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*Consideration of the  
Recommendations of the Report  
on Asian and European  
Education in Kenya*

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# CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT ON ASIAN AND EUROPEAN EDUCATION IN KENYA

## Introduction

The Government wishes to express its thanks to the authors of the report for the care and thoroughness with which they investigated the problems on which they were asked to advise and for the full measure of understanding which they displayed of the context of these problems in Kenya. They have generously given of their wide educational experience in a report which is both comprehensive and practical. The introduction to the report is accepted by the Government as a suitable starting point for the consideration of policy.

2. The Government also wishes to thank the Asian and European Advisory Councils for the unstinted co-operation they have extended in the examination of the report. The advice offered by these Councils in their full study of the recommendations has been of the greatest value and has been given close attention in the preparation of this paper, which the Government believes reflects the considered views of the advisory bodies from both communities.

3. The object of this paper is to set out, for discussion and debate, the main conclusions on educational policy which the Government has drawn from the report. It is also designed to indicate, in terms of policy, some of the steps which the Government has taken or will take to apply these conclusions. A number of the recommendations contained in the report can be implemented by the redeployment of existing resources. The consequences of accepting others have not yet been worked out in precise detail, particularly as regards their financial implications which must determine the scale and pace of their implementation, and such work will properly be reflected in annual estimates of recurrent and development expenditure. But clearly defined lines of policy and a determination to pursue them will make debate on the means more purposeful and conclusive.

## The Ministry and the Department of Education

4. The recommendations in the report are clearly summarized in Chapter IX, with related references to the argument in the earlier chapters. References in this paper will be to the headings in Chapter IX, with comment as necessary on the earlier related material. Most of the recommendations affect professional educational issues but at some points suggestions are made on the duties and functions of the Minister and the Director and the machinery of educational administration. It is convenient to treat these matters at the outset of this paper, the references being to recommendations B (13), D (5) and G (1), (2) and (6).

5. The report suggests that the Education Ordinance should place a responsibility on the Minister to ensure that schools are adequate in number, character and equipment in areas in which education is compulsory. At present the law places the duty on the Minister to promote education and the progressive development of schools. The formula suggested in the report raises the question of how far compulsory, as opposed to universal, education is meaningful in Kenya conditions at the present time. In any case effective enforcement is beyond the resources of existing staff in Kenya. To adopt the formula in the report would provoke even more active controversy over the "adequacy" of the facilities which at present provide education for all those groups of pupils to whom the

compulsory provisions of the Ordinance have been applied, unless education were made an exclusive prior charge on the revenues of the country. This would be unrealistic. The Government therefore does not propose to seek amendment of the law in the sense suggested in the report.

6. Recommendations G (1) and D (5) are linked in their implications. The former seeks a clear definition of the functions of the Minister for Education and of the Director of Education. Apart from the attribution of functions and powers to the Minister and the Director respectively in the Education Ordinance, 1952, the relationship can be briefly expressed. It reflects at present a transitional phase in the passage from the direct channel of executive authority found in the initial form of Crown Colony Government, where a Director was responsible through a Chief Secretary to a Governor, to a fully articulated ministerial system with a Minister responsible for educational policy collectively with his colleagues, receiving professional advice from educationists in his Ministry, the practical administration of schools being in the hands of local authorities and private agencies. At present the Minister is responsible for general educational policy and is answerable for this policy in Legislative Council. His principal administrative officer is the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry, who is responsible to Legislative Council through the Public Accounts Committee for the proper expenditure of funds voted for education. The Permanent Secretary is also responsible for advising the Minister on the correlation of the policy of the Ministry with the other policies and activities of Government. Subject to this, the Director of Education is the professional adviser to the Minister on educational policy, is in charge of the administration of the public education system and has the duty of supervising the execution of policy, taking day-to-day decisions on its application in the light of his knowledge of the main policy objectives of the Government in this field. His instrument for discharging these responsibilities is the Education Department. It follows from this that the Director and his professional officers are responsible for advising on what is educationally desirable in future policy, with due regard to the means which might reasonably be hoped to be available. It is for the Minister, if he accepts this advice, to seek the agreement of his colleagues and of the Legislature to the voting of the public funds required to implement this policy. The Council of Ministers has a collective responsibility for decisions taken in this field, in the interests of the country as a whole (subject always to the concept that constitutionally they are advisory to His Excellency the Governor) and the Minister of Education and his Ministry, through the Permanent Secretary and the Director, then have the responsibility of applying and explaining agreed Government policy.

