather infinite flexibility, versatility and effectiveness -- is bound to be a long and arduous process; and while the process is on, one cannot ignore the educational needs of those children who cannot attend regular schools such as working children, migratory children, children pre-occupied with household chores, girls prevented by tradition-bound attitudes from attending regular schools and children who drop out due to socio-economic compulsions. The NPERC had not come forth with any suggestions to tone up the NFE system. Since it cannot be said that the NPERC was oblivious to the educational needs of 'out of school' children, the logical conclusion is that in its view the process of non-formalising the school would be smooth and rapid. Given the present condition of the schools in general, the challenges before the school system are many, e.g., enrolling and retaining children who cannot afford to attend school regularly; a harmonious interaction with the community around; improving the infrastructure, quality and the learning environment; and ensuring that every student acquires minimum level of learning. These challenges are daunting enough and it does not seem desirable to overload the school system with yet another formidable challenge of meeting the educational needs of children with severe para educational constraints. We are of the view that the NPE approach is more practical and realistic, viz., making the formal school flexible upto a point and beyond that relying on an alternative, more flexible NFE system. For a long time to come, there is no alternative but to have a large and systematic programme of first rate NFE. We cannot overstate the importance of ensuring that the quality of NFE is comparable with that of the formal system in all respects. Concrete measures in this regard brook no delay. We have been informed that the Department of Education is reviewing the scheme of NFE with a view to improving the management system and the learning environment. We strongly urge (i) expeditious and effective action in this area and (ii) continuous and close monitoring by the Centre and the States in concert to ensure the effectiveness of NFE programmes.

9.14 While appreciating the NPE for emphasising the child-centred approach, the NPERC felt that the NPE should have

- i) been more explicit in setting out in the policy statement details such as (a) elements of joy, fun, exploration as integral to learning in the early stages of primary education, (b) measures for modifying the teachers' attitudes that justify corporal punishment and (c) measures for adjusting school timings and calendar to suit the children,

- ii) been more positive in its formulation on non-detention,
- iii) emphasised the role of the affective domain and psychomotor skills at the earlier stages, and
- iv) specified that children, other than first generation learners, should also be allowed to set their own pace and be given supplemental remedial instruction.

On careful consideration we find that, in essence, there is no appreciable difference between para 5.6 of NPE and the NPERC's perspective set out in R.No.148. Where the NPE favoured brevity, the NPERC has preferred elaboration.

9.15 The NPERC observed that Operation Blackboard was a laudable scheme as it helped focus national attention on the paucity of facilities in the schools. However, it noticed deficiencies in the design of scheme, particularly prescribing a uniform list of teaching and learning material for all schools in the country. In keeping with its views on Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), which were spelt out in detail in the chapter on "Decentralisation and Participative Management," the NPERC recommended continuance of Operation Blackboard only until the end of 1992-93. The NPERC further suggested that all decision-making powers should be devolved on the Educational Complex and that while Operation Blackboard must be one of the priority strategies for UEE, investment must be related to the specific needs of the school as assessed by the school and village education committee. Our views on CSSs are set out in the chapter "The Management of Education". It would be adequate to mention here that we are of the view that CSSs initiated after NPE should continue and a few more CSSs need to be introduced in the priority areas of education during the Eighth Five Year Plan, after due consultation with the States. Operation Blackboard admittedly being one of the priority strategies for UEE, we feel that it should continue during the Eighth Plan, in an expanded and extended form. The norms should be upgraded from the present level of two classrooms and two teachers for every primary school to three classrooms and three teachers and the scheme should be extended to upper primary schools. We take note of the fact that flexibility is being introduced in the scheme so that procurement of equipment is better related to local situations; we feel that this is a step in the right direction. As regards entrusting the decision making powers to the educational complex, it may be mentioned that the whole concept of educational complex was detailed by the NPERC in the chapter "Decentralisation and Participative Management" and our views have been expressed in the corresponding chapter. Suffice to say here that till operational models of an educational complex are developed, tested and tried out, it is not feasible to link the Scheme of Operation Blackboard with the educational complex; nor is it feasible to entrust the planning and monitoring of UEE to the educational complex, as suggested in R.Nos.169, 171, 173 and 175.

9.16 We find that other recommendations such as R.Nos. 151,

161, 176 and 177 have no policy implications and are in tune with NPE/POA. R.No.172, relating to vocationalisation, is considered in that chapter.

### Policy Agenda

9.17 Para 5.12 of NPE laid down targets for achieving the goals of universalisation of primary education and universalisation of elementary education. By 1990, it was to be ensured that all children upto the age of 11 would have had five years of schooling or its equivalent in non-formal education system and likewise, by 1995, all children upto 14 years of age were to be provided free and compulsory education. Para 5.12 of NPE, which laid these targets, needs to be revised. Every effort should be made to ensure that the Constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education upto the age of 14 years becomes a reality before we enter the twenty-first century.

9.18 We are of the view that the following points deserve priority during the Eighth Five Year Plan in the area of UEE:

- i) Universal enrolment of all children, including girls and persons belonging to SC/ST;
- ii) Provision of primary school for all children within one kilometre of walking distance and of facility of non-formal education for school drop-outs, working children and girls who cannot attend schools;
- iii) Improvement of ratio of primary school to upper primary schools from the existing 1:4 to 1:2, this being a pre-condition for larger opportunity for widening girls' participation at upper primary stage;
- iv) Reduction of drop out rates between Classes I to V and I to VIII from the existing 45 per cent and 60 per cent to 20 per cent and 40 per cent respectively;
- v) Improvement of school facilities by revamped Operation Blackboard, to be extended to upper primary level also;
- vi) Achievement of minimum levels of learning by approximately all children at the primary level, and introduction of this concept at the upper primary stage on a large scale;
- vii) Local level committee, with due representation to women and teachers, to assist in the working of primary education and to oversee its functioning;
- viii) Improvement of the monitoring system for universalisation of elementary education to see to the achievement of above mentioned goals.

NPE and POA may be revised accordingly.



## Chapter 10

### ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

10.1 The NPERC appears to have an ambivalent attitude to adult education. In its perspective it acknowledged that "it would be plainly unjust if almost 250 million people in the plus 15 years age groups are left to spend their entire productive life without literacy, a powerful tool for acquiring knowledge and enabling effective participation in democratic polity of India. Clearly, like UEE, adult education with a strong literary component has to be one of the central items on the national agenda." However, in specific operational terms, the NPERC drew a distinction between UEE and adult education and recommended top priority being given to UEE in educational planning and resource allocation (R.No.185). The world over educational planning has moved away from a sectoral view of primary schooling, non-formal education and adult education to a holistic view. The UNESCO has been advocating the "dual - track approach," designed to promote simultaneously literacy and basic learning for adults and UEE for children. The UNESCO, in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP and World Bank, had organised the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in Jomtien, Thailand, in March, 1990. One hundred and fifty-five countries and all important bilateral and multilateral agencies attended the WCEFA. The declaration adopted by the WCEFA called upon member countries of UNESCO to meet the basic learning needs of adults and children wherever they exist. Therefore, R.No.185 runs contrary to the world-wide move towards a holistic view of educational needs. Further, it is based on a conceptual frame which posits a unidirectional relationship between adult education and UEE. This conceptual frame rightly points out that adult illiteracy arises from the failure to achieve UEE. However, it does not adequately recognize the inter-dependence of UEE and adult education. The feedback from informed observers in districts where the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) have taken off successfully is that parents who were earlier apathetic towards sending their children to primary school are, after themselves becoming literate, demanding the opening of schools where they do not exist and insisting on regular attendance by the teachers so that their children receive proper education. Primary education can, so to say, ride piggyback on the advances registered in adult education. We, therefore, strongly recommend that the "dual-track approach" should continue to inform educational planning and that the special needs of women and of disadvantaged groups like SCs and STs should be specially attended to.

10.2 The NPERC separated adult literacy from adult education and underestimated the importance of adult literacy. It preferred sequence of activities which is a reversal of the one presently adopted by the National Literacy Mission (NLM). The NPERC proposed first creating an awareness of essential needs and issues like health, housing, nutrition and planning. After such an awareness is created, in the NPERC's view, the adult learner himself should be expected to ask for adult literacy as a felt

need; adult literacy, as an activity, should be a response to that felt need. The NPERC is indeed right in holding that adult literacy is a sub-set of adult education; however, it is rather doctrinaire in rigidly separating adult literacy from adult education and belittling the intrinsic merit of adult literacy. Sequencing of when adult literacy should come in is rather artificial. Literacy provides a minimal entry point to education and thereby access to the world of information, communication and modernisation. Eventually, acquisition of literacy skills would help in raising the level of human awareness and in continuously upgrading survival and life skills. Empirical evidence has established that after attainment of a certain level of literacy, it is possible to move on to functional developmental issues. Adult education programme under NLM, and more particularly the TLCs, is being implemented in close link with developmental activities like immunisation, nutrition and health. The new pedagogy of adult education pays particular attention to these linkages. The basic thrust in TLCs is demand-generation making adult literacy a felt need. In the campaign cycle, the environment building phase is followed by the instructional phase and eventually by the continuing education and post-literacy phase.

10.3 The NPERC's recommendations (R.Nos.178 - 182) leave one with a sense of hopelessness about the massive adult illiteracy problem facing the country, a problem which is in the league of transcendent problems such as population and national integration. In the NPERC's opinion, there is, as it is, no tested and tried "ready-to-use" model. The centre-based model, which dominated the adult education strategy till 1989, is too defective to be redeemed. Its successor, the TLC, is not considered to be ready for universal application rightaway. Not to speak of its replicability, the NPERC is even doubtful whether lessons could be drawn from the "Ernakulam experiment" for application elsewhere. However, the NPERC sees in the Mahila Samakhya (MS) an attractive alternative model, whose application to adult literacy should be examined. The NPERC's prescription for the Eighth Five Year Plan was that NLM should go ahead with its planned literacy campaign while an independent study group would evaluate the programme of NLM as well as of alternative models with a view to arriving at an understanding of what may be the appropriate strategy to remove adult illiteracy in a quicker manner. In other words, the NPERC did not consider it possible to come to grips with the problem of adult illiteracy during the Eighth Five Year Plan; its expectations were rather modest -- no breakthrough can be expected in the adult literacy scene and the only concrete outcome that could be hoped for is the development of viable and effective models.

10.4 The NPERC's perception of Mahila Samakhya (MS) as an alternative model is not valid. MS essentially implies creating a structure and system which will enable women to come together, discuss together, share the experience of their life, to identify their strength and weaknesses, to think critically and reflect and analyse the factors responsible for their discrimination and

to find the wherewithal to overcome them. In a number of districts where mass campaigns for total literacy were launched and where MS was in existence, the two programmes had worked in close and symbiotic relationship with each other. MS functionaries provided support for environment-building and provision of technical resource support including training. Therefore, Mahila Samakhyas and mass campaigns for total literacy, far from being alternatives, actually support and supplement each other for furtherance of common objectives, viz., eradication of female illiteracy and women's empowerment.

10.5 The NPERC's approach to evaluation, as brought out in R.Nos.180 and 182, is rather narrow and restricted. Evaluation is twofold in character, namely, 'formative' and 'summative'. The formative evaluation commences right from the stage of formulation of the action plan and its implementation at various stages; while the summative evaluation deals with evaluation of learning outcome at different stages and teaching-learning process as also with the impact of the programme on acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills, and on the overall quality of life of the learner. Such evaluation, in addition to being a tool of assessment and review of the status of the project, could also be a supportive tool to introduce correctives to improve the quality and content of the programme. Therefore, as suggested by the NPERC, one need not wait for the conclusion of the Eighth Five Year Plan for changing a model; if deficiencies are identified, the correctives could be introduced straightaway.

10.6 The developments since the submission of NPERC report in December, 1990, have established that NPERC had underestimated the significance of the "Ernakulam experiment." The Ernakulam experiment has since been replicated not only in all the fourteen districts of Kerala but in eight other districts in the States of Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and West Bengal and the Union Territory of Pondicherry. Many of these districts are way behind the Kerala districts in regard to levels of educational development as well as in socio-economic characteristics. In addition, TLCs are now in progress in sixty-five districts in fifteen States and two Union Territories; of these, forty-four districts are covered in entirety while in the others parts of the districts are covered. Over ten lakh volunteers are now engaged in the TLCs in these districts. These campaigns do establish the TLC as a potent and viable model and that a significant breakthrough can be expected in the literacy scene during the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) itself.

