

THE I.U.B.E.: ITS GOALS AND CLIENTS

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For any kind of education, the goals and the clients are crucially important components. The ultimate goal of a university education with respect to bios or the living environment cannot and should not be limited to conventional topics which, most of the time, exclude humanitarian and ethical elements. Therefore, graduate and undergraduate programs of the existing higher-educational institutions must be designed and re-designed with due consideration to social and non-material concerns.

Guiding principles of such an educational activity have to be formulated solely on the basis of secular and scientific values which are the outcomes of the cultural and scientific accumulation over centuries. Once decided to teach values, the question of determining what values and whose values then becomes an important issue. Are these values to be left to the desecration of individual educational institutions, or to the choices of the countries in various parts of the world, to regional political entities like the EC or OECD, or they are to be determined by a central body like the International University for the Bio-Environment (I.U.B.E.). It seems to me that the B.I.O. has a moral duty to take that responsibility. In connection with this duty, I would suggest that the B.I.O. attempt to develop a list of guiding principles of a Bio-Ethics, some sort of environmental code of conduct, that could be taken into consideration in the establishment of such programmes.

A distinction used to be made between the needs and potentialities of developing and already developed countries in this respect. Although such a need is still existent, a change of attitude is observed in the practice. There has also been a marked shift of interest in the interactions of ecological and developmental considerations over the last 20 years. In the early 1970s, the priority to be given to concerns for economic growth and development was more pronounced.

This was clearly expressed by the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during the 1972 Stockholm Conference on Environment, when she asked "how can I explain the reasons why the pollution of seas, atmosphere and land is important to hundreds of millions of Indians while their lives were threatened by the lack of food, housing, education and health."

The approach adopted in the report of the UN Commission on Environment and Development which was published under the title of "Our Common Future" is somewhat different and is based on the conviction that ecological and economical concerns can and should be harmonized. Obviously, even for nations of the Third World, ecological adverse affects of industrial development and urbanization might have considerable influence upon the material health of living creatures. As was emphasized rightly by the Founex Report, "ce n'est pas seulement la qualite de la vie, mais la vie elle-meme qui est menace"öthat is, it is not only the quality of life, but life itself which is threatened.

One year from today, a new Conference on Environment, focusing on the problems connected with balancing ecology with development, will take place. It is hoped that the position taken by the World Commission on Environment and Development in the middle of the 1980's will not be changed and the Third World countries will continue to consider the protection of their living environment as important as their development.

In developing the curricula of the International University for the Bio-Environment, certain guiding principles have to be taken into consideration:

- A. A comprehensive understanding of the interdependence of biophysical and social systems-biosphere and technosphereöis a necessity. The most promising curricula try to merge the sciences with the moral and ethical questions raised by the humanities. Ideally, the clients should gain an insight into the dominant social paradigms that shape our intellectual thought and influence the form and functioning of our institutions.
- B. The university should be organized in such a way that it develops an ability to make available factual information to help strengthen this understanding (the contextual component).
- C. Its capacity of research and analysis should be suitable for organizing and analyzing varied information to develop a higher awareness of the system's linkages (the methodological component).
- D. It should possess the ability to inform and consult with citizens and policy-makers on the ramifications of certain courses of action, and on how these people can play a more effective role in shaping the future of their own communities.

Although the concept of the university has the advantage of restricting the scope of such an educational programme, our target client group is

still far from being clearly defined. Therefore, a conscious effort has to be made to define the client population more clearly. Since environmental education is inseparable from citizenship education, citizens must be one of the major components of the programme. Decision-makers, in educational institutions, in public and private occupations should also be the main targets, that are in need of developing a social responsibility together with a systems-centered holistic view of man in relation to environment.

Principles such as duties and responsibilities instead of rights, quality instead of quantity, planned development instead of disorder, must prevail in this programme. We should try to combine generalism with specialization, theory with practice, and make an effort to have an integrated view of urban and rural territories. Our educational system must be flexible enough to allow differentiations at global, national, regional and local levels.

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