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ESSAY REVIEW

EDUCATION PLANNING FOR ZIMBABWE: THE PROBLEM OF UNRELIABLE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

PLANS FOR THE education system of Zimbabwe involve apparently irreconcilable differences of opinion between those who favour modification of the colonial education system and those who seek the creation of an entirely new system. It must be assumed that both parties have the common aim of securing the establishment of an education system that will assist with the creation of a usefully energetic, sensitively intelligent and proudly united society. A basic issue, therefore, is the extent to which the views of the respective parties are valid in the context of national welfare.

The basic premise of conservative opinion is that much in the existing education system is worth preserving whereas the revolutionaries feel that the existing system is without merit of any kind. As the premises of the two parties are to a great extent based on different interpretations of the history of the colonial system of education it is important to consider the validity of their respective historical perspectives.

In the ideological context the historical analysis of colonial education systems gives rise to irreconcilably different views. With reference to colonial East Africa W. T. S. Gould, for example, observes that on the one hand it is felt that by means of

formal education in schools the social resources of each colonial area became mobilized to generate change that benefited both society at large and the individual who was able to find a place in school. A pool of educated and skilled people was one necessary condition for development as measured by the normal indices of Western experience. Schools could be viewed in these terms as one of the benefits of the colonial presence.¹

Critics of this view, Gould continues, point out that

schools served the colonial system by providing a pool of its servants and inculcating a value system of hierarchical control and exploitation that is implicit in colonialism. The gap between these two schools of thought would appear to be unbridgeable.²

Two different historical perspectives on the history of the colonial education system in this country which contrast with each other in much the same manner as that described by Gould have been presented for Zimbabwe. On the one hand, four professors in the Faculty of Education of the

¹ W. T. S. Gould, 'Patterns of school provision in colonial East Africa', *Université Nationale du Zaïre Campus de Lubumbashi: Etudes d'Histoire Africaine, VIII, Numéro Spécial: L'Enseignement en Afrique Noire* (Lubumbashi, Presses Universitaires du Zaïre, 1976), 131. I am grateful to Prof. R. S. Roberts for this reference.

² Ibid.

University of Rhodesia, have produced the 'Report of an Investigation into the Possibilities for Educational Development in Rhodesia-Zimbabwe after a Political Settlement';³ this private report was made in response to certain suggestions from the Ministry of Education and subsequently legislation has, in important respects, followed the plan of the four professors. On the other hand Nathan Shamuyarira on behalf of the Patriotic Front has presented a policy statement in 'Education and Social Transformation in Zimbabwe'.⁴

The report of the four professors in its historical perspectives focuses on 'firm traditions . . . which can be expected to provide a basis for development in the future'.⁵ Three of these traditions which receive special attention are the utilization of schools to promote community development schemes, the maintenance of high standards of education at secondary and tertiary levels, and harmony between the State and religious bodies in their joint involvement in educational affairs. It is asserted that the 'most important among these traditions is almost certainly that of community development'.⁶ The origin of this tradition is attributed to a Native Department official, H. S. Keigwin, whose policy on African education gave rise to

two fundamental principles . . . in the first place, a small educational advance by large numbers of African people was to be 'infinitely preferred to any scheme for the advancement of the few'; and in the second place, the emphasis of education should be placed on such agricultural and industrial instruction as would enable African people to develop a more satisfying and productive way of life in the tribal reserves.⁷

It is alleged that the policy of Keigwin received the endorsement of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1924 and was adopted by the first Director of Native Education, Harold Iowitt, for extension 'to all schools for Africans in the territory'.⁸ The four professors then outline the history of community development schemes in African education up to recent times.⁹

The account of community development schemes by the four professors contains a number of weaknesses arising from factual errors as well as uncritical acceptance of the principles of policy attributed to Keigwin. Taking the factual errors first, it should have been mentioned that the Phelps-Stokes Commission was an American-sponsored enquiry and had played an important part in the formulation of policy on community development in the territory long before this was endorsed in the report of 1924. Indeed, a leading member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, C. T. Loram,

³ N. D. Atkinson (Convenor), P. G. S. Gilbert, Elizabeth Hendrikz and S. F. W. Orbell, 'Report of an Investigation into the Possibilities for Educational Development in Rhodesia-Zimbabwe after a Political Settlement' (Salisbury, privately, mimeo, 1978). The four professors emphasize that their suggestions were made as a result of their investigations as private individuals and the views expressed do not represent those of the University of Rhodesia or its Education Faculty. Had the Government come up with these proposals they would naturally have been subject to widespread criticism on the ground that they represented partizan views.

⁴ N. Shamuyarira, 'Education and social transformation in Zimbabwe', *Development Dialogue* 1978 : 2 (Ovre Slottsgaten, Dag Hammarskjöld Centre, 1978).

⁵ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

had published *The Education of the South African Native* in 1917, which had received widespread attention amongst all concerned with African affairs in the southern half of the continent.¹⁰ Loram had been greatly influenced by the ideas of American specialists on the education of Blacks, notably Booker T. Washington, who from before the turn of the century had promoted rurally-orientated community development schemes for Black Americans, partly with a view to reducing tension between Blacks and Whites in the industrializing sectors of the American economy.¹¹ Early in 1921 the Chairman of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, Thomas Jesse Jones, whose ideas were similar to those of Washington, visited Southern Rhodesia where Native Department schemes under the direction of Keigwin were modified in accordance with Phelps-Stokeism.¹² At the same time the Imperial Government and the Administrator of Southern Rhodesia, Sir Francis Percy Drummond Chaplin, were anxious to promote Phelps-Stokeism as quickly as possible for it was feared that with the advent of Responsible Government European settlers might scotch plans for African community development. Loram was therefore personally called upon to propagate Phelps-Stokeism in the territory where, by 1923, many missionaries were converted to the new policy in African education. All this is not mentioned by the four professors who give the misleading impression that Phelps-Stokeism and the influence of Loram were asserted in the territory only after the advent of Responsible Government.

¹⁰ C. T. Loram, *The Education of the South African Native* (New York, Longmans, Green, 1917); for examples of the reception of this book see reviews in *Journal of the African Society* (1917), LXVI, 85-7; T. F. Victor Buxton, 'Education of the African', *Journal of the African Society* (1918), LXVII, 212-22.

¹¹ For an account of the part played by Washington in Black American education generally, see A. Conway, *The History of the Negro in the United States* (London, The Historical Association, General Series Pamphlet No. 67, 1968), 18-20; for an account of American influences on Loram see K. J. King, *Pan-Africanism and Education* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), *passim*; R. D. Heyman, 'C. T. Loram: South African liberal in race relations', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* (1972), V, 41-50. I am grateful to Prof. R. S. Roberts for these last two references.