7. Paragraph 131 of the report (recommendation D (5)) suggests that the views of the Minister of Education and the advice of the Education Department should be clearly distinguished from the final decisions of the Government. This suggestion is unacceptable to the Government since it implies that professional officers in Government service should be at liberty to indulge in public criticism of their employers and that individual Ministers should be free to publicize personal views which have not found favour with their colleagues. The action conditioned by available resources in men and money is never likely to accord with what in professional opinion is educationally ideal. Professional officers may feel disappointed when their advice is not fully reflected in Government programmes but as Government servants they cannot be allowed the satisfaction of proclaiming their discontent. Specific programmes for a given period may usefully be related in policy statements to the desirable goal; public confidence would, however, be impaired rather than enhanced by the airing of attractive schemes, educationally satisfying but manifestly beyond the resources of the country.

8. Again in the context of the principles of administrative organization, the report suggests (recommendation G (2)) that the dual responsibility of the Inspectorate to the Minister and the Director should be clarified. The Inspectorate is a branch of the Education Department and the Chief Inspector is responsible directly to the Director who is in turn responsible to the Minister. It is for the Director to bring to the attention of the Minister, with his comments, the assessments of educational standards made by the Inspectorate, which the Director considers are of an importance justifying a report to the Minister. The views expressed in the report derive from perhaps too close an analogy with United Kingdom practice, where Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools have an independent role to perform in the assessment and maintenance of standards and where there is no single senior executive officer in the central government with the functions and powers of a Director of Education.

9. In recommendation G (6) the authors of the report advise intensified attention to the public relations aspect of educational policy. In discussions with the Asian Advisory Council the great importance of this recommendation was accepted and it has been fully implemented in the procedure followed in the consideration of the report. The need to consult and explain is recognized and it will be the aim of the Minister, the Director and all officers of the Education Department to spare no pains in meeting this need.

#### **Changes in Primary Education**

10. The recommendations under heading A in Chapter IX of the report concern changes in primary education. It is agreed (recommendation A (2)) that the Principals of large schools (unavoidable in urban areas with a high density of population) should devolve some of their administrative duties on senior masters and such problems are being considered. It is the policy of Government (recommendation A (3)) that children should be grouped in graded classes, in accordance with their ability in general subjects, where a common medium of instruction permits this. To hasten this development the adoption of English as a general medium of instruction is being fostered by intensive effort to improve the standard of English amongst teachers and their training in the use of English as a common language of instruction (recommendation A (4)). It is agreed that the primary syllabuses should suggest how the work should be modified for graded classes, with guidance on group teaching (recommendation A (5)) and amendments to the recently revised Asian Primary School syllabus will be prepared to complete this process. While the desirability of supplementing the syllabus with teaching notes is agreed, this may be beyond the capacity of the existing Inspectorate on any scale for the time being (recommendation A (6)).

11. The view is strongly endorsed that regular annual promotions in primary schools are indispensable (recommendation A (7)). This is the only way of clearing the path to secondary education, which is at present reached so late in life by some pupils as not to provide them with a profitable course. It is wrong that the younger and abler pupils who could gain entry to Secondary Grammar Schools at the age 12½-13½ years should be retarded by older and less gifted pupils who have been allowed to repeat a year. This view was accepted by the Asian Advisory Council, subject to the proviso, the importance of which is recognized by the Government, that such a policy could be more fairly applied if allied with a strong effort to improve the quality of teaching and reduce the size of classes to a point where the less responsive child has a better chance of individual attention.