10.7 The NPERC would not have missed the significance of the Ernakulam experiment but for its conceptual frame. While the saying "Seeing is believing" is true, its converse "Believing is seeing" is no less true. It is well-known in social science research that the answers to questions depend upon the conceptual frame adopted -- the basic assumption, the categories used and the angle of vision. The conceptual frame not only fixes figuratively, the mesh of the net that the analyser drags through the material in order to explain a particular phenomenon; it also

directs him to cast his net in select ponds, at certain depths, in order to catch the fish he is after. The NPERC viewed the success in Kerala on the literacy front as a result of more than a hundred years of sustained effort by various segments of society in promoting school education. The contribution of the historical legacy and social setting to the success story in Kerala is not denied but the salient features of the TLC model did make a difference and in ignoring them the NPERC had chosen to be selective with facts and to brush away the missionary zeal and heroic endeavours of about a lakh of volunteers. In spite of a hundred years of effort in schooling about thirty lakh persons had remained illiterate and but for the TLC with its unique social mobilisation, forging of a broad based alliance between the district administration, NGOs and social activists, and the innovative use of the confluence of culture and communications, they would have continued to remain illiterate. What has been empirically demonstrated is that even in districts in other States which are educationally backward in comparison with the Kerala districts, it is possible to replicate the TLC strategy.

10.8 We consider the adult literacy programme to be of such overwhelming significance that during the Eighth Plan, together with UEE, it has to be given over-riding priority and adequate resource support. We do appreciate the proposal of Education Department, Government of India, to extend TLCs to 75 per cent of the districts in the country and to cover the remaining districts, with an improved centre-based programme which adequately stresses demand creation and mobilisation.

10.9 We have taken note of the recommendations of the NPERC regarding post-literacy and continuing education. However, We also cannot fail to notice the significant developments which have taken place in the last 3-4 years in the sphere of adult education, primary education and non-formal education. According to information provided to us by the officials of the Ministry of HRD, nearly 15 million adults are acquiring literacy skills each year. Some of them not of the expected norms. In addition, a very large number, perhaps as much as 50 to 60 million children, complete primary education through the school system or non-formal programmes and are not able to continue their education. All these persons, namely, persons completing literacy courses and those acquiring primary education but not pursuing education beyond that level comprise the clientele for post-literacy and continuing education. Appropriate arrangements of post-literacy and continuing education will have to be provided in practically every village covered by Total Literacy Campaigns through modified type of Jana Shikshan Nilayams, Youth Clubs-cum-Library Units or other modes. Attention will also have to be paid to improvement of skills relating to work and personal lives of the people. It would be advisable to start planning for post-literacy simultanesously with launching of literacy campaigns in districts/blocks and to ensure that these facilities become available as soon as people complete their literacy course.

## Chapter 11

### SECONDARY EDUCATION

11.1 Unlike other areas of education, secondary education was not dealt with by the NPERC Report in a single chapter. The recommendations of NPERC relating to Secondary Education were dispersed in several chapters such as Chapter 8 "Education and Right to Work", Chapter 11 "Languages in Education" and Chapter 12 "Content and Process Education." These recommendations have been dealt with in this Report in the chapters corresponding to Chapters 8, 11 and 12 of NPERC. This committee also considered Paper No.D-14 entitled "Secondary Education" which was circulated by the Department of Education. This Paper considers the whole gamut of secondary education, calls for greater attention to secondary education and spells out some of the measures needed to expand the coverage and improve the management, content and process of secondary education.

#### NPE Prescriptions

11.2 The NPE prescriptions in regard to secondary education are briefly as follows:

- i) Access to secondary education should be widened to cover unserved areas
- ii) In other areas, main emphasis should be on consolidation
- iii) Conscious internalisation of a healthy work ethos and of the values of a humane and composite culture would be brought through appropriately formulated curricula
- iv) Navodaya Vidyalayas for talented children largely from rural areas
- v) Vocationalisation of Education.

#### Expansion of Secondary Education Facilities

11.3 We took note of the impact of total literacy campaigns and efforts so far made in elementary education on the demand for secondary education. While unserved areas, particularly hill and desert districts, remote and inaccessible areas and islands, should continue to have a priority, it would be necessary to bring about a planned expansion of secondary education facilities all over the country in order to cope with new demands for secondary education. Removal of disparities and equalisation of educational opportunities should inform such expansion. The participation of girls, and students of disadvantaged sections, particularly in science and commerce streams, has been lower. Special measures are needed to improve their participation.

## Education Structure

11.4 New initiatives are needed to improve the operationalisation and management of secondary education. We also note that the management structures for secondary education are not uniform; in some States the +2 stage is still outside of the school system. Though the 10+2+3 system has become near universal, there are differences among the States in the break up of first ten years of schooling. We advocate that efforts should be made to bring about uniformity in the management structure for secondary education in all the States. It is also necessary to ensure that the break up of the first ten years of schooling should be as envisaged in para 3.3 of NPE and is uniform in all States.

## Boards of Secondary Education

11.5 Apart from a restructuring of the management system, it is imperative to improve the functioning of the Boards of Secondary Education which are expected to provide the academic inputs. In most States these Boards have been functioning only as bodies for conduct of public examinations and that too not in an optimal manner. Instances are not wanting where non-academic public personalities have been appointed to head the Boards. This practice should be done away with. It is necessary to reorganise the Boards and invest them with autonomy so as to enhance their ability to provide academic inputs to secondary education. The Boards should play an active role in curriculum design and upgradation, updating textbooks and teaching-learning material, and examination reforms.

## Heads of Educational Institutions

11.6 Para 10.7 of NPE calls for a very important role to be assigned to the heads of educational institutions. The NPERC also calls for the heads of institutions to be delegated with meaningful authority. We strongly advocate that time-bound measures should be taken by the Central and State Governments to implement these directions and to empower the Headmasters with administrative, academic and financial powers. Training of the heads of institutions requires particular attention.

11.7 We have spelt out our views on examination reforms in the chapter "Content and Process of Education." Here we emphasise the essentiality of examination reforms and call for co-ordinated efforts by the Central and State Governments on the following lines:

- i) Preparation of a status report of Examination Reforms undertaken by various Boards,
- ii) Preparation of a National Examination Reform Framework to serve as a set of guidelines to the examining bodies which would have the freedom to innovate and adapt the framework to suit the specific situation,

- iii) Introducing Examination Reform in CBSE-affiliated schools for a few years, and
- iv) Developing an effective mechanism for co-ordination and monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of examination reforms undertaken by the Boards.

### Teacher Training

11.8 Teacher training in secondary education requires no less emphasis than in primary education. The revitalisation of pre-service training needs to be taken up as a major enterprise. Pre-service training should be a pre-condition of recruitment of TGTs. The SIEs and SCERTs should be strengthened and their purview extended to include secondary education. Programmes for in-service training of teachers need to be taken up.

### Computer Literacy

11.9 Computer literacy needs to be given special emphasis. In the emerging technological paradigm, computer literacy is as essential as literacy and numeracy. The ongoing programme of CLASS needs to be revamped. The endeavour should be to provide universal access to computer literacy in all secondary and senior secondary schools.

### Teaching of Science, Mathematics and Languages

11.10 The scheme of improvement of science education was taken up after NPE and mainly concentrated on expansion of physical facilities such as libraries and laboratories. Mathematics education and teacher training need be given more stress. Language teaching including teaching of English needs greater attention.

### Open Learning System

11.11 Considering the resource constraints, the open learning system has an important role in the universalisation of educational opportunities. The flexibility and innovativeness of the open learning system are particularly suited to the diverse requirements of the pluralist clientele. While reducing the pressure on the formal system, it offers facilities for continuing education to those who had to move out of the formal system at various stages, including those who had joined the vocational stream. It thus both broadens the access to education and helps the dropouts to get back to the mainstream. We are, therefore, of the view that the open learning be given utmost encouragement and that the National Open School should play the same lead role within the open school system as IGNOU with open universities.

## Chapter 12

### VOCATIONALISATION OF EDUCATION

12.1 Vocationalisation is one of the areas to which the NPERC attached great importance and paid a great deal of attention. While sharing some perceptions with NPE, the NPERC had major differences with NPE. Following are the common perceptions:

- i) vocationalisation of secondary education is crucial for educational reorganisation and national development;
- ii) the importance of the relationship between education and work which implies empowering people for work;
- iii) the significance of work experience;
- iv) the need for non-formal vocational courses for neo-literates, school drop-outs, working persons and unemployed or partially employed persons with special attention to women.

12.2 Following are the major differences:

- i) NPE envisaged vocational education to be a distinct stream, intended to prepare students for identified occupations. The NPERC, on the other hand, felt that the dichotomy between academic and vocational stream was not desirable and that a core component of vocationalisation should be part of the curriculum for all students at the secondary stage.
- ii) According to NPE, vocational courses would be ordinarily provided at the +2 stage; however, pre-vocational courses may be made available after class VIII to keep the scheme flexible. However, the NPERC was against fragmenting the secondary stage into lower secondary and higher secondary for introduction of vocational courses. The NPERC view would imply a switching over to 8+4 pattern of education instead of the present 10+2 pattern.

12.3 The divergences are largely explained by the NPERC's absolutist view of work experience and vocationalisation. According to the NPERC, the objective of vocationalisation cannot be merely imparting specific saleable manual skills; it should aim at relating the hand with the head and the heart so that productive labour and socially useful work become the medium for developing creative intelligence and a knowledge base on which one could keep building throughout one's life. The role of education should be empowering people for work and inculcating the appreciation of work for its own sake. Work as a medium of education should be reflected throughout the content and process of education. In coming out strongly against two streams, one academic and another vocational, the NPERC was also influenced by



its perception that vocational stream had come to be viewed by the students as well as parents to be inferior and meant for the less fortunate. The NPERC considered that Work Experience/Socially Useful Productive Work (SUPW) programmes had in practice degenerated into trivial activities and put forth the view that instead of being provided through structured programmes, Work Experience should be endogenous to the whole process of education.

12.4 We do note that some of the recommendations, particularly, R.Nos.188 and 189, appear to be at variance with the NPERC's vision of vocationalisation. An integrated design of vocational education was suggested for classes IX to XII, according to which the students have a compulsory general core subject, a compulsory vocational core subject and different mixes of elective academic and vocational subjects. The vocational content of one of the options suggested is more vocational-intense than the present vocational stream. R.No.189 also referred to provision for specific skill training as one of the requirements for the long term viability of vocational education. Therefore, the two recommendations seem to imply that the NPERC did not exclude, in operational terms, streaming of subjects and occupation -- specific education and training.

12.5. While the NPERC did not specifically suggest any change in the 10+2 pattern, the integrated design of vocational education (R.Nos.188 and 189) would seem to imply that the four years from class IX to XII constitute a distinct four year block and that there should be a switch over to an 8+4 pattern. Each pattern has its distinct advantages and disadvantages and different countries have opted for different patterns for well considered reasons. However, it took nearly twenty years for the 10+2 pattern to be fully accepted in our country. A transition to yet another pattern would be a long-drawn-out process, and would impose further avoidable adjustment costs. The change to 8+4 pattern would necessitate re-writing the curricula and textbooks not only of vocational courses but also of general education.

12.6 We have taken a holistic view of the perceptions and the recommendations of the NPERC. We appreciate the concern of the NPERC for inculcation of a positive attitude to work from class I onwards, a concern which is very much in keeping with the NPE perception. We also feel that the Work Experience/SUPW courses need to be toned up in keeping with the common perception of NPE and the NPERC on Work Experience. The National Curricular Framework brought out by the NCERT suggested compulsory Work Experience at all stages of education. However, even at middle and secondary stages, the integration of work with learning has not come about as it ought to. The time allocation for Work Experience hardly exceeds ten per cent in many States. Though the NCERT guidelines were made available to the States, there has been no planned intervention either by the Central Government or by most States.

12.7 The idea of a core vocational course suggested by the NPERC (R.Nos.188 and 189) is very appealing. Generic vocational courses which cut across various occupational fields and which are primarily not occupation specific have many potential benefits. The benefits would include promoting the all-round personality of students, acting as a corrective to the textbook oriented learning process that goes on in school, fostering right values and attitude to work and providing the students with a general skill base which would facilitate acquisition of more specific skills.