¹² Unless otherwise stated these and other observations on African education history that follow in this article are based on R. J. Challiss, 'African Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1923', (Salisbury, unpubl. Mss, 1978), which contrasts with N. D. Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians: A History of Educational Policy in Rhodesia* (London, Longmans, 1972), which is cited as the historical authority in the Report of the four professors. In the account by Atkinson, no mention is made of the influence exerted by Phelps-Stokeists before the advent of Responsible Government and the part played by Loram is overlooked entirely. Atkinson also fails to mention that for some years before the advent of Responsible Government there were serious disputes between professionally qualified officials of the Government Department of Education and officials of the Native Department which centred upon whether Phelps-Stokeist community development schemes should be encouraged at the expense of provision of third-class (kraal) schools and improvements in African teacher-training. Similar omissions are made in two other published accounts of local education history: F. Parker, *African Development and Education in Southern Rhodesia* (Columbus, Ohio State Univ. Press, International Education Monograph No. 2, Kappa Delta Phi Publication, 1960), and R. C. Bone, *African Education: The Period to 1927* (Salisbury, Univ. College of Rhodesia, Faculty of Education Occasional Paper No. 9, 1970). These omissions largely explain why views expressed by the author of this essay differ from those presented by the four professors.

As for uncritical acceptance by the four professors of the two principles of policy attributed to Keigwin, this is a matter of the utmost significance as far as their advocacy of community development in the future is concerned. For, the wide acceptance of the new policy in the 1920s was indeed successful in the inhibition of 'the advancement of the few'. For example, before Phelps-Stokeism prevailed in the territory, good progress was made in the field of African teacher training at certain leading mission stations. As a result of Phelps-Stokeism this progress was arrested because limited mission and State finances and resources were swallowed up by agricultural and industrial training schemes instead of being utilized for the expansion and improvement of teacher-training facilities.

Phelps-Stokeism also had an adverse effect on the growth-rate of African education. During the First World War and for a few years afterwards, attendances at Mission schools increased rapidly, albeit mainly in single-teacher kraal schools where only a very elementary education was given in the vernacular.¹³ This alarmed the Native Department, chiefly for security reasons. The Native Department therefore welcomed Phelps-Stokeism which eschewed kraal schools in favour of more centralized ones where larger numbers of better qualified teachers could cater more effectively for industrial and agricultural training. With a smaller number of schools, of course, closer European surveillance was possible and there was no danger of subversive propaganda against colonial rule, as there might be in remotely situated kraal schools.

Concentration on the establishment of centralized schools and neglect of African teacher-training appears to have meant that the growth-rate of African education slowed down in the late 1920s, and for a while in the early 1930s numbers at schools actually declined. In addition to the fact that schools were fewer and further between, the arrested growth-rate may also have had something to do with the nature of the Phelps-Stokeist curriculum. Not all Africans can have wished to train as agriculturalists and they strongly resented industrial training of a simplified kind that was intended to promote improvements in traditional African craftsmanship instead of the acquisition of technical skills of a Western industrialized

¹³ The sole text cited as a reference on the history of education in the Report of the four professors is Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, 91, where it is erroneously asserted that under Government regulations on kraal schools 'The only stipulation concerning the curriculum was that "a sufficient number of pupils are taught to speak and understand the English language"'. In fact, under the regulations only the more sophisticated First and Second-class mission schools had to give instruction in English, but this was not required in Third-class (kraal) schools at all, British South Africa Company, *Government Gazette*, 21 June 1907, Government Notice No. 133 of 20 June 1907, Order "D", Schools for Natives, Sections 1-8, *passim*. This error results in further confusion later on (see, for example, the citation of Native Department criticism of African teachers in kraal schools on the ground that they could not speak English, *Teaching Rhodesians*, 95). For further examples of such errors that result in unreliable interpretations in *Teaching Rhodesians*, see R. J. Challis, 'The origins of the educational system of Southern Rhodesia', *Rhodesian History* (1973), IV, 57-77, and *Vicarious Rhodesians: Problems Affecting the Selection of Rhodesian Rhodes Scholars 1904-1923* (Salisbury, The Central African Historical Association, Local Series 33, 1977), 9, fn. 102.

kind. Instead of promoting 'a small educational advance by large numbers of African people', as the four professors would have us believe, Phelps-Stokeism appears to have had the opposite effects.¹⁴

The complexities of the situation that gave rise to Phelps-Stokeism in Southern Rhodesia can only be touched upon briefly in this essay. Indeed, only in relatively recent times has the importance of the subject been recognized.¹⁵ It is apparent, however, that a deeper understanding than that displayed by the four professors is needed to ensure that history does not repeat itself where contemporary community development schemes are concerned. What seems to be clear enough is that under Phelps-Stokeism, instead of investment in such things as agricultural equipment, improved communications and irrigation schemes, too much reliance was placed upon schools alone for the promotion of African economic and social development. It is also clear that Phelps-Stokeism was for the most part a genuine attempt to promote African welfare by adopting the policy of separate racial development in order to safeguard African rather than European interests. Ironically, this meant that African advancement towards self-sufficiency and self-determination was probably far more effectively retarded than might have been the case if European settlers had from the outset been allowed to adopt frankly exploitative policies that might at least have brought the African more quickly into the modern, cash economy.

¹⁴ A common view, at least amongst certain European authorities on local African education history, is that until the late 1930s, Africans were generally opposed to formal education. Parker, *African Development*, x, for example, asserts that 'until about 1940 many Africans were loath to accept Western Culture and schooling. But that pattern has changed. In the last dozen years African progress has accelerated from an orderly trot to a breathless gallop.'

In 1970 a Government publication (R. Taylor, *African Education, The Historical Development and Organization of the System* (Salisbury, Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism, 1970), 4) also adopted this view: 'It was unfortunate that the difficulties of the war years 1939-45 should have imposed restrictions on expansion at a time when the African was awakening to the benefits of education. Prior to about 1938, the problem had been to induce parents to allow their children to attend school, for they preferred that the children should help with household tasks, herd the cattle, or hoe the lands.'

Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, 116, mentions the 'sharp rise in the number of African pupils, which coincided with the early years of the Second World War, and attributes this largely 'to a tendency for many more pupils to stay on for work in the upper standards'. He also asserts that 'demands for African secondary education were already appearing with remarkable frequency,' *ibid.*, 118.

For purposes of European propaganda, it is perhaps convenient to assume that Africans for long resisted formal education, and only made relatively sudden demands for it in the late 1930s. What is overlooked, however, is that before the advent of Phelps-Stokeism the growth-rate of African education was relatively rapid. Indeed, African demands for high standards of education had always been strong. It was not education but Phelps-Stokeism which Africans resisted in the 1920s and early 1930s.

¹⁵ For consideration of important aspects of community development schemes that still require investigation, see M. C. Steele, 'Some problems of government in Rhodesia', *Rhodesian History* (1970), I, 83-6, and 'Community Development in Rhodesia', *ibid.* (1973), IV, 105-12.