#### **Content and Organization of Secondary Education**

12. The first six recommendations in this section (B (1) to (6)) are related aspects of the broadening of the content of secondary education and introducing

variations in the traditional academic pattern. The Government has been reinforced in its acceptance of these recommendations by the support of the European and Asian Advisory Councils, although the latter expressed a preference as soon as conditions allowed for a secondary modern course on a four-year basis. It was also generally agreed that a start could be made with three-year courses even before the goal had been achieved of reducing the normal primary school leaving age to 12 (paragraph 83 of the report). This aim is in fact not so far from attainment, since ages of admission to and departure from Asian primary schools are dropping rapidly and it is, therefore, the view of Government that it is not unreasonable to rule that, commencing with the entry at the beginning of 1960, pupils selected for Secondary Modern courses will, in the case of those not above the age of 13+ at the date of admission, be drafted into a three-year course, while those over the age of 13+ will be obliged, as at present, to enter a two-year course. It is the policy of Government that all such courses will be increased to three and even four years as and when ages drop sufficiently to enable the completion of such a Secondary Modern course by the age of 15+.

13. The authors of the report paid considerable attention to the advantages and disadvantages of housing Secondary Modern courses in separate schools or of maintaining them in the same building as a Secondary Academic course. On balance, they favoured the latter, provided that the objective of each is clear and that new schools are planned to fit in with the pattern decided upon. The Government accepts the recommendation in the report (B (5)), although it sees some force in the point of view advanced in the European Advisory Council where members appreciated the arguments in favour of such a combined school but wished to record their opinion that circumstances might arise in which a separate Secondary Modern school building might be found desirable. The Government has also noted with interest the opinions expressed in paragraph 86 of the report as to the likely relative needs of the European and Asian communities in Kenya for Secondary Modern courses, and agree that it is most important to ensure that one community is not favoured at the expense of the other when Modern courses are being planned.

14. With reference to recommendation B (7) it is agreed that School Certificate results should be an important element in an assessment of the relative need for Secondary and Modern courses. It is also the intention of the Education Department to introduce standardized tests for entrants to secondary schools.

15. Further detailed work on the curricula for Modern courses is required and the matter is being examined at the professional level.

16. In recommendation B (8) the report advises the provision of alternative four-year and five-year courses leading to School Certificate. This recommendation if widely adopted could lead to greatly enhanced recurrent and capital costs in secondary schools and might not be the most advantageous way of employing additional resources. The authors of the report suggested that it would only be really practicable in the larger schools. There is also the danger that too many pupils and parents, playing for safety, might opt unnecessarily for the five-year course. The Advisory Councils, in accepting the recommendation, expressed understanding of these conditions and agreed that the matter was one for detailed professional examination. The proposal now under study for experimental introduction is that all students with a Grammar/diagnostic K.As.P.E. assessment should commence with a common diagnostic year to determine whether they are suitable for secondary academic or secondary modern courses. Those selected for a secondary academic course at the end of this year are to be given a further year to determine whether at the end of that second year they will need a further two years to complete a four-year secondary academic course or a further three years to complete a five-year secondary academic course.

17. In recommendation B (9) attention is drawn to the new Examination for the General Certificate of Education introduced in England by the Associated Examination Board with syllabuses of a markedly practical character. These syllabuses should certainly be followed in the Secondary Technical schools, but, as the main purpose of a Secondary Grammar course is often to prepare candidates for entry at the end of it to institutes of higher education, great care has to be taken to see that candidates are only prepared for an examination which is, in fact, recognized by those higher institutions. The equating of Cambridge School Certificate passes with equivalent standards in the G.C.E. Examination has already been noted in Kenya and should prove of great value. From the policy point of view it is undesirable that a normal secondary course designed to equip children for life in Kenya should be concluded without a qualification in English.

18. With reference to recommendation B (10) it is agreed that a diagnostic period should be observed at the outset of secondary academic and modern courses. In both European and Asian Secondary Schools a diagnostic period is already observed and this policy will be continued. It will be the aim of the Education Department to reduce this period to the minimum, assisted by the standard tests referred to in paragraph 13 above. Pupils classified as definitely grammar or definitely modern as a result of the K.As.P.E. examination, will at once enter and remain in definite modern or academic streams. The diagnostic process will only be adopted to meet the cases mentioned in paragraph 16 of pupils classified in the K.As.P.E. as Grammar/diagnostic, i.e. pupils who have to complete a diagnostic year at the end of which selection for them into a grammar or modern stream takes place. The essential purpose of any system must be to settle the pupil on the course of study for which he or she is equipped at the earliest point in secondary education, with a clearly defined objective at the end of it.