12.8 The litmus test of any vocational programme is the eventual gainful placement of students in their chosen vocational areas. The employability of the students depends to a great extent on the relevance, quality, specificity and intensive nature of vocational education. Specifically tailored curricula have to be provided to students to develop skill proficiency for jobs. It would be necessary to improve the market orientation of the programme and to use training resources efficiently. Good vocational training costs more than general education and it is thus important to manage costs efficiently. We feel that undifferentiated teaching of vocational skills may foster the right attitudes to work but it may not facilitate the development of specific skills. The resources would be spread too thinly to provide the necessary inputs needed for preparation of employable students. We are fortified in our conclusion by the fact that countries which are making rapid progress in education and development such as South Korea, Philippines and China, are streaming their students. We, therefore, advocate retention of the present system of distinct streams of vocational education.

12.9 R.No.190 dealing with reorganisation of vocational courses for those who do not go in for formal secondary school system, R.No.192 dealing with work benches and practice schools, R.No.193 dealing with teacher education courses, and R.Nos.195 and 197 dealing with management of vocational education have no new policy implications. They relate to implementation modalities which are congruent with NPE/POA. We suggest that these recommendations be taken into account while revising the POA.

12.10 R.No.194 suggested that the management, planning and implementation of the vocational education programmes should be decentralised and entrusted to individual high schools and school complexes. Flowing from this recommendation, R.No.196 suggested that the concept of National and State Councils of Vocational Education should be reformulated in the framework of decentralised planning. We note that under the existing scheme, a number of functions are decentralised. These include the planning of courses, and selection of institutions and industries for collaboration. The District Vocational Surveys are expected to provide valuable inputs for the planning process. Arrangements for teaching-learning are also decentralised and are expected to be provided at the school; coordination is envisaged at the district level. However, a certain degree of centralisation of the arrangement is necessary to ensure national standards of

achievement. Therefore, a few functions like overall planning, monitoring and supervisory role have been envisaged at the State and Central levels. The Central Institute of Vocational Education and State Councils of Vocational Education are expected to provide the necessary resource support for the programmes at the Central and State levels. Therefore, we feel that the degree of and areas for decentralisation should be determined with reference to the monitoring and periodic evaluation of the scheme.

12.11 We take note of the fact that vocationalisation is a complex programme in which inputs of a diverse nature have to be provided in a coordinated manner. Therefore, we feel that greater rigour must be brought to bear on the planning and implementation of the programme, particularly in regard to the conduct of district surveys, the preparatory measures needed for starting a course, linkages with employers, pre-service and in-service training for teachers, preparation of good quality instructional material, adequate management structure and provision of vertical mobility for graduates of vocational education.

12.12 To summarise, we recommend the following:

- i) The existing vocational stream at the +2 level may be suitably strengthened and, wherever possible, the vocational courses may be started from class IX also.
- ii) Generic vocational courses may be introduced on a selective basis; to begin with generic vocational courses may be tried out in about ten per cent of the schools.
- iii) The Work Experience programme may be systematically implemented by allocating 12.5 per cent to 20 per cent of the school time for these activities; the activities should have a practical orientation in relation to various subjects under this programme. The vocational "core" would find place at the secondary and higher secondary stages; Work Experience/ SUPW would relate to elementary education.
- iv) The other recommendations relating to implementation may be taken note of while revising POA.
- v) Greater rigour should be brought to bear on the planning and implementation of the scheme.

## Chapter 13

### HIGHER EDUCATION

13.1 Chapter 9 of the NPERC Report, dealing with Higher Education, contain twenty-three recommendations (R.Nos.198-220). Recommendation No.220 relating to grievance redressal is dealt with in the chapter on 'The Management of Education' as the recommendation has a bearing on the educational administration as a whole.

#### Policy Recommendations

2. The following recommendations relate to policy:

- i) Re-examination of the feasibility of a national level statutory mechanism for strongly discouraging non-standard and sub-standard universities and colleges (R.No.198).
- ii) Universities should become instruments of development in the respective regions and consistent with this concept, curriculum, course development, etc., should undergo significant changes (R.No.214).
- iii) The National Testing Service (NTS) should only be a resource institution; the testing of competencies should be left to the concerned user agencies (R.No.215).
- iv) There is no need to set up a Central Council of Rural Institutes; the functions envisaged for the Council can be performed by the UGC and State Councils of Higher Education (R.Nos.216 and 217).
- v) There is no need to set up a National Council of Higher Education; the same objectives can be achieved by a two-tier structure, namely, a Council of Ministers and a Council of Secretaries (R.No.219).

#### Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education

13.3 R.No. 198 is based on the following premises:

- i) the unplanned proliferation of colleges and universities is the bane of higher education;
- ii) the existing powers of UGC to control proliferation are inadequate.

The first premise is universally accepted. The NPE itself recognised the need to effect an all-round improvement in the institutions already established and proposed that the main emphasis will be on the consolidation of, and expansion of

facilities in, the existing institutions and on protecting the system from degradation. The POA envisaged an important role for the UGC and the State Councils of Higher Education in securing a planned development of the higher education system. The UGC also is not in favour of establishment of colleges and universities without adequate facilities and, as early as 1972, the Commission had circulated the necessary guidelines in this regard. In fact, the UGC gives grants only to those universities and colleges with established minimum prescribed facilities. We have given careful consideration to the recommendation of the NPERC. We take note of the fact that States, in general, have been averse to a Central regulatory legislation and that the UGC itself prefers to rely on persuasion than on statutory authority. It is not advisable to set up a national level statutory mechanism to regulate the opening of non-standard and sub-standard universities and colleges. We are of the view that the proliferation of colleges without adequate facilities can be curbed to a large extent if the universities exercise rigorous control and insist on creation of necessary infrastructure and educational facilities before granting affiliation and if the State Governments respect the decision of the universities in these matters. We are further of the view that the establishment and operationalisation of State Councils of Higher Education will go a long way in the planned development of higher education.

#### Extension Service

13.4 In the NPERC's perspective, the higher education system should strive for a balance between regional expectations of the people and global activities in education and research. Consequently, the NPERC recommended that universities should involve themselves in developmental issues and become instruments of development for their respective regions (R.No.214). For this purpose, it was suggested that courses in universities and colleges should be redesigned and the teachers and students should participate more actively in developmental programmes including improvement of rural schools. The spirit underlying the NPERC's recommendation is laudable; ideally extension service should be as important a function of the universities and colleges as teaching and research. However, considering the present state of higher education system, we feel that the first priority should be restoring intellectual vigour, seriousness of purpose and discipline into the higher education system in order to make it work. Academic Credit for extension work could be considered and in certain areas directly related to extension activities like social work and rural development. Even the courses can be redesigned. However, it would be neither feasible nor desirable to redesign all courses as suggested by the NPERC. Efforts should be made to secure involvement of teachers and students in extension work such as literacy. We strongly reiterate para 8.22 of NPE. Adequate facilities should be provided to ensure that all students participate in one or the other existing schemes, particularly National Services Scheme (NSS), and National Cadet Corps (NCC). Specific schemes should be formulated to encourage out of school youth to participate in

national service and development. Some of us also suggest a two-year composite programme for students who complete the +2 stage, comprising paramilitary service, development of vocational and professional skills, and extension work in rural areas. An important feature of the programme would be that the students would be required to participate in these programmes outside their home state with a view to promoting national integration. The feasibility and financial implications of the programme will have to be worked out. One of us does not subscribe to this view.

### National Testing Service

13.5 While accepting the importance of delinking jobs from degrees and the need for a National Testing Service (NTS), the NPERC recommended that the NTS need not be a body for conduct of tests in a centralised way (R.No.215). One of us, however, does not accept the idea of delinking jobs from degrees. Testing of competencies, in the NPERC's view, is best left to user agencies, whether they be employers or educational institutions. The NTS should be a developmental agency engaged in research and performing certain service functions such as building models for tests, test development, test administration and clearing house of experiences. The majority is of the view that unless the NTS undertakes the conduct of tests, the organisation cannot acquire the required expertise and develop into a competent resource centre, as envisaged by the NPERC.

### Rural Universities

13.6 NPE envisaged the development of a pattern of education related to the needs of rural communities and strengthening and supporting of programmes of Gandhian basic education. Following this the POA suggested the setting up of a Central Council of Rural Institutes to formulate and implement a well co-ordinated programme of rural education. A proposal for setting up such a Council was formulated by the Department of Education based on a project report prepared by the Education Consultants (India) Ltd. The NPERC opined that there was no need to set up a Council and that the functions envisaged for the Council can be discharged by the UGC and the State Councils of Higher Education themselves (R.No. 216-217). However, the Department of Education felt that this was not a feasible recommendation for the following reasons:

- i) Only one State has so far set up the State Council of Higher Education. Even if more Councils are set up, their main focus would remain on conventional system of higher education.
- ii) Because of the rapid growth of the conventional system, the UGC has not been able to give adequate attention or necessary encouragement to the development of rural universities. It will be difficult for the UGC to rearrange its priorities in favour of rural institutions.

- iii) Many rural institutions provide integrated education including education at school level. These institutes are not affiliated to the university system and do not come within the purview of the UGC. Therefore, a separate body like the Central Council is required to promote their activities.
- iv) The proposed Central Council will also initiate and encourage setting up of new rural institutes. The UGC cannot perform this function.

We are of the view that a Central Council of Rural Institutes is necessary to provide the much needed fillip to rural education on Gandhian lines and that it should be set up immediately.

#### National Council of Higher Education

13.7 The NPE envisaged the setting up of a national body covering higher education in general, agricultural, medical, technical, legal and other professional fields in the interest of greater co-ordination and consistency in policy, sharing of facilities and developing inter-disciplinary research. The NPERC took the view that coordination can as well be achieved by having a Council of Ministers and a Council of Secretaries dealing with subjects related to higher education instead of creating another institution (R.No. 219). Following NPE, the Department of Education initiated the process of consultation with Planning Commission, the UGC and other Ministries concerned like Agriculture and Health. All these organisations expressed reservations about the proposal to set up an apex body as they felt that such a body would erode the autonomy of existing institutions. Therefore, while recognising the importance of achieving coordination, we agree with the recommendation of the NPERC.

#### Other Recommendations

13.8 The following are the recommendations of the NPERC which have no policy implications:

- Restructuring the University Grants Commission (R.No.200)
- Relieving universities of the responsibility of holding undergraduate examinations (R.No.201)
- Adequate research facilities in every college imparting post-graduate instruction (R.No.202)
- A quick examination by the UGC of the report of the Committee on Autonomous Colleges (R.No.203)
- Early decision on the report of the Gnanam Committee (R.No.204)

- Decentralisation of curriculum development (R.No.205)
- Study by UGC of the implementation of the conditions associated with revision of the pay-scales of university and college teachers (R.No.206)
- Pre-induction teacher training (R.No.207)
- Research (R.Nos.208-213)
- Diversification by Agriculture Universities (R.No.218)

13.9 R.Nos. 206, 208-213 and 218 are general suggestions which we are sure would be taken note of by the agencies concerned. We limit our observations to the rest of the recommendations listed in para 13.8

#### Restructuring of the UGC

13.10 The NPERC suggested a change in the structure of the UGC by providing for at least five full-time Members, apart from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, with specialisation in the specific areas of teaching, research, extension, management and finance (R.No.200). We were informed that the question of restructuring the UGC on the lines suggested by NPERC had been considered in the past. Though the U.G.C. Act was indeed amended in 1971 to provide for three full-time Members the amendment was later repealed as it was felt that it would not be desirable to have two categories of members, viz., full-time Members and part-time Members, with the latter having, by implication, lower role and status as compared to full-time Members. We appreciate this point of view and feel that there is no need for appointment of full-time Members.

13.11 The NPERC also suggested the opening of regional offices with adequate decentralisation of authority and functions (R.No.200). We were informed that the UGC had accepted the need for establishment of some regional offices and also received a report of the Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad. We strongly recommend that regional offices should be set up at the earliest, with adequate authority and functions.

#### Undergraduate Examinations

13.12 The NPERC while recommending that Universities should be relieved of the burden of conducting undergraduate examinations (R.No.201), did not suggest any alternative arrangement for this purpose. We note that the Gnamam Committee also made a similar recommendation. However, since most of the universities are affiliating universities, this recommendation can be implemented only when most of the colleges become autonomous or when a system of internal evaluation gradually replaces a terminal examination, or when an independent State level examining body is set up to conduct common examinations for



all undergraduate courses.

#### Research Facilities in Colleges

13.13 The NPERC suggested providing of adequate facilities for research to all affiliating colleges offering post-graduate instruction (R.No. 202). While this is desirable, the resource constraint precludes the feasibility of implementing the recommendation in toto. The UGC may, however, consider augmenting research facilities in selected colleges within the available resources.