The four professors also assert that, 'A second important tradition in the Rhodesian educational experience is that of maintaining high standards of achievement at the upper secondary and higher levels'.¹⁶ Their Report states rather tentatively that before the advent of Responsible Government:

It would appear that there was already some recognition, though from a distinctly European point of view, of the significance of maintaining high educational standards in a situation in which people of different race and culture lived and worked in increasing proximity to each other.¹⁷

Surely the racially competitive aspect of the situation should have been expressed in stronger terms. Simply from perusal of debates in the Legislative Council from the turn of the century onwards it is clear that European settlers became increasingly anxious to ensure that their children received the 'best possible' education in order to secure continued European dominance in the territory.¹⁸ Indeed, by 1923 prolonged failure by the B.S.A. Company Administration to satisfy European settlers' desires for an efficient European education system had considerably intensified the opposition of many European settlers to African advancement.

The Report of the four professors rather simply suggests that the tradition of high standards was mainly the result of recommendations made by the Commissions of Enquiry into European education of 1928 and 1936.¹⁹ Close examination of the evidence reveals, however, that these recommendations reflected long-felt needs and suggested the best ways of meeting them now that the facilities and finances were available for such action. Important aspects of the situation appear to have been that Europeans could only secure superior education facilities for their children by means of the exploitation of cheap African labour, particularly in the European system of schools, the allocation annually of a lion's share of public revenues to European education (even though these funds for long came largely from African taxation), and, in the 1920s, the grant of Imperial loans for the provision of European school facilities. The Report of the four professors makes no mention of these considerations.

Neglect of the part played by the exploitation of cheap African labour would seem to be a serious defect in any scheme for the modification of the colonial system. Certainly, it is hard to disagree with the view implied in the Report of the four professors that a precipitant lowering of standards in order to let schools cater more equitably for all sectors of society should be avoided. Even so, important reasons why high standards were made possible for the exclusive benefit of a small, privileged group of people in the country should be frankly recognized in education plans for Zimbabwe. Only then is it likely that sincere efforts will be made to create an education system which gives equal opportunities for all to benefit from 'high standards of upper secondary and higher education'.

¹⁶ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 5.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Unless otherwise stated these, and the observations on European education that follow in this article are based on R. J. Challiss, *The European Education System in Southern Rhodesia 1890-1930* (Salisbury, Supplement to *Zambezia*, 1980 in press).

¹⁹ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 5-6.

In conclusion to their historical outline the four professors state that the 'third important educational tradition has been the maintenance of close co-operation between government and the various church and missionary authorities'.²⁰ Rhodes is given credit for initiating this tradition which was reflected in legislation

passed in 1899, authorising public financial assistance to denominational schools and the 'right of entry' of denominational clergy to teach the children of their own persuasion in state-maintained schools . . . Since then, the principle of a partnership between church and state in the public provision of education has been consistently maintained, though there has been some modification in the terms of the 'right of entry' under the *Federation Act No. 15* of 1956, sec. 28, and a considerable reduction in missionary responsibility for primary education, as a result of the Plan for Education of 1956.²¹

The impression given here of virtually complete harmony between religious bodies and what were often reactionary Governments is misleading. Later in the Report the four professors mention that religious bodies took the initiative in educational change and progress. Missionaries, for example, led the way in African teacher training, agricultural training and secondary education.²² Perhaps it might have been mentioned by the professors that in some of these instances missionary initiatives were at odds with Government policy, or to be more precise, policy of the Department of Native Affairs. For example, Phelps-Stokeism, which was favoured by the Native Department, was resisted by certain missionaries who felt that greater attention should be paid to African teacher training. In this connection, what happened from the 1930s onwards would seem to have been of special significance. Progress in African teacher-training, which had been checked by Phelps-Stokeism in the 1920s, was revived in the 1930s. At the same time, African demands for technical training instead of simple industrial training became harder to deny by those who still clung to Phelps-Stokeist notions of simplified vocational training for Africans. Certain missionaries also realized that opportunities for Africans to receive secondary education should no longer be withheld.

A great deal of research into what happened in the 1930s and later still remains to be done before a satisfactory account of events can be given. It seems to be safe enough to say, however, that by the time that African education was placed under the authority of a somewhat repressively inclined Native Department in the mid-1930s, missionaries were becoming increasingly aware of needs to pay more attention to African aspirations that had been thwarted by Phelps-Stokeism. It would appear, therefore, that the stage was now set for an era of struggle rather than co-operation between missionaries and Government authorities.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Church-State relationships was that many missionaries, long before it became clear that decolonization was inevitable, strove to ensure that the Imperial Government and its agencies

²⁰ Ibid., 7.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 50-1.

in the territory treated Africans justly. Missionaries like Arthur Shearly Cripps did this in a somewhat counter-productive manner by means of open confrontation with the State.²³ Others, however, seem to have appreciated the need to avoid public controversy, and so they relied on persuasion and influence exerted behind the scenes.²⁴ It might be said, therefore, that for all their natural human weaknesses, missionaries have often acted as the conscience of the State, and hopefully they will continue to be a force for the good in Zimbabwe.

Clearly, the historical perspectives of the four professors, characterized as they are by superficiality and factual errors, undermine their case for evolutionary educational change in Zimbabwe. This is a pity for there is a great deal in their Report which seems to be of value. Of course, local historical perspectives are by no means the sole basis of their suggestions. In addition to consultations with individuals and groups representative of a wide range of public opinion,²⁵ the Report is informed by comparative educational studies.²⁶ Obviously, the four professors themselves are also professionally well qualified to appreciate what is feasible in the context of universally valued principles of educational theory and practice. Space allows for only a summary of what appear to be the salient features of the multi-faceted recommendations made by the four professors.

To facilitate the creation of 'a non-racial meritocracy' in the context of a free-enterprise system of government, the four professors suggest that the existing education system should be modified and expanded on the basis that all institutions eliminate racial discrimination and that high standards of education are maintained.²⁷ At the same time, the professors recommend certain innovations intended to provide basic educational opportunities for

²³ See generally, T. O. Ranger and J. Weller, (eds), *Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa* (London, Heinemann, 1975); T. O. Ranger, *State and Church in Southern Rhodesia 1919-1939* (Salisbury, The Central Africa Historical Association, Local Series No. 4, 1972); D. V. Steere, *God's Irregular: Arthur Shearly Cripps* (London, S.P.C.K., 1973); G. Gibbon, *Paget of Rhodesia. A Memoir of Edward, 5th Bishop of Mashonaland* (Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1973); and reviews of the latter two books by M. C. Steele, *Rhodesian History* (1973), IV, 113-15, and A. J. Chennells, *Zambezia* (1974), III, ii, 132-4.

²⁴ Certainly, missionaries have often co-operated with the State in African educational provision, but it is misleading to regard this as evidence of harmonious relations between the two parties. Special difficulties have naturally arisen as a result, for example, of disunity amongst various missionary bodies as well as their heavy reliance upon State financial aid. To suggest that missionary attitudes can be closely identified with Governments representative of European settlers, however, would seem to require considerable qualification. For a study of trends towards greater co-operation between missionaries and the State, see Ranger, *State and Church in Southern Rhodesia*; for an account of struggles between missionaries and the State, see Challiss, 'African Education in Southern Rhodesia'; for evidence of increasing tension in the late 1930s, see B. Grimston, *Survey of Native Educational Development, Southern Rhodesia, 1937* (St. Albans, privately, 1942); for accounts of Church-State relations down to more recent times, see, for examples of persuasive influence by clergy, Gibbon, *Paget of Rhodesia*; F. C. Barr, *Archbishop Aston Chichester 1879-1962: A Memoir* (Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1978); and for an example of recent struggles, see R. H. Randolph, *Church and State in Rhodesia 1969-1971: A Catholic View* (Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1971).