19. The general policy of Government is to develop the educational system in both Government and Aided sectors on a Day School basis. The Report suggests in recommendation B.11 that provision for boarding at Asian Secondary Schools should be given its due priority in the interests of the more senior pupils. Some expansion of boarding facilities may be necessary in certain circumstances, as for instance in cases where the number of children requiring advanced educational facilities is small and dispersed in small groups over the whole country. It is to be hoped, too, that Day School facilities will be supplemented in appropriate cases by locally provided and managed hostels, but as far as Government finance is concerned future expansion is intended to be directed generally to the establishment of Day Schools. It is in accordance with the policy of concentrating advanced educational facilities in the early stages at appropriate centres and bringing to these centres children from the outlying districts that Government has planned the construction of one Hostel at the Duke of Gloucester School for Higher School Certificate Asian children from the whole territory and one at Thika for secondary children from the Central Province which at the moment has no other Asian secondary school.

20. A recognized certificate of attainment obtainable at the conclusion of a Secondary Modern course (recommendation B (12)) is accepted as desirable. It is, however, of the essence of a Secondary Modern course that its curriculum should be flexible and adapted to local circumstances. The adoption of an externally controlled examination for those successful at the end of the course would be liable to place severe restrictions upon the curriculum, which might then not suit Kenya conditions. In certain instances, such as the clerical examinations of the Royal Society of Arts, externally controlled examinations could, without danger, be adopted and this possibility is being given closer study. In addition it is agreed that a local examination, leading to graded certificates, should be

established and its requirements will be discussed with Government departments and industrial employers to ensure its recognition and consequent value. These conclusions are based on extensive discussions with Advisory Councils whose views might be summarized as recommending that a local certificate should be given, that the courses leading to it should be geared to the needs of the country, that candidates should also be encouraged to take externally controlled examinations in certain subjects as and when this proved possible, and that the recognition by employers of the value of a full Modern course with its consequential certificate is essential.

### **Further Education and Apprenticeship**

21. The recommendations in section C of Chapter IX of the report are accepted.

### **Accommodation and Finance**

22. The recommendations in section D of Chapter IX of the report relate to the financial requirements of the educational development programme. A particular point of criticism in the report is the observation (paragraph 127) that the actual, as distinct from the projected, expenditure on capital development shows a more serious retardation in the case of Asian than in the case of European education. It is recognized that there is a back log in Development expenditure on Asian education, and the Government will take this fact into consideration when planning the next development programme. The immediate problem of accelerated development has received special study by the Ministers of Education and Works. Although a great strain will be placed on the agencies concerned, a firm programme has been established to expend all the funds available for Asian education within the revised allocation for the current development period. During the financial year 1959/60 more than a quarter of a million pounds will be put into educational institutions designed to promote the policies outlined in this paper. These will include: the completion of extensions to the Asian Teacher Training Colleges in Nairobi, the building of two completely new primary schools in Nairobi, the building of two completely new primary schools in Mombasa, additional classrooms and workshops at existing Secondary and Secondary Modern Schools, the completion of two residential hostels for Asian secondary school children at Thika and at the Duke of Gloucester School, Nairobi, and a certain sum for capital grants to match expenditure contemplated by aided Asian schools. Even with the completion of this programme there will remain a growing requirement for primary and secondary school accommodation. The satisfaction of these requirements will fall to be considered in the next development period and it would not be practicable in this paper to give any accurate forecast of the programme likely to be adopted. But attention is being given to the system advocated in the report of planning the physical needs of the educational system, where practicable, over a longer period than three years, even if the financial expectations beyond the triennium are too obscure for firm commitments to be accepted.

### **Selection for Secondary Education**

23. Section E of the recommendations in Chapter IX of the report concerns the procedures for the selection of students for secondary education. These recommendations cover a very important element in the terms of reference of the enquiry, namely a reassessment of the Kenya Asian Preliminary Examination and its use for the selection of pupils for post-primary courses, together with an

examination of the considerations which should govern the transfer of pupils from primary to post-primary courses. The nature of such courses has already been considered earlier in this paper.