#### Gnanam Committee Report

13.14 The NPERC recommended early decisions on the report of the Gnanam Committee (R.No.204). We note that in accordance with the decision of the CABE, in its forty-sixth meeting held in March, 1991, a CABE Committee was appointed to examine the Gnanam Committee report in detail keeping in view the comments of the State Governments.

#### Curriculum Development

13.15 In 1986, the UGC initiated the Scheme of Curriculum Development Centres (CDCs) with the objective of carrying out a thorough review of existing syllabi and courses in different universities and for suggesting measures for modernising and restructuring the courses. The CDCs are located in twenty-six universities in different parts of the country. The model curricula prepared by the CDCs were discussed in national level workshops and circulated to all universities with guidelines. The NPERC, while noting that the universities and colleges were free to adapt model curricula with such modifications as they deem fit, opined that the higher education as a whole had come to look upon the guidelines of the UGC as iron-bound mandates and that this by itself had introduced a certain rigidity. On this basis, it recommended that the work done by the CDCs should be decentralised and that it should be left to the universities and colleges to seek the assistance of the UGC in the area of curriculum (R.No.205). The UGC has a legislative mandate to determine and maintain standards in higher education. Curriculum reform is, therefore, very much in the UGC's Charter. What is important is that the UGC discharges its functions in a participative and interactive manner. This is exactly how the Curriculum Development Scheme was implemented. Therefore, we feel that the scheme should be continued; however, to allay any misgivings the UGC may reiterate that the universities have full freedom to adapt model curricula. The UGC should also consider specific requests from the universities for curriculum development.

#### Teacher Training

13.16 The NPERC recommended one year pre-induction training of teachers after recruitment to be provided by the respective

universities on decentralised basis (R.No.207). The NPE had laid emphasis on preparation of teachers, both at the beginning of the service and at subsequent intervals. We were informed that in pursuance of the NPE, the UGC had set up forty-eight Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs) in different parts of the country for organising orientation programmes for newly appointed Lecturers and re-orientation of courses for in-service teachers. We were also informed that so far nearly 20,000 teachers received training at the ASCs, that the Expert Committee appointed by the UGC found that, by and large, the ASCs had served a useful purpose and that the UGC had decided to continue to expand the Scheme. In view of the resource constraint, it may not be possible to provide training facilities in every university. We suggest that the UGC may closely monitor the implementation of the Scheme of ASCs.

## Chapter 14

### TECHNICAL AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

#### NPERC's Perspective

14.1 The NPERC, in its perspective on technical and management education underscored the following:

- i) Need to unflinchingly project the human face of technology.
- ii) Technical and management education should pay attention to the real needs of our rural society and disadvantaged sections.
- iii) A culture of eternal dependence on foreign technology should not be created.

This perspective is largely a restatement of NPE/POA and of the Science and Technology policy.

#### Brain Drain

14.2 Almost all the recommendations relate to specific modalities of implementation. The one recommendation which has policy implication is R.No. 229 relating to brain drain. The NPERC put forth the view that it should be compulsory for the graduates of IITs and RECs to serve at least three years within the country before going abroad as they receive high quality education at highly subsidised costs. The fact remains that the country has not been able to gainfully employ all the graduates passing out from technical institutions in the country, particularly in some disciplines. Further, in an age of global inter-dependance, no country can afford to insulate itself from the emerging developments in the frontiers of science and technology, for insulation entails technological and economic stagnation and even regression. Our young scientists and technologists should not be deprived of opportunities of interaction with institutions and academics outside the country and from acquiring valuable research and work experience abroad. Many of our professionals do return to the country after study/work abroad. This trend should further increase with the modernisation and technological upgradation of the economy, the increasing availability of modern facilities in industry, universities and research institutions and the more liberalised incentives for NRI investment. If properly utilised, the Indian professionals abroad can constitute a brain bank. We are of the view that all efforts should be made to ensure that environment for science and technology in the country is attractive enough for talented persons. However, we do not consider regulatory legislation as advisable. One of us does not agree with the last point.

### Thrust Area Schemes

14.3 The NPERC had recommended a detailed evaluation of the thrust area schemes by a national level expert committee (R.No.221). These schemes are extremely important because of their linkages with economy. Therefore, a proper system of monitoring and evaluation is extremely important. We have been informed that large scale funding has been provided for these schemes only during the last three years and that it would be premature to have the schemes evaluated by a national level expert committee. Therefore, we suggest that a detailed evaluation be taken up in 1994-95, the third year of the Eighth Plan (1992-97) by when the schemes would have operated on a large scale for about 5-6 years.

### Community Polytechnics

14.4 R.No.222 suggested the revision of the scheme of community polytechnics on the basis of the report of the Kalbag Committee. The Department of Education, GOI, should take early decision on the reports of the Kalbag Committee.

### IITs

14.5 R.No.224 suggested early decision to be taken on the report of the IIT Review Committee. The Department of Education, GOI, should take early decision on the report.

### AICTE

14.6 R.No.223 suggested that emergent steps should be taken to ensure that regional offices of the AICTE are fully staffed and that adequate authority and function are devolved on these offices. We have given a great deal of thought to the functioning of the AICTE Act. We do appreciate the reasons which impelled its enactment. We are of the firm view that it is necessary to ensure the maintenance of standards in technical education. It cannot be gainsaid that there is no need for an all-India professional body in the field of technical education for planning, formulation and maintenance of norms and standards, accreditation, funding of priority areas, monitoring and evaluation, maintenance of parity of certification and awards, and ensuring the coordinated and integrated development of technical and management education. However, we feel that the role of AICTE should be akin to that of the UGC and that it should not be more regulatory than the UGC. We have explained in para 13.3 of the report the reasons why we cannot subscribe to the recommendation of the NPERC for vesting the UGC with statutory powers to regulate the opening of non-standard and sub-standard universities and colleges. We are of the view that the Regional Committees of the AICTE should be adequately staffed and that the Chairman of the Regional Committee should be an Education Minister of a State from the region, by rotation. The Regional Committee should have the power to make recommendations on the opening of new institutions, starting of

new courses and enhancing the intake within the framework of the guidelines laid down by the AICTE. The State Governments and the universities should issue the necessary approvals based on the recommendations of the Regional Committees only.

#### Future Perspective and Measures

14.7 The NPERC also made a number of recommendations regarding improvement of quality and standards, upgradation of infrastructure facilities, industry-institutions linkages, technology watch and manpower planning, promotion of R&D, special programmes for the disadvantaged, entrepreneurship development and continuing education and retraining programmes. In the revision of POA, these recommendations would have to be given due consideration.

## Chapter 15

### LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION

15.1 The present policy was enunciated by NPE 1968. After examining the question in great detail, the NPE came to the conclusion that the essentials of the 1968 Policy on languages could hardly be improved upon and that they continue to be relevant. The NPE commended energetic and purposeful implementation of the 1968 Policy provisions. The NPERC also reiterated the 1968 Policy. It concentrated on a study of the implementation of the policy and of the measures needed to improve its implementation. Its recommendations are useful for improving the ongoing schemes and for toning up the performance of the institutions in this field, such as the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan (KHS), the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) and the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL).

15.2 In regard to the Three-Language Formula, the NPERC opined that whatever be the difficulties or unevenness in the implementation of this formula, it had stood the test of time and that it was not desirable or prudent to reopen it. Two of us, however, are of the view that English should be the link language. The NPERC had urged the uniform and rational implementation of the Three-Language Formula and had made many suggestions in the area of language teaching, training of language teachers and curriculum development. It also had suggested proper coordination between KHS, CIEFL, and CIIL for ensuring uniformity in the matter of acquisition of language competency by the students in the school system (R.No.235). The NPERC also suggested conversion of CIIL into an autonomous body like CIEFL and KHS.

15.3 The NPERC also made many very useful suggestions for promoting the use of Indian languages in higher education, special measures for development of Hindi as per Article 351 of the Constitution, maintenance and coordination of academic standards in Sanskrit education, development of Sindhi and other inter-state languages like Gorkhali, Santhali, Maithili and Bhojpuri, national level facility for training and translation, a fresh linguistic survey of India and use of technology for language development (R.Nos.236 -241 and 244 -247). We are of the view that all these recommendations, except R.Nos.239 and 246, are useful and should be taken into account in the revision of POA.

15.4 R.No.239 suggested the merger of Kendriya Hindi Sansthan (KHS), Central Hindi Directorate (CHD) and Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology (CSTT) with a view to strengthening and unifying the efforts for promotion of Hindi as envisaged in Article 351 of the Constitution. However, we feel that the merger of these three institutions would not be desirable. The charters of each of these institutions is different. The CHD is meant for production of bi-lingual tri-

lingual, multi-lingual dictionaries and propagation of Hindi in non-Hindi speaking areas, KHS for training of Hindi teachers and CSTT for evolution of terminology in Indian languages. Further, the body that would emerge from the merger would be unwieldy; merger is also likely to generate service litigation as the service conditions of the employees of these three organisations would be affected.

15.5 R.No.246 suggests that a fresh linguistic survey of India based on rational principles should be undertaken. We notice that many agencies including the Registrar General of India, Anthropological Survey of India and some institutions of educational research are already engaged on the collection of data on languages. In view of this as well as sharp differences of opinion on the issue of languages, and the possibility of controversies arising out of a linguistic survey, we feel that a fresh linguistic survey is not desirable.

15.6 The NPERC also supported the recommendation of the Ali Sardar Jafri Committee on the development of Urdu. We have been informed that the Department of Education, Government of India, are processing the entire report of the Ali Sardar Jafri Committee in consultation with the educationists and experts on Urdu language. We, therefore, are not offering any view on this recommendation.

## Chapter 16

### CONTENT AND PROCESS OF EDUCATION

16.1 In Chapter 12 of its Report, the NPERC considered a wide range of issues relating to the content and process of education. These issues include curriculum, cultural content of education, value education, languages, educational technology, computer education, work experience, environment awareness, mathematics and science education, sports, physical education and youth activities, examination reforms, and reduction in the load of the school bag. R.No. 254 relates to languages. The NPERC itself stated that the measures mentioned in R.No.254 were more elaborately dealt with in the Chapter "Languages in Education." Therefore, R.No.254 is not considered in this chapter. R.No.258(i) relates to work experience/SUPW which, according to NPERC itself, was brought out in the chapter "Education and Right to Work". Hence R.No. 258(i) is also not considered here.

#### Curriculum

16.2 The NPERC referred to the national curricular framework which was prepared by the NCERT in pursuance of NPE. The NPERC puts forth the view that the preparation by the NCERT of instructional packages in core curriculum areas and of exemplary packages on specific work-experience activities reflected a Centrally directed effort to revise the curriculum; while Central coordination would be meaningful, the NPERC opined that the process of preparation of curriculum should be decentralised through involvement of State agencies. We note that even now the national curricular framework prepared by the NCERT merely provided guidelines and that the actual preparation of the curriculum is done by the State agencies for their schools. Therefore, NCERT's role in curriculum is one of coordination only. Referring to the cultural content of education NPERC feel that the curriculum should not only include India's common heritage as suggested by the NPE but also the diversities of cultural traditions of all parts of India, particularly those symbolised through oral and folk traditions. The NPE also suggested that in conveying to the student community the cultural traditions of the country, the need for acceptance/rejection of the same based on critical analysis should be inculcated. These recommendations imply that there are two kinds of cultural heritage -- one common and the other non-common -- and that diversities of culture are not a part of India's common culture. India's composite culture, on the other hand, does encompass the diversities. In suggesting that the core curriculum should promote values such as India's common cultural heritage, the NPE does not ignore the diversities. This is clear from the fact that para 4.6 stressed the need for the curriculum at all stages of education to create awareness of the rich cultural identity of the tribal people. Implicit in R.No.249 is a static view of culture. In the process of historical and cultural development, many elements become obsolete and are given up while some others undergo change and



modification. Therefore, culture should be viewed as a process and not as something which was created at any fixed time in the past in its final form which is either to be revered or denigrated.

### Value Education

16.3 The NPERC endorsed the provisions of the NPE relating to value education and was appreciative of the emphasis which NPE placed on the unity and integrity of the country. Most of the values which the NPERC felt should pervasively inform the content and process of education are specifically enumerated by NPE. The NPERC was of the view that value education should not be confined to the curriculum translated in the class room. It suggested several other activities for promoting values such as establishment of linkages between the school and the community and extra curricular activities like community singing of folk songs. These suggestions (R.No.251-253) should be taken into account while revising the POA.