²⁵ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation,' Appendix B, ii-iv.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 30, 37, 54.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

those who are not immediately catered for in conventional ways.²⁸ A fundamental problem apparently envisaged by the four professors is that high standards are necessary to sustain economic progress vital to the welfare of the nation generally, but if these standards are to be maintained, then progress towards the realization of universal and compulsory education will be very slow.²⁹ Only properly trained teachers and adequately appointed facilities will ensure the maintenance of standards.

In view of natural difficulties arising from the integration of pupils with widely different home backgrounds, even amongst members of the same race, the professors feel that the education system should continue to consider the often sharply contrasting cultural needs of pupils and that multi-racial integration should therefore be implemented only gradually.³⁰ At the same time the curriculum of all schools should pay special attention to African studies and 'encourage understanding and tolerance of different racial groups'.³¹ As there is 'no realistic alternative', English is recommended wherever practicable as a common medium of instruction, but all children should learn 'the main local African language (i.e. Shona or Sindebele)'.³²

Modification and expansion of the existing education system suggested by the four professors mainly involves the conversion to and creation of 'high fee-paying' and 'low fee-paying' schools.³³ Pupils should be drawn from the immediate neighbourhood of each school, but in the absence of local schools of these kinds, pupils should attend boarding institutions on a regional basis.³⁴ For the secondary level, pupils should pass aptitude tests and be accepted only on the understanding that they will complete courses of at least four years at schools where the emphasis is placed on either the academic or technical side.³⁵ To cater for special manpower requirements, chiefly in commerce and industry, it is recommended that expansion should be concentrated upon the junior secondary stage and proceed from there to the provision of universal primary education.³⁶ Private schools, which are similar in many ways to English Public Schools, should continue to receive State assistance and similar encouragement should be given to 'community' schools established by enterprising individuals and managed by private trusts.³⁷ Pre-school and special education centres for infants and handicapped children should remain largely in the hands of local authorities and private charitable organizations, but the State should monitor these institutions closely and encourage expansion by means of greater financial assistance.³⁸

With regard for post-school and adult education the four professors advocate retention of university autonomy and the co-ordination and expansion of State and voluntary training schemes generally.³⁹ At the University a guiding principle should be the maintenance of 'academic

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 31-4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 12-18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 58.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 25-7.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 12-18.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 50-3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 20-3, 47-50.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 31-4, 42-6.

excellence'; therefore, student entry should remain as it is, namely after the completion of sixth-form studies.⁴⁰ Increased numbers in receipt of higher education, however, should be achieved by the University's recognition of associate status for institutions where entrance qualifications are not uniform.⁴¹ At the University greater attention to research is advocated, closely integrated with national development needs.⁴² Great expansion in teacher and technological-training facilities is also advocated, with special assistance in the latter aspect from local as well as internationally-based commercial and industrial bodies.⁴³ In addition to centrally monitored on-the-job training, expansion should include existing facilities like the Bulawayo and Salisbury Polytechnics.⁴⁴ Reliance upon expatriate teachers and expertise should generally be minimized in favour of locally trained personnel firmly committed to the national interest.⁴⁵

Innovatory suggestions by the four professors include increased numbers of bursaries to assist promising pupils who might not otherwise be able to attend school,⁴⁶ the establishment of regional adult education centres 'in order to meet the needs of particular localities',⁴⁷ and a combination of non-formal and semi-formal methods of instruction to cater for those outside the conventional system of education.⁴⁸ Co-ordination between existing Government, University and other agencies for rural development, which includes utilization of facilities provided by Protected Villages and the provision of free schooling, should generally be directed towards community development.⁴⁹ Co-ordination is advocated as well between the Government, the University and the racially unified teaching force in the share of regionally based curriculum development centres.⁵⁰

A full review of the suggestions made by the professors does not fall within the scope of this paper. It is necessary, however, to make a few general observations on their suggestions in order to appreciate the implications of their unsatisfactory historical perspectives. When the Report was made in 1978 it was criticized on the grounds that a scheme for gradual change instead of rapid 'Africanization [might] perpetuate inequality'.⁵¹ Indeed, some feared 'the emergence of a small black bourgeoisie filling the positions of those Europeans who leave the country, leaving the vast majority of the population no better off than before'.⁵² Certainly, the four professors display greater concern for sustained economic progress than for the deeply rooted social injustices that were chiefly responsible for the advent of war in the territory.

Failure by the four professors to fully appreciate the nature of problems and injustices arising from the colonial era would seem to be partially responsible for what appears to be one of the most unfortunate consequences

⁴⁰ Ibid., 45.

⁴¹ Ibid., 44.

⁴² Ibid., 44.

⁴³ Ibid., 45-7.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 34, 45-7.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 54-5.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 31-4.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 35-8.

⁵¹ J. O. O'Leary, 'What kind of system after Rhodesian war is over?', *The Times Higher Education Supplement* (7 July 1978), 6.

⁵² Ibid., 7.

of the implementation of their scheme in the territory. That is, the transfer of former Government schools into the hands of semi-autonomous bodies. It should be stressed that not all of the suggestions made by the four professors have been adopted by the Government. The suggestion of neighbourhood high-fee and low-fee paying schools has been introduced, but other suggestions, notably increased numbers of bursaries to assist promising but needy pupils, the introduction of an Afrocentric curriculum, and provision for non-formal and semi-formal methods of instruction for those outside the conventional school system, have not yet been introduced. A different concept of community school provision from the one advocated by the four professors has also been encouraged under the Government of National Unity. What has been done in connection with the creation of high-fee paying, low-fee paying and community schools is of special significance, partly because it reveals that the suggestions made by the four professors failed to make those in power sufficiently appreciative of how the creation of relatively well-equipped Government schools for Europeans was made possible during the colonial era, and also because high-fee paying and community schools have given rise to considerable criticism from certain quarters in Zimbabwe.

Under the new Education Act (No. 8 of 1978, promulgated 2 Feb. 1979), parents of pupils in formerly exclusively European Government schools have been given a chance to choose whether these schools should become high-fee paying, low-fee paying or community schools. Many parents have opted for community schools. When the four professors recommended these schools in their Report they referred specifically to institutions that had already been established in African townships which cater for children who cannot find places in Government schools.⁵³ The newer concept of community schools, however, which the four professors did not suggest in their Report, is intended to cater for special cultural and religious communities. The new concept of community school was justified by the Rhodesian Front M.P. and Co-Minister of Education, Rowan Cronje, as follows: 'The importance of the religious and cultural association, group identification, and the relevance of these factors to the education system and the upbringing of a child have been recognized in many parts of the world.'⁵⁴ Atkinson, one of the four professors, had the following response

⁵³ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 53.