24. Criticism of the Kenya Asian Preliminary Examination in the past has focused on the system of the moderation of marks, which the great majority of critics, despite repeated assurances to the contrary, have represented as a method of reducing the number of successful candidates in the Examination. This fear is completely groundless, the truth being that moderation has merely been used, as it is now used in all major public examinations in all parts of the British Commonwealth, to counteract difficulties which almost invariably arise in large examinations owing to natural and unavoidable fallibility on the part of examiners and the varieties of standards between them. It frequently happens that, however good examination questions may appear to be before candidates are confronted with them, the actual examination scripts show that some questions which appeared reasonable are too easy and others again too difficult. In the pre-scientific past examiners corrected such errors by the simple process of adding or subtracting marks where results in the scripts showed this to be necessary. In this more scientific age, however, professional educationists in the United Kingdom have arrived, as the result of experience over a great many years, at a normal pattern which should reveal itself in all examination results. If this pattern does not show itself, then the marks are moderated accordingly to bring it about.

25. This is exactly the procedure that has been adopted in Kenya, and in the summary of recommendations, E (1), the report states quite definitely that the moderating of the marks in the Asian Preliminary Examination favoured none, but was a step towards making the Examination fairer for all. In paragraph 139, however, it is remarked that the standard curve of distribution used was one derived from experience outside Kenya, and it is suggested that performance in previous Kenya Asian Preliminary Examinations is relevant. It is agreed that too much importance can be attached to the attainment of the normal United Kingdom standard examination curve owing to variable factors, which exist in Kenya Asian schools, in particular, to a degree not so marked in the United Kingdom, for example the wide variations in experience and capacity among the teachers and the variety of home circumstances of the children concerned. For this reason an assurance can be given that moderation will never be used as a method of reducing the number of admissions to Asian secondary academic schools. A further assurance can be given that it will only be brought into use when the performance revealed by the examination scripts makes it clear that some such moderation is necessary, to ensure consistency of standards. Equally, where moderation proves necessary in other Preliminary Examinations, the system followed will be identical to that used in the Asian Examination.

26. In the light of the comment in paragraphs 142 to 145 of the report (recommendation E (2)) it is intended to use as one guide to the provision of different types of secondary course the results obtained in School Certificate examinations, while at the same time striving to improve these percentage passes by strengthening the observance of regular annual promotion and improvements in the quality of teaching.

27. The recommendation E (3) that a candidate's grading in each part of the examination might be published and that the pass mark should also be fixed in advance is accepted. It must be understood, however, that the fixing of such a pass mark does not in itself entitle to secondary places all candidates who achieve it, but it is an indication that the candidate is qualified for secondary education should a place be available. It is the duty of Government to ensure, as far as possible, that those children are admitted to a Secondary Grammar school whose performance and record both in their previous school and in the



selective examination suggests that they will be able to benefit by it. It is the Government's aim within the resources available to attain this objective. In the United Kingdom it is generally estimated that only one-fifth of the children are so capable.

28. The introduction of this system will necessitate the setting up of Examination and Secondary Selection Committees on a Provincial basis. The results of the scripts in English and Arithmetic marked centrally will be forwarded to these Provincial Committees with the recommendations of the Central Examiners as to the candidates who deserve secondary selection on the results of these two papers only. It will then be the duty of the Provincial Committees to take into account, in addition, the internal marks of candidates as well as their Principal's reports upon them, and on the basis of all these factors to make their final selection for entry to Secondary Academic and Secondary Modern courses. It is hoped that in time, as these Provincial Committees develop, it may also be possible to use them as a method of selecting Provincial nominees for membership of the Central Advisory Council.

29. It is also agreed (recommendations E (4) and E (5)) that, whilst a written test of attainment should form the core of the Kenya Asian Preliminary Examination, each primary school should submit an order of merit of its candidates. As the Report states in paragraph 152, experience gained in many countries suggests that no selection test, however well planned and honestly conducted, is faultless. There is, therefore, much to be said for treating the Examination not as a final test but only as the first stage of selection and to follow up this first stage by a diagnostic period in a secondary school. This issue has already been discussed in paragraph 18 of this paper.