### Educational Technology

16.4 The NPERC had generally endorsed the NPE formulations regarding educational technology. R.No. 255 offered suggestions for improving the implementation of the scheme of educational technology. Among the measures suggested are, assessing the status of utilisation of electronic hardware provided to the various State Governments, removing the infrastructural bottlenecks which come in the way of using the hardware and better coordination and monitoring. The NPERC reiterated the importance of training and re-training of teachers in the use of educational technology in classroom instruction. The recommendation also advocated better utilisation of the facilities in the existing institutions like the UGC, CIEFL, CIIL and KHS. The NPERC also suggested measures for properly manning the technical and professional posts in the SIETs so that the capacities of the SIETs are fully utilised. We suggest that this recommendation should be followed up by the Central and State Governments and that it be taken into account while revising the POA.

### Computer Education

16.5 R.Nos. 256 and 257 relating to computer education have no policy implications; they relate to implementation of the scheme of Computer Education. The NPERC struck a note of caution about expansion of computer education: it is necessary to take into account the resource constraint and higher priorities like WEE. The NPERC also suggested a review of the CLASS project. We have given careful consideration to the recommendation of the NPERC. While resource availability is an important consideration, we feel that in the emerging technological era computer illiteracy is as great a handicap as illiteracy and that we cannot afford to be left behind in comparison with other countries. Therefore, there is need to progressively expand

facilities for computer education in schools, particularly at the secondary stage. We have taken note of the intention of the Department of Education, Government of India to recast the ongoing Scheme of Computer Education so as to make it more effective.

### Environmental Education and Teaching of Science and Mathematics

16.6 The NPERC agreed with the emphasis given by NPE to work experience, environmental orientation to education, mathematics teaching and science education; however, it had differences about implementation modalities. The NPERC suggested that appreciation of environment should be inculcated among the children through their continuous participation in project work. We find that the Centrally sponsored scheme of Environment Orientation to School Education provides for a number of project activities aimed at creating environment awareness amongst the children and the community. The NPERC desired that traditional wisdom and knowledge should be integrated in the teaching and learning of mathematics and science. In this context the NPERC specifically referred to the 'sutras of vedic mathematics' as enrichment material for school education. We feel that in the curriculum and teaching of mathematics and science, a balance has to be struck between the historical perspective and the present state of art and that understanding of the concept should be emphasised. The NPERC preferred the use of discovery methods in the teaching of science so that students develop their own perceptions about natural and physical phenomenon. It also advocated orientation of science teachers, publication of new books, devising simple experiments for science teaching and inculcation of scientific temper. These suggestions are essentially a re-statement of paras 8.18 and 8.19 of NPE, which envisaged strengthening of science education so as to facilitate the child to develop well-defined abilities and values such as the spirit of enquiry, creativity, objectivity, the courage to question, an aesthetic sensibility and problem solving and decision making skills.

### Youth

16.7 R.Nos. 259-266 contained the suggestions of the NPERC on the schemes for involvement of youth in national and social developmental programmes. We urge that these suggestions be taken into account while revising the POA. We are strongly of the opinion that students should be required to participate in one or the other existing schemes, such as NSS and NCC, as envisaged in para 8.22 of NPE.

### Examination Reforms

16.8 Regarding examination reforms, the NPERC exhaustively reviewed the observations and recommendations made by different Committees and Commissions, starting from the Indian University Commission (1902). During the course of the review, the NPERC also referred to the provisions of NPE in regard to evaluation

process and examination reforms. The NPERC also specifically referred to the NPE formulations calling for removal of subjectivity in examinations, de-emphasis of memorisation, continuous and comprehensive internal evaluation of the scholastic and non-scholastic achievements of students, improvement in the conduct of examinations, introduction of concomitant changes in instructional materials and methodology, introduction of semester system from the secondary stage in a phased manner and use of grades in place of marks. The NPERC further listed out the short-term and long-term measures suggested by the POA for carrying out examination reforms. The NPERC also presented the status of the examination reforms in different States at the university and school levels. The NPERC came to the conclusion that the elements of examination reforms were implemented piecemeal and without due coordination, and consequently the system of examination was dictating and distorting the character and quality of education.

16.9 In its recommendations (R.Nos. 267 and 268), the NPERC particularly made four points, namely:

- i) The examination reforms should be construed as a package.
- ii) The package as a whole should be implemented instead of in piecemeal and ad hoc implementation of individual elements.
- iii) Implementation of the package suggested by the NPERC bristled with practical problems such as the vast diversities in the education system and the wide spread apprehensions about the credibility of the internal evaluation process.
- iv) The need to constitute a high level National Examination Reforms Commission to coordinate and monitor the progress in Examination Reforms at various levels.

16.10 The reading of the recommendation as a whole would make it appear that the NPERC was itself undecided about the immediate feasibility or acceptability of the package suggested by it. Given the diversity of the educational institutions, it would not be realistic to prescribe a single package of reforms across the board. Some of the reforms like introduction of semester system may be relevant for higher education rather than for school stage. Facilities for multiple entry and exit, and transfer of grade from one institution to another are not immediately feasible, at least in the school stage, and call for a degree of uniformity in curriculum and medium of instruction, which are difficult to achieve in a continental nation like ours. Therefore, the endeavour should be to strive for the best achievable results rather than plan for the best unobtainable package. Examination reforms have necessarily to be contextual and evolutionary.

16.11 The essentiality of examination reforms cannot be overstated. We do feel that rather than leaving examination reforms to the individual initiatives and inclinations of the examining bodies, a strong and coordinated effort should be made by the Centre and the State Governments in this area. The idea underlying the constitution of an Examination Reforms Commission is appealing. However, rather than creating yet another institution, we suggest that the NCERT and the UGC should play a lead role in promoting and guiding examination reforms in school and higher education systems respectively. Inter alia, the following measures are suggested:

- i) Preparation of a status report of examination reform measures undertaken by the examining bodies.
- ii) Preparation of a National Examination Reform Framework to serve as a set of guidelines to the examining bodies which would have the freedom to innovate and adapt the framework to suit the specific situation.
- iii) Developing an effective mechanism for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the examination reforms by the different examining bodies.
- iv) Documentation and dissemination of innovations and measures for examination reforms.

#### "Load of School Bag"

16.12 The NPERC expressed concern about the "load of the school bag" and made a number of recommendations (R.No.259 to 276). The whole question of curriculum is complex and there are no simple solutions. The concern about curriculum load is universal. There is invariable tension between the knowledge explosion, particularly in the fields of science and technology, and the limitations of time during which the curriculum is to be transacted. While the load of the school bag is a valid concern, one cannot afford to ignore the requirements of modernisation and relevance. The NPERC questioned the value of preparing science material to catch up with the exponential growth of knowledge and emphasised the need to stress upon scientific method of acquiring knowledge rather than the knowledge itself. It is no doubt important to inculcate the scientific temper and scientific method and to imbue the students with spirit of enquiry, and problem solving and conceptualisation skills. However, the distinction drawn between the scientific method and scientific knowledge is artificial. Rather than teaching the scientific method in abstract, it is better to teach it in the relation to empirical facts and knowledge. Such an approach is all the more important in the initial stages of science education.

16.13 The NPE envisaged adoption of a child-centred approach to education in the context of efforts to promote universal

enrolment and universal retention of children upto 14 years of age and substantial improvement in the quality of education. The re-orientation of content and process of education at the school stage which was initiated after the adoption of the NPE, took into account many concerns including the question of reducing the burden on school students. Based on the NPE guidelines, the NCERT brought out in 1988 a National Curricular Framework for all stages of school education. The revised curriculum took into account the need for reduction of curricular load. The pedagogical thrust stressed in the National Curricular Framework of 1988 as well as in the NCERT syllabi/textbooks are based on a comprehensive understanding of the pupil's psyche, the learning process and conditions and methods of learning. The stress laid in the Framework on a child-centred approach to education, on the role of teacher as facilitator, on replacement of rote learning, lectures and information by interactive modes of teaching are designed to make the study of subjects interesting and easy to grasp. The NCERT curricula are designed as self-sufficient packages for the primary, upper primary, secondary and senior secondary stages. If the guidelines are followed carefully, the problem of the 'load of the school bag' will be mitigated. The NCERT textbooks in science subjects, particularly those for the +2 stage provide a detailed treatment of the difficult concepts and necessary resource material. At most of the places, the resource material has been kept non-evaluative. This has been done keeping in view the limitations of the libraries of not only the schools in the urban areas but more so of the schools in the rural and remote areas. The tendency on the part of the expensive private schools in urban areas to prescribe a large number of books, particularly in science subjects at +2 stage, has contributed to overburdening of students. The teachers of these schools need to be re-oriented so that they give up the habit of prescribing an unnecessarily large number of books.

## Chapter 17

### TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

#### NPERC Perspective

17.1 The NPERC is one with the NPE on salience of teacher education; overhaul of teacher education system is considered to be the very first step towards educational reorganisation. The NPERC also gave credit to the NPE for launching a nation-wide programme of strengthening teacher training institutions at the district level. It also noted that after 1987, substantial funds were provided for construction of buildings, purchase of books and creation of other facilities under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education. In Chapter 13 of its report, the NPERC made a large number of recommendations covering recruitment, content and process of teacher education (both pre-service and in-service), teacher welfare and participation in the management, and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education. The NPERC also offered suggestions on the participation of students in the corporate life of academic institutions.

#### Teacher Accountability and Evaluation

17.2 The NPERC's recommendations in Chapter 13 deal with operational matters which do not require any reformulation of the NPE. The lone exception is the suggestion to introduce a licensing system for teachers (R.No.292). The NPERC was of the view that the teacher was as much a professional as a doctor, an engineer or a lawyer. To qualify and to remain as a professional person, one must have updated knowledge and skills. Therefore, it is essential that every teacher, without exception, goes through an in-service education programme once in every five or six years. The requirement of updating must be linked to the continuance of a teacher as a professional. In the event of a teacher refusing to go through a re-orientation course or of attending a training course without learning anything, his teaching licence should be withdrawn. The licensing system envisaged by the NPERC goes beyond the requirements stipulated in professions like engineering, medicine and law. Professional bodies generally disqualify a member for proven misdemeanour and not for failure to update the skills. The administrative chores to be attended to in a licensing system of the type envisaged by the NPERC would be stupendous; the coverage of as many as four million teachers would require the creation of a cumbersome regulatory bureaucracy which cannot but vitiate the academic environment. Licensing of teachers as suggested by the NPERC is therefore not desirable. The concerns of the NPERC, namely, ensuring teacher accountability and competence are extremely valid but the solution offered is draconian. We feel that operationalisation of the relevant NPE formulations (Paras 9.2 and 9.3) would meet these concerns. NPE envisaged creation of an open, participative and data-based teacher evaluation and laying down the norms of accountability with incentives for good

performance and disincentives for non-performance. NPE also called upon the teachers associations to play a significant role in upholding professional integrity, enhancing the dignity of the teacher and in curbing professional misconduct. NPE suggested that national level associations of teachers could prepare a code of professional ethics for teachers and see to its observance.

#### Admission to Teacher Training Programmes

17.3 The NPE/RC suggested that selection of students for teacher training courses should be regulated through stringent aptitude and attainment and not merely on university grade or marks (R.No.277). In the context of teacher recruitment, NPE talked about reorganising the methods to ensure merit, objectivity and conformity with spatial and functional requirements. The selection system, whether for teachers or teacher trainees, should be objective and immune from undue inducements, thereby fostering the credibility of the selection process.

#### Content and Process of Teacher Education

17.4 The NPERC listed out a number of propositions which should inform content and process of teacher training programmes (R.Nos.278-281 and R.No.283). These propositions are an elaboration of the provisions in NPE/POA and many of them are built into the teacher education programmes. The major recommendations are the following:

- i) Theory and practice should be integrated for situational applications.
- ii) The training programmes should promote qualities and values such as empathy, particularly to the girl child and children from educationally backward sections of society, and right attitude towards the profession and society.
- iii) Teacher training programmes should cover concepts and methods relating to child-centred approach, multi-grade teaching, continuous and comprehensive evaluation, development of content on the basis of minimum levels of learning, linkages with ECCE and adoption of playway and activity based approach in primary education.
- iv) In-service programmes should be related to the specific needs of teachers and take care of the future needs of teacher growth, evaluation and follow up.
- v) Innovative strategies and pilot trial of significant activities should be encouraged.
- vi) Distance education system of in-service education should be developed using radio, TV and print media.