⁵⁴ T. Dumbutshena, 'Experiments in education, class of "79"', *Illustrated Life Rhodesia* (15 Feb. 1979), XI, xxiv, 8; the new concept of community schools is very similar to the Afrikaner concept of Christian National Education which comprised parental control of schools, especially the choice of teachers, and emphasis upon Dutch Reformed Church religious teaching, instruction in the Dutch language, and the inculcation of Afrikaner national consciousness, particularly in history lessons. Schools of this kind received Government assistance in Southern Rhodesia during the Pioneer decade. Subsequently, these early schools were absorbed by the Government system of undenominational public schools. Christian National Schools, however, operated in opposition to the Government system of schools in Southern Rhodesia until 1922, chiefly because the Government schools provided inadequate scope for Afrikaner language needs. Agreement was reached between the Government and the Christian National Schools movement when sufficient Afrikaans language instruction was introduced in Government schools. For an account of these and other events and difficulties affecting the Christian National Schools movement in Southern Rhodesia, see R. J. Challiss, 'Afrikaner Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1923' (Salisbury, unpubl. Mss, 1977). This account reveals that a number of factual errors are to be found in the brief account given of Afrikaner education in Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, 61.

to this new concept of community school: 'The more rigorously they preserve their culture, the richer the nation. We do not want regimentation in our system'.⁵⁵ It has been argued, however,

that community schools will engender parochialism which will not be in the national interest . . . The Board of Governors who will run community schools are vested with wide-ranging powers. They have full control over the admission of pupils and they can object to the appointment of a particular teacher. In exercising these powers, some critics ask what is to stop the Board from being racialistic . . . Since teachers at community schools will be paid by the Government, a question that arises is whether the taxpayers should subsidise cultural or religious exclusivity.⁵⁶

Dr Joseph Gopo, who was then the ZANU Secretary for Education and is a lecturer in Biochemistry at the University of Rhodesia, was reported as opposing concepts of community schools altogether, because 'community schools will encourage racism. He sees nothing to stop various tribal groups from establishing their own schools, for example. And he believes that if a community wishes to establish its own school, it should not expect or receive government subsidy'.⁵⁷ An M.P., the Revd Farayi Muzorewa, whose own children attend one of the new types of community school, deplores the fact that the Government has allowed the governing body to purchase what was formerly Government school property for well below its real value and the very purpose of the school which appears to be the continuation of 'racialistic practices' by Europeans who predominate amongst parents.⁵⁸

As fees charged at the new kind of community school are likely to be higher than those charged at neighbourhood high-fee paying schools, there may be European parents who hope that this will minimize enrolment by African pupils. African parents have often been prepared to make special financial sacrifices in order to send their children to the best schools available, however, and this may mean that if community schools prove to have advantages over others, Africans will be specially attracted to the community schools irrespective of higher fees. Another advantage of community schools, in the eyes of racially prejudiced parents, appears to be the fact that they are not subject to zoning regulations. Where formerly exclusive European Government schools may find themselves in zones which might embrace predominantly African, Coloured or Asian residential areas, the European parents might decide to opt for community-school status instead of becoming

⁵⁵ Dumbutshena, 'Experiments in education', 8; Atkinson has recently qualified his initial response to the new concept of community schools:

Certain aspects of the legislation — notably the arrangements for community schools — have not been altogether clarified at the time of writing, and seem likely to arouse considerable controversy, both on educational and non-educational grounds. It is necessary to seek much closer definition of a 'community' in terms of the Act, and to examine the extent to which schools are likely to be economically viable under the control of particular local communities. It is also necessary to consider if the concept of community schools might not be abused, in order to erect barriers between children of different racial groups, 'Changing the school structure: The experience of Zimbabwe Rhodesia' *Zimbabwe: The Education Supplement* (1979) (Salisbury, Univ. of Rhodesia, 1979), 8.

⁵⁶ Dumbutshena, 'Experiments in education', 8.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁸ *The Herald* (4 July 1979), 'School scandal — M.P.'.

a high-fee paying school. In this way it is possible that Europeans from relatively far afield might be attracted to the school where fees are too high for local parents who are not Europeans. Here again, African parents who can afford to send their children to these schools, even as boarders, will probably do so if they think that it is worth the extra expense on educational grounds or perhaps even for social prestige.

As for high-fee paying schools, which were suggested by the four professors, these have been criticized on the ground that they are solely for the children of those who own or lease residential property in the neighbourhood concerned.⁵⁹ This, it is feared, 'will inevitably conspire to limit black intake' in predominantly European residential areas.⁶⁰ Gopo feels that unless all three types of Government schools, high-fee paying, low-fee paying and free, are made available in all areas, the children of domestic servants 'in affluent suburbs' will have to go to free schools envisaged mainly for rural areas.⁶¹ Gopo consequently 'foresees the continuation of the unhappy situation in which families are broken up'.⁶² The Revd Farayi Muzorewa also deplored the exclusion of the children of domestic servants from neighbourhood schools⁶³ and, in view of the shortage of school places generally, the exclusion of these children would be hard to justify if the locally situated schools have vacant places in their classrooms. It should also be remembered that the relatively well-appointed schools in formerly exclusively European areas were to a large extent the result of colonial exploitation of cheap African labour.

In response to the introduction of the zoning system by the Government, one of the four professors was reported as follows:

Professor Atkinson applauds the introduction of the zoning system in respect of high-fee paying schools. 'In opting for the neighbourhood school, I believe the Government has been particularly right,' he says, 'these schools, which are related to a particular local community through zoning or some other method, serve the special educational interests of that community and to a large extent mirror its socio-economic character.' He also believes these schools will remove race as a divisive factor and provide a sound base on which to build understanding and harmony between children and parents or different racial groups . . . Experience in other parts of the world has shown that social and class background is an important factor in determining educational performance. Thus we cannot expect policy makers to eliminate the reality of class differentials in our society. What they can do, however, is to minimise the effects of these differences on educational opportunities. Professor Atkinson says he is not unduly worried about socio-economic divisions, provided the quality of tuition is spread evenly. All schools should have the essential facilities — libraries, adequate supplies of scientific and technical equipment and highly qualified teachers, he says.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Dumbutshena, 'Experiments in education', 8.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid., 9.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *The Herald* (4 July 1979), 'School scandal — M.P.'.

⁶⁴ Dumbutshena, 'Experiments in education', 8-9.

Certainly, the transition from colonial racial discrimination to an independent multiracial democracy cannot be regarded as a simple process. Whatever the pros and cons of the gradual introduction of multiracial schooling recommended by the four professors may be, it should be stressed that the situation in Zimbabwe Rhodesia is at present unusually difficult. The question to be asked is whether the hopes expressed by Atkinson for an even spread of facilities in schools will be realized. The way in which the original idea of community schools has been transformed into a completely different concept does not augur well for such hopes.