30. In advocating a gradual changeover to a common syllabus for the preliminary examination the authors of the report direct particular attention to arithmetic (recommendation E (6)). The Asian Advisory Council attached considerable importance to the early introduction of a common syllabus and examination system for both Asian and European schools. This proposal, whilst completely acceptable to Government in principle, presents very acute immediate difficulties. In the case of English, for instance, this language for European children is their own vernacular; in the case of most Asian pupils it is at present an unfamiliar language, and although experiments are being made, and will be accelerated, in the introduction of English as the medium of instruction in Asian primary schools, it will nevertheless remain an acquired language, and Asian students examined in it will obviously be at a disadvantage if taking the same examination as European pupils to whom English is their own vernacular. Nevertheless, as soon as English does become the common medium of instruction throughout all Asian primary schools, every effort will be made to minimize differences between the Asian schools and European schools both on the syllabus and the examination side. A recent revision of primary school syllabuses has borne very much in mind the advisability of uniformity in all subjects wherever possible. Arithmetic is one of the easiest subjects in which to achieve this, and it is hoped that in the Examination in 1960 there will be almost complete uniformity in the Arithmetic questions in the Kenya Asian and European Preliminary Examinations. It is agreed that, in the immediate future, individual Asian schools which so wish may follow the European syllabus and sit for the European English Examination if they wish to do so.

31. As an immediate step a new pattern for the Kenya Asian Preliminary Examination is being introduced to bring it completely into line with that now followed for European students. In this new pattern, scripts in English and Arithmetic only will be marked at Headquarters (*see* paragraph 28 above) the remaining subjects being marked internally by the respective schools on papers

set by the Department, it being understood that, although the results of the examinations will not be determined on an aggregate basis, nevertheless the internal marks as well as the Principal's record of the pupil at school will be taken into account in awarding secondary places.

### **Training and Supply of Teachers**

32. The recommendations in section F of Chapter IX of the report concern the training and supply of teachers.

33. It is accepted policy that teacher training programmes should aim not simply at keeping pace with the growing number of classes but at reducing the size of classes and replacing unqualified by trained teachers. The output of trained Asian primary teachers is expected to rise to 160 in 1959; including 25 from upgrading courses, and to 190 in 1960. It is also agreed that the work of the Special Centre should be extended and made an integral part of teacher training (recommendation F (2)). This policy is, in fact, already in force and it is fully realized that the best way to satisfy the determination of the Asian community to correlate their syllabus and examinations as closely as possible with that of the European system is acceleration of the work of this Centre in extending the use of English as the medium of instruction throughout the Asian primary schools. Every encouragement will be given to this work.

34. The Government welcomes the advice (recommendation F (3)) that the Asian community in Kenya should encourage its young people to enter the teaching profession. It is also agreed (recommendation F (4)) that the training of Secondary Modern teachers should be undertaken urgently by the Kenya Teacher Training Colleges. In addition facilities for training such teachers in the United Kingdom are being explored and a member of the Inspectorate will be given an early opportunity to study the work of sample Secondary Modern schools and training colleges in the United Kingdom so as to be able to give special guidance to the development in Kenya of Modern courses and of suitable Teacher Training (recommendation F (5)).

35. In recommendation F (6) the authors of the report advise that conditions of service in aided schools should gradually be made similar to those that obtain in government schools. Government accepts the view of the Asian Advisory Council that aided schools have a most important part to play in the Asian educational system and it will certainly do its utmost to make conditions of service in all schools as uniform as possible. Government believes that there should be no rigid distinction between Government schools on the one hand and Aided schools on the other. Both types of school should be regarded as integral and equally important parts of the Asian educational system. A committee has been constituted to examine and advise on the creation of a unified teachers service in Asian schools, with appropriate terms and conditions of employment.

### **Administration**

36. There are certain recommendations in section G of Chapter IX of the report which have not already been considered earlier in this Paper. First, it is accepted that an expansion of the Inspectorate should be an important aim of policy. This objective will be accorded as much priority as possible within the ceilings of finance and staff laid down for the Education Department. Secondly the delegation of responsibility to Provincial Education Officers is also accepted as a desirable development when staffing conditions permit. They are already given every opportunity to advise on development programmes for their Provinces. Lastly, with reference to recommendation G (5), an Asian has been appointed on a trial basis to an office subordinate to that of Assistant Director.