Though many of these propositions are already incorporated in the teacher education programme, we commend these to National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and State Councils of Research and Training (SCERTs) for consideration whenever the curriculum is reviewed or renewed.

### Correspondence Courses

17.5 The NPERC reiterated the view of the NCTE that the first degree in teacher education should not be given through correspondence education (R.No.282). In the correspondence mode of pre-service teacher training, the trainees do not get adequate exposure to school conditions; and practice-teaching is perfunctory. Therefore, a correspondence course imparts at best a bookish knowledge which is not adequate for preparing a balanced professional teacher. This recommendation is very sound and needs to be followed up vigorously by the Central and State Governments and the universities. We are happy to know that the University Grants Commission had taken note of NCTE's view and issued necessary instructions to the universities for discontinuing pre-service teacher training courses. We would have liked the NPERC to take a strong position against the proliferation of sub-standard teacher education institutions. Unless firm and effective steps are taken immediately to put an end to the commercialisation of teacher education, it would be futile to talk about educational standards. We, therefore, strongly urge that the NCTE be immediately provided, as envisaged in the NPE/POA, with necessary resources and capability.

### Internship Model

17.6 The NPERC made a strong plea for the internship mode of teacher training (R.Nos.284-285). The NPERC felt that the conventional institution-based model of pre-service and in-service teacher training may not be adequate to meet the challenge of UEE. The conventional approach suffers from several deficiencies; it is isolated from the ground realities, the linkages between theory and practice are weak and the infrastructural facilities inadequate. The emphasis should, therefore, shift towards developing the teacher rather than on training the teacher. In the internship model, the training starts with a brief theoretical orientation at teacher education institutions. This phase is followed by internship in a school for a 3-5 year period. Each trainee would be attached as an intern to an experienced and skilled teacher who would function as a real model. In the second and third years, the supervision may become less frequent and the trainees left to function more independently. During this phase of supervised teaching, the trainees would be required to attend short sessions in the teacher education institutions. The trainee would be certified as a trained teacher only after 3-5 years on the basis of continuous evaluation by the supervisors and senior teachers. According to the NPERC, internship model has better scope of development of requisite skills and attitudes in the teachers. The NPERC



recommended this model of training for 'para-teachers' only. For other teachers, the NPERC suggested exploring this model as a possible way of training. There are at the moment no well-documented experiences on the internship model and the practical aspects for its adoption on a large scale and its comparative advantages need to be examined further. An expert body like the NCTE should study the model in-depth and guide the SCERTs and teacher education institutions.

### B.Ed. Syllabus

17.7 R.Nos.286-287 deal with details of syllabus for B.Ed. courses and the types of courses to be opened. NCTE may take necessary action in consultation with States/UTs.

### Attributes of Teacher Education

17.8 In R.Nos.288-289, the NPERC had identified the attributes which a teacher educator should possess. The NPERC also suggested that the programmes should be designed for teacher educators and that such programmes should inculcate all the desired attributes in the trainee (R.No.288-289). We understand that the NCERT is preparing a special programme for teacher educators. Recommendations of the NPERC may be kept in mind by the NCERT.

### In-service Programme: Planning

17.9 R.No.290 suggested that the responsibility for planning and organising in-service teacher training programmes should be assigned to the educational complex. The educational complex can also provide an effective channel of communication between the school and the DIET. The NPERC elaborated the concept of educational complex in Chapter 14 "Decentralisation and Participative Management." Our views on educational complexes are also set out in the corresponding chapter. Suffice to say here that in Chapter 14, the NPERC had advocated testing, during the Eighth Plan, with the idea of educational complexes on a pilot basis and development of functional models; in other chapters including the chapter on "Teachers and Students", the NPERC proceeded on the premise that the educational complex was a proven idea and can be entrusted with the entire responsibility of management of education and major programmes like teacher education. It would be premature to assign to educational complexes the responsibility for planning and organising teacher training programmes before effective functional models are developed. Therefore, training and management of in-service training programmes for elementary teachers should be the responsibility of the DIETs only.

### Teacher Education Institute: Faculty

17.10 The NPERC was rightly critical of the practice of using teacher training institutions as a dumping ground for unwanted and troublesome persons, and suggested that they should be manned

by competent persons (R.No.291). The NPERC rightly held that the faculty of the DIETs is the most crucial element in the teacher education programme. We strongly endorse the appeal of the NPERC to the State Governments that they should give emergent attention to fill up all the posts and to frame recruitment rules. These rules should ensure that the posts are filled up by competent and motivated persons with reasonable tenure.

### Teacher Education Scheme

17.11 We also strongly endorse the recommendation of the NPERC (R.Nos.296-297) that emergent steps should be taken for operationalising the teacher education institutions for which financial assistance was provided by the Government of India and that further financial assistance should be denied to those States in which the physical progress and utilisation of funds are unsatisfactory.

17.12 The NPERC recommended that the DIET should be provided autonomy from the SCERT and the State Government for taking initiative in organising its own research and training programmes (R.No.294). It also suggested that the responsibility of DIETs should be extended to cover ECCE, vocationalisation of the educational process and examination reforms, modularisation and multiple entry and exit points (R.No.295). We do feel that every DIET should be a distinct identity with enough operational autonomy. It should have the "space" to experiment and to innovate. However, it would be more advantageous to have a networking arrangement of DIETs and the SCERT, with the SCERT providing necessary guidance and coordination. The SCERT can also act as a clearing house for sharing of experiences and information. We would recommend an independent and autonomous structure for SCERTs conducive to their emergence as genuine academic institutions. At the present, only a few DIETs have become fully operational; therefore, we do not feel that DIETs can, at this stage, take on the additional responsibilities as envisaged by the NPERC. It would be worthwhile to examine setting up separate institutions at the State level for some areas like vocationalisation; the SCERTs themselves can play a lead role in respect of some areas like ECCE and examination reforms.

### Heads of Institutes

17.13 The NPERC reiterated the important role assigned by the NPE (Para 10.7) to the heads of the educational institutions (R.No.293). We are of the view that emergent action is necessary in this regard and the heads of the institutions should be vested with the necessary powers and capabilities to discharge their role.

### Teacher Welfare/Participation/Mobility

17.14 The NPERC also offered suggestions regarding teacher welfare, teacher participation and teacher mobility (R.Nos.299-301). The NPE also called upon the government and the community

to create conditions which will help motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines. It also felt that pay scales and conditions of service of teachers should be commensurate with their social and professional responsibilities, and with the need to attract talent to the profession. The NPERC's suggestions regarding office room, residential quarters, facilities for community and corporate life, cultural and recreational facilities, medical facilities, travel facilities, etc. have to be considered by the State Governments in the light of their financial position and other commitments. Regarding teacher participation in management, we consider that para 9.2 of NPE put forth the most feasible proposition, namely, that teachers will continue to play crucial role in formulation and implementation of the teacher education programmes.

### Students

17.15 The NPERC recommended several measures for student participation in the corporate life of the academic institutions such as setting up Students' Councils, and Departmental Student Advisory Committees. The NPERC also suggested that representation of students on these bodies be preferably by nomination. The State Governments and universities may take appropriate action on the recommendations taking into account the specific situations.

## Chapter 18

### MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

18.1 The recommendations of the NPERC on Management fall into eight distinct areas : Disaggregated Target Setting (R.Nos.303-306), Educational Complexes (R.No.307), Indian Education Service (R.No.308), Involvement of Voluntary Organisations (R.No.309), Coordination and Convergence of Services (R.No.310), Role of Central Institutions (R.No.311) and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (R.No.312). Excepting those in the area of Educational Complexes, Indian Education Service and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, all the recommendations of the NPERC are in congruence with NPE/POA perceptions. We suggest that these recommendations be taken note of while revising the POA. We are also considering in this Chapter R.No.220 relating to grievances redressal which was dealt with by the NPERC in the chapter on Higher Education, as this recommendation can be extended to all stages of education.

#### Educational Complexes

18.2 The NPERC assigned a very important role to the Educational Complexes in planning and implementation of different programmes. While the main recommendation figures in the chapter on 'Decentralisation and Participative Management,' the related recommendations, assigning a key role to Educational Complexes, are dispersed among many other chapters such as 'Education and Women's Equality' (R.Nos. 15,28,35,39), 'Education for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other Educationally Backward Sections' (R.Nos. 62 and 68), ECCE (R.Nos.122, 131, 132, 133, 141 and 142), 'Universalisation of Elementary Education' (R.Nos.155A, 158, 169, 171, 173 and 175), and 'Teachers and Students' (R.Nos. 284 and 290). The idea of school complexes was first mooted by the Kothari Commission (1964-66). The networking of schools in a school complex was expected to facilitate sharing and exchanging of resources and experiences. NPE assigned a key role to school complex and POA elaborated the NPE perception. We find that the educational complexes suggested by the NPERC is an enlargement of the idea of school complexes in that colleges and universities are also brought into the network. We find a certain measure of uncertainty in the NPERC's approach to the educational complexes. In this chapter, the NPERC had advocated experimentation with the idea of an educational complex while in other chapters the recommendations relating to educational complex proceed from the premise that educational complex is a proven institution which can be entrusted with entire responsibility of management of education and major programmes like Operation Blackboard in the area as falling in its jurisdiction. Given the present stage of higher education, it seems to be rather far-fetched to expect colleges and universities everywhere to play a leading role in educational complexes. We, therefore, suggest that the idea be tried on an experimental basis in selected areas.

## District Boards of Education

18.3 The NPERC also refers to the District Boards of Education which were assigned a very important role by NPE in the management of education upto the secondary level. We recommend that these Boards should be set up and operationalised expeditiously. The constitution of the Board should be such that these are genuinely tripartite bodies with due representation to elected representatives in the district, district officials and teachers. One of us does not agree with this recommendation.

## Indian Education Service

18.4 NPE called for the establishment of the Indian Education Service (IES) as an All-India Service so as to bring a national perspective to the vital sector of education. It also suggested that the basic principles, functions and procedures of recruitment to IES be decided in consultation with the State Governments. The NPERC suggested (R.No.308) creation of cadres of Educational Advisory Services in the States on the model of a similar service of the Government of India. We notice that several Commissions, Committees and Conferences, including Kotnari Commission (1964-66) and the Sarkaria Commission (1983-84), had favoured the establishment of IES. Potentially IES can draw the best talent into the field of educational management. Many bright youngsters who join other services may opt to remain in the education field, if there is IES. Allotment of a certain percentage of recruits to States other than those to which they belong, as in other All-India Services, would promote national integration and a national outlook in the management of education. In the States, such a service can promote establishment of good norms, professionalism and continuity in educational administration. IES would also further the Centre-State relations and give the much needed State perspective in the management of education in the Government of India. State level education advisory services are redundant since excepting some secretariat posts all other posts are already filled by educational cadre. We feel that it would be necessary to hasten the process of consultation with States and to give concrete shape to the idea of IES with due regard to the views and concerns of the States. Two of us do not subscribe to the idea of IES.

## Centrally Sponsored Schemes

18.5 Regarding Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs), we find two points of view figured before the NPERC. The first point of view reflected in the Approach Paper of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-95) which advocated in principle the transfer of all CSS to the States. The second view strongly urged the continuance of CSS in the field of education having regard to factors such as Education being in the Concurrent List, inadequacy of resources with the State Governments, need for a Central role in achieving national objectives such as UEE and removal of educational disparities, etc. The NPERC also took

note of the fact that normally CSSs run for a full five year period and going by this practice, the CSSs started in pursuance of NPE had to be continued till 1992. The Committee also noted that abrupt discontinuance of these schemes would lead to disruptions of initiatives already taken in the crucial areas. Having regard to these views, the NPERC pragmatically suggested that the CSSs started in pursuance of NPE should continue upto 1992-93 and that a review of the implementation of these schemes should be undertaken before the end of that year. The NPERC also suggested that no new CSS should be initiated unless it is for the purpose of securing decentralisation of education management at the grass-roots level (R.No.312).

18.6 We have taken note of views of the various Commissions and Committees which examined the issue of CSS, including the Sarkaria Commission and the Committee of the National Development Council (NDC) on CSSs, under the Chairmanship of Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao (1988). The NDC Committee scrutinised all the extant CSSs and recommended continuance of all CSSs in the area of education as well as ICDS during the Eighth Five Year Plan. The NDC Committee also laid down the following modified criteria for the retention of the existing, and the initiation of new CSS:-

- a) The fulfilment of an important national objective such as poverty alleviation or achievement of minimum standards in education, or;
- b) The programme has a regional or inter-State character, or;
- c) The programme or scheme should be in the nature of a pace setter or should relate to demonstration, survey or research.