Perhaps the most telling criticism that has been levelled at the suggestions of the four professors is on community development. In 1978 Professor T. O. Ranger, for example, is reported to have observed that schemes for special education courses in tribal areas advocated by the four professors 'would effectively mean a policy of separate development. The authors were being unrealistic about the chances of such a system being accepted under a new regime.'⁶⁵ Clearly, enthusiasm by the four professors in this respect can be attributed to their superficial understanding of the community development 'tradition' and failure to point out that separate development envisaged by Phelps-Stokeists was impractical and largely unsuccessful in its purposes.⁶⁶

With references to post-U.D.I. Government proposals for the utilization of certain schools for community development purposes, the four professors give special consideration to junior secondary schools with 'a pre-vocational flavour, strongly linked to the agricultural or industrial needs of particular communities'.⁶⁷ Criticism of African schools of this kind, established in the 1970s, to the effect that they simply provided 'a "second-class" type of secondary education' is cited by the four professors, but lightly dismissed.⁶⁸ African sensitivity about differentiated educational provision that discriminates between the races might have been more seriously considered had the professors possessed a deeper understanding of the community development 'tradition'. All that the professors assert is that 'it seems evident that some progress has been achieved in developing new community based approaches to secondary education', and, quoting a former Secretary for African Education (a European), as an authority in the matter, it is claimed that the African junior secondary schools, known as F2 schools, 'can inculcate a sense of commitment to rural life if positive measures are taken to bring

⁶⁵ O'Leary, 'What kind of system . . .?', 7.

⁶⁶ If community development schemes of the past had been soundly conceived, as the four professors appear to suggest was the case, then a logical implication of their line of reasoning would appear to be that wide-spread underdevelopment, particularly in the tribal areas, was the result of African racial inadequacies of some kind. Certainly, in a previous publication, one of the four professors appears to have displayed a somewhat patronizing attitude towards African aspirations generally; see review by R. J. Challiss of N. D. Atkinson, *Educational Co-operation in the Commonwealth: An Historical Study* (Univ. of Rhodesia, Education Occasional Paper No. 1, 1974) in *Zambezia* (1974), III, ii, 134-6.

⁶⁷ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 4-5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

this about'.⁶⁹ The only modification of the F2 school system suggested by the four professors is that it is 'equally desirable for many European pupils' who might be unsuited to a conventional secondary school education.⁷⁰ Clearer understanding of Phelps-Stokeism, therefore, might have persuaded the four professors to treat criticism of F2 schools more seriously. It would also have been pertinent to note that special 'Farm and Trade' school schemes for Europeans were also experimented with unsuccessfully in the territory some fifty years ago.

The suggestions of the four professors appear to be seriously flawed by their unsatisfactory historical perspectives. This should not, of course, imply that the case for evolutionary change must be dismissed. It does, however, appear to be a cause for concern in the Faculty of Education. Of relevance here are observations made by the four professors that research 'must always be looked upon as one of the most important contributions of a university to any educational system'⁷¹ and the University should maintain 'its detachment from political policy and from any form of sectional interest'.⁷² In both of these respects the four professors have revealed Faculty weaknesses by coming out strongly in favour of narrowly conceived interpretations of history to support proposals for an education system based on free enterprise principles. The fact that the territory has never experienced the free enterprise system, save in the case of a small sector of the populace, should in itself suggest the need for more widely based educational proposals. The partizan approach of the four professors would also appear to have undermined the case that they make for preservation of the University's autonomy in order to maintain high standards of 'academic excellence'.⁷³

⁶⁹ Ibid.; the quotation is from M. G. Mills, *Junior Secondary and Secondary F(2) Schools in Rhodesia* (Salisbury, Univ. of Rhodesia, Faculty of Education, 1974), 69, who briefly cites the community development schemes of Jowitt as the precedent for schemes that he advocates in his paper on F(2) schools. Mills joined the African Education Department in 1939 after an education in South Africa and at Merton College, Oxford; in 1966 he became Secretary for Education and after his retirement from the Ministry he held a Research Fellowship in the Education Faculty of the University, personal interview, 2 April 1975. Whilst the experience of senior civil servants, like Mills, must be of value for research purposes, the extent to which the civil service is non-political after many years of U.D.I. is questionable, and thus throws some doubt on the objectivity of such research in the Faculty of Education. A feature of the work of the Education Faculty is its close relationship with the Ministry of Education. Close co-operation between the Education Faculty and the Ministry, is, of course, reflected by the production of the Report of the four professors itself. The nature of the close relationships established can also be found in reports by the Ministry; see, especially, Rhodesia, *Annual Report of The Secretary for African Education for the Year Ended 31st December 1975* (Sessional Papers, Cmd. R.R.7, 1976), 1, where the Secretary (A. J. Smith) acknowledges 'with gratitude the unstinted assistance and friendly co-operation of the Principal and staff of the University of Rhodesia'; and various articles in *The Bulletin of the Institute of Education*, especially (1979), XV, 89-95: A. J. Smith, 'Address to NEA in Gwelo: Wednesday 8 August 1979'; Smith, a recipient of the Rhodesia Front regime's Independence Decoration, was involved mainly in European education until 1964, and in 1972 he became Secretary of African Education, *Prominent Rhodesian Personalities 1978* (Salisbury, Cover Publicity Services, 1977), 207-8.

⁷⁰ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 5.

⁷¹ Ibid., 41.

⁷² Ibid., 36.

⁷³ Ibid., 42.

It is appropriate to conclude this assessment with observations made by the great South African liberal historian, Professor C. W. de Kiewiet, on dangers affecting certain universities in his own country:

The degeneration of scholarship into partisanship is a familiar phenomenon. It appears in many universities in many lands. But no university can serve its true purpose if the forces within it generate and exact a uniformity of thought and expression in essential things. This is the danger of any university which is devoted to one race, or one faith or one economic or social pattern.⁷⁴

Turning now to the revolutionary change advocated by Shamuyarira, we see that it is based on the Marxist assumption that all institutions that evolved during the colonial period, specially educational ones, were determined by 'the economic base of . . . colonial capitalism'.⁷⁵ It is therefore claimed that the colonial education system contributed largely towards shaping 'the minds of young boys and girls at an impressionable age' and this means that one of the main purposes 'of a new and dynamic education system and programme' in Zimbabwe will be 'to decolonize the minds' of the people.⁷⁶ The historical analysis which follows this declared objective begins with an assessment of what Shamuyarira calls the 'Missionary attack on African culture'.⁷⁷

Nobody can deny that many early missionaries had an arrogant disregard for the value of anything that was non-Christian.⁷⁸ Shamuyarira implies, however, that missionaries were simply the agents of 'colonial capitalism' who allowed themselves to be used by Rhodes 'for contacting, pacifying and misleading the African chiefs' and then 'combined' with the settler Government 'in undermining and destroying the basis of African culture and traditions'.⁷⁹ Such a simplified view of events assumes that the thought processes of missionaries eighty years ago were influenced in much the same way as those of Shamuyarira today. Just as Shamuyarira thinks that African flavoured Marxist socialism should replace the European colonial system, so, he assumes, did missionaries think that Christian flavoured capitalist exploitation should replace the traditional African way of life. The conspiracy theory espoused by Shamuyarira is a distorted historical perspective which, ironically, arises from much the same kind of superficiality that prompted the four professors to make claims for almost perfect harmony between State and religious bodies.

A second major assertion made by Shamuyarira about the colonial education system is that its 'central objective . . . was to produce adequate and cheap labour power for the plantations, the mines and the growing

⁷⁴ C. W. De Kiewiet, *The Anatomy of South African Misery* (London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), 27.

⁷⁵ Shamuyarira, 'Education and social transformation', 1.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁸ For studies of missionary motives and attitudes, see generally, A. J. Dachs (ed.), *Christianity South of the Zambezi*: 1 (Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1973); M. F. C. Bourdillon (ed.), *Christianity South of the Zambezi*: 2 (Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1977); W. R. Peaden, *Missionary Attitudes to Shona Culture 1890-1923* (Salisbury, The Central Africa Historical Association, Local Series 27, 1970).

⁷⁹ Shamuyarira, 'Education and social transformation', 2.

manufacturing industries'.⁸⁰ This, again, is an over-simplification, for the various European parties concerned with African education throughout the colonial period have always been influenced by a variety of motives. Often these motives have had little or nothing to do with purely economic and political interests of the kind mentioned by Shamuyarira.

Naturally enough, missionaries were largely concerned with religious aspects of educational provision. In order to spread the Gospel widely, and stimulated too by interdenominational rivalries, single-teacher kraal schools tended to proliferate, specially in the first few decades of European settlement. This certainly promoted mass literacy in the vernacular, but was hardly likely to assist with the provision of European labour needs. What followed under Phelps-Stokeism has already been mentioned. Shamuyarira, however, does not mention this at all and seems to be unaware of the fact that Phelps-Stokeism was directed towards separate African economic and social development. For long, Europeans relied heavily upon migrant labour from outside the territory. Generally, a number of sometimes conflicting European interests and motives influenced African education and this means that it is necessary to modify the simple claim made by Shamuyarira that it 'was harnessed to produce . . . cheap labour by providing quite substantial primary education', but secondary education was, presumably for the same reason, 'deliberately and persistently suppressed'.⁸¹

Although Shamuyarira does not mention Phelps-Stokeism at all, he certainly displays a keener awareness than the four professors of problems that inevitably flowed from prolonged suppression of African secondary education, technical training and mass literacy programmes. These aspects of the situation, in conjunction with job-reservation for Europeans, quickly resulted in widespread unemployment amongst African school leavers and serious dislocation generally between inadequate educational provision for a rapidly increasing population and economic needs in the territory.⁸² The frustrations of Africans long before they were aggravated by the Rhodesian Front, are of great importance where an understanding of contemporary difficulties in the territory are concerned.

The third main aspect of colonial education considered by Shamuyarira is the theory that the manufacturing boom after the Second World War, coupled with 'shortages of raw materials in Europe and Britain's need to conserve dollar earnings [which] created continuing demand for Rhodesian commodities', was mainly responsible for African education reforms favoured by the Prime Minister, Garfield Todd, in 1955.⁸³ Shamuyarira argues that because local as well as 'the 105 multinational companies that have invested in the manufacturing industry want a higher level of skill from their labour force',⁸⁴ Todd specially favoured improvements in the standard of African primary education and provision for African technical and commercial training at the secondary school level.⁸⁵ Very little was to be done however, in the way of expansion in academic secondary education for Africans.⁸⁶ Here

⁸⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 3-5.

⁸³ Ibid., 5.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

again, Shamuyarira presents a conspiracy theory and he suggests that it can be linked to the previous one because Todd happened also to be a missionary.⁸⁷

Shamuyarira completes his historical survey with an elaboration upon the conspiracy theme. After describing how 'the Rhodesian Front reversed the programme of the Todd plan and returned to the old philosophy of laying stress on industrial training',⁸⁸ Shamuyarira goes on to say:

Neither the Todd nor the Smith plan would ever meet the requirements of a good education system for Zimbabwe, but we should point out again that imperialism preferred the Todd plan because it wanted high level and skilled labour power to utilize the technology of the new machinery, and even to manage local branches of multinational corporations. The willingness of imperialism to work with the local Africans, and even to give them a semblance of control in the local factories, was clear in the 1950s. Because of the growing threat from the liberation movements, imperialism is now producing new strategies and tactics to try and hoodwink the leaders of the liberation movements, but the aim is unchanged.⁸⁹

Clearly, the readiness displayed by Shamuyarira to see almost everything that happened in the history of colonial education in terms of sinister conspiracies is as unsatisfactory as the somewhat roseate picture presented by the four professors. In a general consideration of the uses made of history in the context of decolonization, G. Kitson Clark has perhaps given the most valuable indication of dangers that might arise from Shamuyarira's approach to the subject:

The desire to condemn does not always, probably does not normally, spring from an abstract desire for justice. Francis Bacon said that 'Revenge is a kind of wild justice'. Very often the desire for human justice is in essence a sombre and heavily moralized desire for revenge. The demand for justice at the bar of history is no exception to this. The motive behind it is very often the fact that those who feel it to be their duty to recount and stigmatize what they consider to have been the misdeeds of the past do so because in some way they identify themselves with the victims of those misdeeds and some other still existing group or historic personality with those who perpetrated them. Thereby hatred is sustained and increased.⁹⁰

Unlike the four professors, Shamuyarira does not present a clear scheme for the practical implementation of aims mentioned in his paper. He simply asserts that policy in this respect must await the assumption of absolute power by the Patriotic Front.⁹¹ Aims mentioned by Shamuyarira include the establishment of a 'centralized ministry which will give fair opportunity to all citizens to receive the education they are capable of', the introduction of universal compulsory education, and the nationalization of all private educational institutions which will be 'opened to all Zimbabweans'.⁹²

⁸⁷ Ibid., 5.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 6.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 6-7.

⁹⁰ G. Kitson Clark, *The Critical Historian* (London, Heinemann, 1967), 207.

⁹¹ Shamuyarira, 'Education and social transformation', 12.

⁹² Ibid., 7-8.