18.7 We are strongly of the opinion that without a steep increase in the resources made available for education it would not be possible to bring about educational transformation. While adequate availability of resources may not by itself be a sufficient condition for such transformation it is a necessary condition. The nation as a whole should find resources for the vital area of education and in this endeavour the Centre and States should play complementary roles and become real understanding partners, true to the spirit of concurrency. Given its larger resource base, the Centre should supplement the efforts of States. In order to realise the overall objectives of Central support in vital areas of education, it is necessary to insist upon accountability and non-divertibility of resources. Broadly speaking, this is all that CSS aims at. However, there is a general perception that the schemes are formulated and implemented without due consultation with the States and that the schemes are devoid of flexibility needed to suit local conditions. We were informed that the CSSs started in pursuance of NPE were formulated and are being implemented in close consultation with the States. What is important is that, in the

formulation and implementation of the policy and programmes, there should be close and continuous consultation between the Central and State Governments in the true spirit of partnership. If this principle is observed in letter and spirit, there should be no misperception about CSS. We are, therefore, in agreement with the decisions of the NDC at its 43rd meeting held on 23-24 December, 1991, which is as follows:

"It was agreed that 113 Centrally Sponsored Schemes, as suggested by Narasimha Rao Committee, will be transferred to the States along with Central share of funding which will be released outside the Gadgil formula."

None of these schemes relate to Education or to ICDS. We take note of the fact that the Department of Education has undertaken a review of all the ongoing CSSs in consultation with the States. We expect that these schemes would be modified during the Eighth Plan in the light of these consultations. We would also suggest launching of new CSSs in some priority areas not so far covered, such as the advancement of educationally backward minorities, after due process of consultations. One of us is not in agreement with the suggestion.

#### Redressal of Grievances

18.8 The Law Commission in its 123rd Report had suggested the setting up of 3-tier structure for redressal of grievances in the higher education system. This recommendation is one of the several measures suggested by the Commission to relieve the congestion and burden on the High Courts and the Supreme Court and to hasten the redressal of grievances. The NPERC suggested an early decision by the Government of India on the report of the Law Commission (R.No.220). The Department of Education had suggested that setting up tribunals would be useful also at all levels of education. In every State hundreds of cases are pending in matters relating to the service conditions of teachers and administrative staff and implementation of Educational Acts, Codes and Manuals. Because of the proliferation of litigation, the State Departments of Education find it difficult to give adequate attention to educational issues and educational programmes. At the same time, teachers, administrative staff of the education departments and the management of the educational institutions feel aggrieved at the enormous delays in the redressal of their grievances. Constitution of specialised State Level Educational Tribunals is, therefore, desirable. The details of setting up of these tribunals may be worked out in consultation with the State Governments.

#### Making the System Work

18.9 Management of Education is a critical, but often an under-emphasised, dimension. It is no exaggeration to say that several parts of education, particularly the higher education system, is in a state of disorder. As eloquently observed by NPE,

"these and many other new tasks of education cannot be performed in a state of disorder. Education needs to be managed in an atmosphere of utmost intellectual rigour, seriousness of purpose and, at the same time, of freedom essential for innovation and creativity. While far-reaching changes will have to be incorporated in the quality and range of education, the process of introducing discipline into the system will have to be started, here and now, in what exists.

The country has placed boundless trust in the educational system. The people have a right to expect concrete results. The first task is to make it work. All teachers should teach and all students study."

18.10 We agree. Making the System Work has to be treated as non-negotiable. We strongly urge formulation and implementation of an Action Plan to put into practice the strategy outlined in Para 7.3 of NPE.



## Chapter 19

### RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION

19.1 The NPERC made an exhaustive study of several reports and documents and made valuable recommendations for augmenting resources for education.

19.2 The recommendations are, in brief, as follows:

- i) Public investment in education should exceed 6 per cent of GNP.
- ii) All technical and management education may be made self-financing with appropriate support to the students by way of student loans.
- iii) Increase by higher education institutions of tuition fee and fees charged for specific purposes such as laboratory fee, library fee, etc.
- iv) Mobilising institutional finance for promotion of research in universities and for creation of educational infrastructure such as buildings, hostels and staff quarters.
- v) Increase in funds provided for scholarships by the Central Government.
- vi) Mobilisation of community contribution.
- vii) Efforts to be made by higher, and technical and management institutions to augment their income by way of consultancy and other services.

19.3 These recommendations are within the framework of the existing Education Policy; however, the Credit Policy needs to be revised to provide for a larger measure of student loans as well as developmental finances for education.

19.4 We reiterate the point which has been made by several committees and commissions earlier and which is indeed axiomatic that without adequate resources educational reconstruction would remain a slogan. The Kothari Commission had first put forth the view that public expenditure on education should be 6 per cent of the GNP. This view has been reiterated time and again and has come to acquire the characteristic of a national resolve. The NPE had proclaimed that from the Eighth Plan onwards the outlay on education would uniformly exceed 6 per cent of the National Income (Para 11.4). The NPERC had reiterated this prescription. Though all the Five Year Plans had stressed the importance of education as crucial for national development and survival, in actuality, education has been treated as residual sector in the matter of allocation of resources. We accept this finding and feel that this practice should be reversed and that the NPE

provision (para 11.4) should be implemented forthwith. Need-based financing is required for priority areas like Universalisation of Elementary Education, Adult Literacy and Vocationalisation.

19.5 We are conscious of the fact that given the competing demands and resource constraints, resources for education can never be adequate and that higher budgetary allocation for education should be complemented by other measures such as -

- i) Prioritisation within the Education Sector in the matter of allocation of governmental resources.
- ii) Progressively making higher education and technical and management education largely self-financing by revising the fee structure with appropriate support to the needy students by way of student loans.
- iii) Institutional finances for development of educational infrastructure.
- iv) Incentives to academic institutions to augment income by way of consultancy and other studies.
- v) Encouraging community and the cooperative sectors to financially support education. The time and effort given by thousands of unpaid volunteers in the Total Literacy Campaigns is a concrete demonstration of the possibility of raising social capital without any opportunity cost.
- vi) Efficiency and effectiveness of expenditure which would imply that programmes should be judged not only with reference to the financial expenditure or coverage in terms of geographical area or number of beneficiaries but also in terms of outcomes.

19.6 The above framework is only a restatement of the NPE/POA provisions and of the NPERC recommendations and is relevant nonetheless. We would recommend that Central and State Governments, financial institutions and educational institutions draw specific action plans for operationalising this framework.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Overview

1. The concept of participatory educational order should go beyond involvement of educational institutions and should extend to the community itself. (Para. 2.2)
2. While very little of policy requires reformulation the POA needs to be revised considerably. (Para. 2.3)

### Education and Women's Equality

3. While the NPERC had rightly reiterated the importance of women's education the NPE policy frame is adequate and the POA should be revised to take into account the recommendations of the NPERC. (Para. 3.5)

### Education of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Educationally Backward Sections

4. A single focal agency should be identified in each State for the purpose of monitoring the programmes and reporting to the Central Government. (Para. 4.4)
5. A standing CABE Committee on education of SCs, STs and other educationally backward sections should be constituted; educationists from these groups should have representation in that Committee. (Para. 4.4)
6. While instruction should be child-centred and cater to individual differences, it is not advisable to differentiate students in the matter of syllabus and curriculum. (Para. 4.5)
7. Monitoring of the implementation of the guidelines for recognition of minority-managed educational institutions is better left to the State Governments, as they are deeply conscious of the need for proper monitoring and many organisations like the Minority Commission already exist for the purpose of monitoring. (Para. 4.6)
8. No policy reformulation is necessary; all recommendations of the NPERC on education of the SCs, STs and other educationally backward sections, except R.Nos. 69 and 80, should be taken into account while revising the POA. (Para. 4.8)

### Education of the Handicapped

9. No policy reformulation is necessary; the recommendations of the NPERC on education of the handicapped should be built into the revised POA. (Para. 5.3)

### Common School System

10. Effective measures need to be taken to implement the

provision of NPE 68 and NPE in regard to Common School System. To this end, disparities between schools should be ended as early as possible by upgrading the quality of ordinary schools and providing amenities for achieving minimum levels of learning. Both the Centre and the State should take determined action in this regard. The privileged schools should accept social accountability by sharing their facilities and resources with other institutions, taking up community activities, and facilitating access to children of the disadvantaged groups. (Para. 6.6)

### Navodaya Vidyalayas

11. The scheme should continue and a NV should be set up in each district as originally envisaged. Further, the following measures are suggested:

- i) constant review to keep the scheme as cost effective as possible,
- ii) ensuring the continued validity and reliability of the admission tests by periodic evaluation and appropriate modification of admission procedure, and
- iii) more particular attention to the pace-setting role of these institutions. (Para. 7.5)

12. It is also necessary to begin thinking about the future course of the scheme after NVs have been established in all districts with the requisite facilities and investment. A choice has to be made between establishment of new institutions and expansion of facilities in the existing institutions. Planning has also to begin for catering to the higher educational needs of students who pass out of NVs. A scheme needs to be formulated for central financial support to residential schools. In this scheme priority should be given to ST areas and areas predominantly inhabited by SCs. (Para. 7.9)

### Early Childhood Care and Education

13. The scope of Article 45 of the Constitution need not be enlarged. (Para. 8.8)

14. ICDS and other CSS relating to ECCE should continue as Centrally Sponsored Schemes during the Eighth Five Year Plan. The Anganwadi workers should play an expanded role and should be the focal point for a number of activities and support services for women and children, such as child care, family welfare, nutrition and health. The recruitment and training of Anganwadi workers should be so organised as to ensure that they have the necessary skills and motivation to discharge the expanded role. (Para. 8.8)

15. The other recommendations of the NPERC which broadly relate to implementation modalities should be taken in to account for

reviewing POA. (Para. 8.8)

### Universalisation of Elementary Education

16. What is needed is not so much a Constitutional amendment as suggested by the NPERC as the manifestation of a national will to achieve UEE. The Central and State Governments should bestow overriding priority to adult literacy and UEE and provide programmes in these two areas total support -- financial, administrative and political -- a support which is commensurate with the priority. (Para 9.2)

17. No further refinement of the policy relating to access and enrolment is required; what needs to be done is large scale operationalisation of important components of the strategy outlined by NPE/POA such as community mobilisation, school mapping and micro-planning. (Para. 9.5)

18. MLL should be a thrust area. (Para. 9.6)

19. The NPE approach to non-formal education is more practical and realistic than that of the NPERC. (Para. 9.13)

20. Expeditious and effective action is required to tone up the management system and the learning environment of NFE so as to ensure that the quality of NFE is comparable with that of formal system in all respects. The Centre and the States in concert should closely and continuously monitor NFE programmes in order that the programmes are effective. (Para. 9.13)

21. Operation Blackboard, being one of the priority strategies for UEE, should continue during the Eighth Plan, in an expanded and extended form. (Para. 9.15)

22. Till operational models of an educational complex are developed, tested and tried out, it is not feasible to link the Scheme of Operation Blackboard with the educational complex; nor is it feasible to entrust the planning and monitoring of UEE to the educational complex, as suggested in R.Nos.169, 171, 173 and 175 by the NPERC. (Para. 9.15)

23. Para 5.12 of NPE, which laid the targets for UPE and UEE, needs to be revised. Every effort should be made to ensure that the Constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education upto the age of 14 years becomes a reality before we enter the twenty-first century. (Paras. 2.6 and 9.17)

24. The following points deserve priority during the Eighth Five Year Plan in the area of UEE:

- i) Universal enrolment of all children, including girls and persons belonging to SC/ST;
- ii) Provision of primary school for all children within one kilometre of walking distance and of facility of non-

formal education for school drop-outs, working children and girls who cannot attend schools;

- iii) Improvement of ratio of primary school to upper primary schools from the existing 1:4 to 1:2, this being a pre-condition for larger opportunity for widening girls' participation at upper primary stage;
- iv) Reduction of drop out rates between Classes I to V and I to VIII from the existing 45 per cent and 60 per cent to 20 per cent and 40 per cent respectively;
- v) Improvement of school facilities by revamped Operation Blackboard, to be extended to upper primary level also;
- vi) Achievement of minimum levels of learning by approximately all children at the primary level, and introduction of this concept at the upper primary stage on a large scale;
- vii) Local level committee, with due representation to women and teachers, to assist in the working of primary education and to oversee its functioning;
- viii) Improvement of the monitoring system for universalisation of elementary education to see to the achievement of above mentioned goals.

NPE and POA may be revised accordingly. (Para. 9.18)

#### Adult and Continuing Education

25. The "dual-track approach" of promoting simultaneously UEE and adult literacy should continue to inform educational planning; the special needs of women and of disadvantaged groups like SCs and STs should be specially attended to. (Para. 10.1)

26. The NPERC's perception of Mahila Samakhya (MS) as an alternative model is not valid. (Para. 10.4)

27. Events since December, 1990, when the NPERC submitted its report have established that NPERC had underestimated the significance of the "Ernakulam experiment." The TLC approach is a potent and viable model which could help achieve a significant breakthrough in the literacy scene in the Eighth Five Year Plan. (Para. 10.6)

28. Programmes of post-literacy and continuing education should be planned for neo-literates and youth passing out of primary education system (through the school system or non-formal education programme) and these programmes should be planned simultaneously with literacy campaigns and be made effective as soon as large numbers of persons complete literacy courses. (Para. 10.9)

## Secondary Education

29. The policy should be reformulated to bring about the new initiatives that are required in secondary education. (Para. 2.7)

30. It would be necessary to bring about a planned expansion of secondary education facilities all over the country in order to cope with new demands for secondary education. (Para. 11.3)

31. Efforts should be made to bring about uniformity in the management structure for secondary education in all the States. (Para. 11.4)

32. It is necessary to reorganise the Boards of Secondary Education and vest them with autonomy so that their ability to provide academic inputs to secondary education is enhanced. (Para. 11.5)

33. Time-bound measures should be taken by the Central and State Governments to implement the directions contained in para 10.7 of NPE and to empower the Headmasters with administrative, academic and financial powers. Training of the heads of institutions requires particular attention. (Paras. 11.6 and 17.15)

34. Teacher training in secondary education requires no less importance than in primary education. (Para. 11.8)

35. The ongoing programme of CLASS needs to be revamped. (Para. 11.9)

36. Open learning should be given utmost encouragement and that the National Open School should play the same lead role within the open school system as IGNOU with open universities. (Para. 11.11)

## Vocationalisation of Education

37. The existing vocational stream at the +2 level may be suitably strengthened and, wherever possible, the vocational courses may be started from class IX also. (Para. 12.12)

38. The idea of a core vocational course, mooted by the NPERC, is attractive. Generic vocational courses may be introduced on a selective basis; to begin with generic vocational courses may be tried out in about ten per cent of the schools. (Paras. 2.5 and 12.12)

39. The Work Experience programme may be systematically implemented by allocating 12.5 per cent to 20 per cent of the school time for these activities; the activities should have a practical orientation in relation to various subjects under this programme. The vocational "core" would find place at the secondary and higher secondary stages; Work Experience/ SUPW

would relate to elementary education. (Para. 12.12)

40. The other recommendations of the NPERC relating to implementation of the scheme of vocationalisation of education may be taken note of while revising POA. (Para. 12.12)

41. Greater rigour should be brought to bear on the planning and implementation of the scheme. (Para. 12.12)

### Higher Education

42. It is not advisable to set up a national level statutory mechanism to regulate the opening of non-standard and sub-standard universities and colleges. The proliferation of colleges without adequate facilities can be curbed to a large extent if the universities exercise rigorous control and insist on creation of necessary infrastructure and educational facilities before granting affiliation and if the State Governments respect the decision of the universities in these matters. The establishment and operationalisation of State Councils of Higher Education will go a long way in the planned development of higher education. (Para. 13.3)

43. Efforts should be made to secure involvement of teachers and students in extension work such as literacy. Adequate facilities should be provided to ensure that all students participate in one or the other existing schemes, particularly National Services Scheme (NSS), and National Cadet Corps (NCC). Specific schemes should be formulated to encourage out of school youth to participate in national service and development. The feasibility and financial implications of a two-year composite programme for students who complete the +2 stage, comprising paramilitary service, development of vocational and professional skills, and extension work in rural areas be studied. An important feature of the programme would be that the students would be required to participate in these programmes outside their home state with a view to promoting national integration. (Para. 13.4)

44. NTS should undertake the conduct of tests so that it acquires the required expertise and develops into a competent resource centre. (Para. 13.5)

45. A Central Council of Rural Institutes is necessary to provide the much needed fillip to rural education on Gandhian lines; it should be set up immediately. (Para. 13.6)

46. The recommendation of the NPERC (R.No.219) on NCHE is sound and Para 5.34 of NPE should be reformulated. (Paras. 2.5 and 13.7)

47. There is no need for appointment of full-time Members in the UGC. (Para. 13.10)

48. Regional offices of the UGC should be set up at the earliest, with adequate authority and functions. (Para. 13.11)



49. Since most of the universities are affiliating universities, R.No.201 of the NPERC can be implemented only when most of the colleges become autonomous or when a system of internal evaluation gradually replaces a terminal examination, or when an independent State level examining body is set up to conduct common examinations for all undergraduate courses. (Para. 13.12)

50. The UGC may consider augmenting research facilities in selected colleges within the available resources. (Para. 13.13)

51. The Scheme of Curriculum Development Centres should be continued; however, to allay any misgivings the UGC may reiterate that the universities have full freedom to adapt model curricula. The UGC should also consider specific requests from the universities for curriculum development. (Para. 13.15)

52. The UGC may closely monitor the implementation of the Scheme of Academic Staff Colleges. (Para. 13.16)

#### Technical and Management Education

53. It is not advisable to regulate through a statute the emigration of graduates of IITs and RECs. All efforts should be made to ensure that environment for science and technology in the country is attractive enough for talented persons. (Para. 14.2)

54. A detailed evaluation of the thrust area schemes should be taken up in 1994-95, the third year of the Eighth Plan (1992-97). (Para. 14.3)

55. The Department of Education, GOI, should take early decisions on the report of the Kalbagh Committee on Community Polytechnics. (Para. 14.4)

56. The Department of Education, GOI, should take early decisions on the report of the IIT Review Committee. (Para. 14.5)

57. The AICTE Act should be amended and Para 6.19 of NPE should be reformulated. The Regional Committees of the AICTE should be adequately staffed and that the Chairman of the Regional Committee should be an Education Minister of a State from the region, by rotation. The Regional Committee should have the power to make recommendations on the opening of new institutions, starting of new courses and enhancing the intake within the framework of the guidelines laid down by the AICTE. The State Governments and the universities should issue the necessary approvals based on the recommendations of the Regional Committees only. (Para. 14.6)

58. The recommendations of NPERC relating to improvement of quality and standard, upgradation of infrastructure facilities,

industry-institution linkages, technology watch and manpower planning, promotion of R&D, special programme for the disadvantaged, entrepreneurship development and continuing education and retraining programmes should be given due consideration in the revision of POA. (Para. 14.7)

#### Languages in Education

59. All the recommendations of the NPERC in the area, except R.Nos.239 and 246, are useful and should be taken into account in the revision of POA. (Para.15.3)

60. The merger of KHS, CHD and CSTT is not desirable. (Para. 15.4)

61. A fresh linguistic survey is not desirable. (Para. 15.5)

#### Content and Process of Education

62. The recommendations of the NPERC on value education should be taken into account while revising the POA. (Para. 16.3)

63. The recommendation of the NPERC on educational technology should be followed up by the Central and State Governments and it be taken into account while revising the POA. (Para. 16.4)

64. There is need to progressively expand facilities for computer education in schools, particularly at the secondary stage. (Para. 16.5)

65. The suggestions on Youth and Sports may be taken into account, while revising the POA. Students should be required to participate in one or the other existing schemes, such as NSS and NCC, as envisaged in para 8.22 of NPE. (Para. 16.7)

66. Rather than leaving examination reforms to the individual initiatives and inclinations of the examining bodies, a strong and coordinated effort should be made by the Centre and the State Governments in this area. Inter alia the following measures are suggested:

- i) Preparation of a status report of examination reform measures undertaken by the examining bodies.
- ii) Preparation of a National Examination Reform Framework to serve as a set of guidelines to the examining bodies which would have the freedom to innovate and adopt the framework to suit the specific situation.
- iii) Developing an effective mechanism for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the examination reforms by the different examining bodies.

- iv) Documentation and dissemination of innovations and measures for examination reforms. (Para. 16.11)

67. While the load of the school bag is a valid concern, one cannot afford to ignore the requirements of modernisation and relevance. (Para. 16.12)

68. The NPE provision and the National Curricular Framework should be followed faithfully so that the problem of the 'load of the school bag' will be mitigated. The teachers of the expensive private schools in urban areas should be reoriented so that they give up the habit of prescribing unnecessarily a large number of books. (Para. 16.13)

### Teachers and Students

69. Licensing of teachers as suggested by the NPERC is not desirable. (Para. 17.2)

70. The selection system, whether for teachers or teacher trainees, should be objective and immune from undue inducements, thereby fostering the credibility of the selection process. (Para. 17.3)

71. The suggestion of the NPERC on the content and process of teacher education are commended to NCTE, NCERT and SCERTs for consideration whenever the curriculum is reviewed or renewed. (Para. No.17.4)

72. First degree in teacher education should not be given through correspondence courses. (Para. 17.5)

73. The NCTE should be immediately provided, as envisaged in the NPE/POA, with necessary resources and capability. (Para. 17.5)

74. An expert body like the NCTE should study the internship model of teacher-training, as suggested by the NPERC and guide the SCERTs and teacher education institutions. (Para. 17.6)

75. Regarding NPERC's recommendation on the syllabus for the B.Ed. courses NCTE may take necessary action in consultation with States/UTs. (Para. 17.6)

76. The attributes of teacher education identified by the NPERC may be kept in mind by the NCERT while preparing special programme for teacher educators. (Para. 17.8)

77. Training and management of in-service training programmes for elementary teachers should be the responsibility of the DIETs only. (Para. 17.9)

78. State Governments should give emergent attention to fill up all the posts in the teacher training institutions and to

frame recruitment rules for them. (Para. 17.10)

79. Emergent steps should be taken for operationalising the teacher education institutions for which financial assistance was provided by the GOI; further financial assistance should be denied to those States in which the physical progress and utilisation of funds are unsatisfactory. (Para. 17.11)

80. Every DIET should be a distinct identity with enough operational flexibility. (Para. 17.12)

81. The State Governments and universities may take appropriate action on the recommendations of the NPERC on students, taking into account the specific situations. (Para. 17.15)

### Management of Education

82. The idea of educational complex may be tried on an experimental basis in selected areas. (Para. 18.2)

83. The District Boards of Education should be set up and operationalised expeditiously. (Para. 18.3)

84. It would be necessary to hasten the process of consultation with States and to give concrete shape to the idea of IES with due regard to the views and concerns of the States. (Para. 18.4)

85. On Centrally Sponsored Schemes the decisions of the 43rd meeting of the NDC held on 23-24 December, 1991, are reiterated. Launching of new CSSs in some priority areas not so far covered, such as advancement of educationally backward minorities, are also suggested, after due process of consultations with the States. (Para. 18.7)

86. Constitution of specialised State Level Educational Tribunals is desirable. The details of setting up of these tribunals may be worked out in consultation with the State Governments. (Para. 18.8)

87. "Making the System Work" has to be treated as non-negotiable. Formulation and implementation of an Action Plan to put into practice the strategy outlined in Para 7.3 of NPE is strongly recommended. (Para. 18.10)

### Resources for Education

88. The practice of treating education as a residual sector in the matter of allocation of resources should be reversed; para 11.4 of NPE should be implemented forthwith. Need-based financing requires to be provided for priority areas like Universalisation of Elementary Education, Adult Literacy and Vocationalisation. (Para. 19.4)

89. Higher budgetary allocation for education should be complemented by other measures such as -

- i) Prioritisation within the Education Sector in the matter of allocation of governmental resources.
- ii) Progressively making higher education and technical and management education largely self-financing by revising the fee structure with appropriate support to the needy students by way of student loans.
- . iii) Institutional finances for development of educational infrastructure.
- iv) Incentives to academic institutions to augment income by way of consultancy and other studies.
- v) Encouraging community and the cooperative sectors to financially support education. The time and effort given by thousands of unpaid volunteers in the Total Literacy Campaigns is a concrete demonstration of the possibility of raising social capital without any opportunity cost.
- vi) Efficiency and effectiveness of expenditure which would imply that programmes should be judged not only with reference to the financial expenditure or coverage in terms of geographical area or number of beneficiaries but also in terms of outcomes. (Para. 19.5)

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