Apparently Shamuyarira envisages rapid realization of these aims. Indeed, he describes how the revolutionary destruction of the existing system 'root and branch' has already begun: 'It started on 29th April 1966, when the first shots were fired at Sinoia in the national liberation war that is continuing and deepening. The war itself has become a vast school for the re-education and reorientation of Zimbabweans.'⁹³ In addition to the 'political education' given to the people by cadres in the field,⁹⁴ cadres themselves, as well as their followers, are in receipt of a practical education in the use of modern weaponry and equipment.⁹⁵

As for what will happen should the Patriotic Front assume absolute power, the basic structure of schools, colleges and university will be retained.⁹⁶ Priority, however, will be given to the establishment of secondary and technical institutions, with emphasis 'on science and mathematics, which are underscored in African schools at present.'⁹⁷ Apparently the services of all existing teachers in the territory will be retained.⁹⁸ Presumably, these teachers will have to be kept under careful surveillance to ensure conformity with State aims. It can also be presumed that many teachers will be drawn from cadres already formed, many of whom are college and university graduates.⁹⁹ Cadres also include those who have received practical and ideological training at vocationally oriented colleges established by the Patriotic Front in Mozambique and elsewhere.¹⁰⁰ Generally, curricula will be Afrocentric and the main objectives in all institutions will be 'to transform the thinking of Zimbabweans as quickly as possible through a vigorous education policy aimed at producing a New Man who is productive, skilled, self-reliant, co-operative, and a confident participant in all aspects of the national life'.¹⁰¹ It is assumed that the revolutionary Government will receive majority support,¹⁰² and presumably this will justify the programme of mass conformity. Whites and the Church bodies will be tolerated in the country so long as they do not claim any special privileges¹⁰³ or disseminate ideas that 'cut clean across the doctrine and ideology of the State'.¹⁰⁴

Not all socialist inspired proposals for Zimbabwean education are so uncompromisingly doctrinaire as those presented by Shamuyarira. One set of proposals, by Dr B. T. G. Chidzero, which considers colonial education history relatively briefly, has perspectives that differ from those of Shamuyarira and also suggests a different approach to the problem of establishing a socialist education system in Zimbabwe. Another set of proposals, by Fr E. W. Rogers, unlike other contributions to the Zimbabwean education issue, relies almost entirely upon a comparative education approach, with little or no reference to local education history. It seems to be useful, therefore, to

⁹³ Ibid., 9.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 11.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 7.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 8.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 12-14.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 8.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 8.

consider these two sets of proposals in the assessment of the validity of historical perspectives on the subject generally and the extent to which evolutionary and revolutionary approaches to it are entirely irreconcilable.

Dr Chidzero, in *Education and the Challenge of Independence*, reveals in a brief historical sketch, that, like Shamuyarira, he is unaware of the part played by Phelps-Stokesism during the vital period between the two World Wars.¹⁰⁵ Chidzero also, therefore, rather simply asserts that in essence 'it is the economic privileges and labour requirements of the racial minority that the Rhodesian education system serves',¹⁰⁶ and he implies that this has always been the case. Unlike Shamuyarira, however, Chidzero claims that poor progress is not so much the result of sinister conspiracies between the Government, missionaries and other parties but simply the fact that deliberately neglectful Governments were for long content to leave the 'brunt of the work' to missionaries who received 'only paltry government hand-outs'.¹⁰⁷ Like the four professors, however, Chidzero has taken the trouble to assemble a great deal of statistical evidence for a careful analysis of the nature and extent of practical difficulties affecting educational provision in the country. Chidzero therefore presents the main problem affecting African education in its historical perspective as follows:

It has been estimated that 'to permit every African child who completes primary schooling to go on to a four-year secondary course would require 400 additional 600-pupil secondary schools, with an extra 800 graduate and 10,800 non-graduate teachers for whose training 53 additional teacher training colleges would be required' . . . This is an apocalyptic picture and is in itself a telling indictment of the present system, with years of deliberate neglect behind it. Indeed, until relatively recently the Rhodesian Government virtually ignored African education which for a long time it left almost entirely to missionary efforts and to voluntary organizations.¹⁰⁸

As for suggestions made by Chidzero for Zimbabwean education, these are naturally made with special emphasis upon the need to seek the removal of social injustices and class divisions of the colonial system. Chidzero therefore eschews proposals based on the 'theory of equal opportunities' with meritocratic ends in view.¹⁰⁹ In practice Chidzero argues that this kind of approach gives rise only to 'the illusion of equality' and leads 'to the rationalization of the elite system, of which education is the hand-maid'.¹¹⁰ Even though 'inequalities can and will to some extent be levelled off or down' the fundamental inequalities of this approach, with 'its basic individualism and therefore actual or potential exploitation of the masses by the elitist political and economic machine, and its basically capitalist

¹⁰⁵ B.T.G. Chidzero, *Education and the Challenge of Independence* (Geneva, International University Exchange Fund, mimeo, 1977), 13-22.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 6.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 14.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 27-8.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 28.

temper, constitute together the basis for revolt by the masses'.¹¹¹ On the other hand, although the socialist approach, with its aim 'to eliminate progressively inequalities of rewards and status and to promote mass culture' for the creation of 'the man of the people and of the society' is of 'superior moral and socialist value', it will involve authoritarianism, 'at least during the early phase of transformation' and therefore also 'carries with it possible risks of revolt and inefficiencies'.¹¹²

Chidzero therefore suggests that instead of 'copying other systems or models . . . what is critical is the need to tailor the socio-economic system . . . to its fundamental situation or realities, given agreed objectives and general principles'.¹¹³ What is needed is 'a new or another development . . . an alternative to approaches based either on the maximization of the production of goods . . . or else based on regimentation'.¹¹⁴ Although Chidzero, like Shamuyarira, feels that the removal of racial discrimination should 'be quick and resolute', like the four professors, he appreciates that

It is more than likely that in practice the exercise will take time to accomplish, given the many differences which derive from language, cultural background, geographical inequalities in the availability of educational facilities in general, as well as the likely continuance of *de facto* residential groupings by race or economic 'class' and their practical implications for schooling.¹¹⁵

Like the four professors, Chidzero appreciates that for practical reasons 'non-racial, compulsory and free education up to the end of lower secondary' education cannot be achieved overnight.¹¹⁶ Chidzero, however, is not so much concerned with the preservation of what are perhaps unusually high standards, as the professors appear to be, but by the time and cost involved in providing adequate facilities and staff. For these reasons, therefore, he feels that 'it would be imperative to move by steps over a period of time'.¹¹⁷ Like the professors too, Chidzero feels that special efforts should be made to inculcate deeper understanding amongst pupils of their immediate social environment, but unlike Shamuyarira he eschews 'partisan indoctrination'.¹¹⁸ Chidzero, however, sees as a main purpose here the inculcation of increased awareness 'of duty to society as well as to oneself',¹¹⁹ whereas the four professors lay stress on inter-racial 'tolerance and understanding'.¹²⁰ Chidzero also eschews differentiated kinds of schools and instead suggests progressive incorporation of practical training in all schools in order to eliminate 'snobbish attitudes' and inculcate the idea of 'service in a free society of equals'.¹²¹ Of special significance is the suggestion that national service, in the economic sense, should be built into the

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., 29.

¹¹³ Ibid., 29-30.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 33.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 30.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 34.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 36.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Atkinson *et al.*, 'Report of an Investigation', 58.

¹²¹ Chidzero, *Education and the Challenge of Independence*, 34.

education structure so that at one point or another of the ladder students or pupils put in a given period of service of agricultural work, office work, teaching, etc. — before completing their education.¹²²

Generally Chidzero, in his desire for an education system that will satisfy 'the imperative of socialist equality and economic efficiency'¹²³ differs fundamentally from the four professors who propose a meritocratic system for a society based on principles of free enterprise. Even so, both approaches contain evolutionary as well as revolutionary, or at least, innovatory elements which suggest that differences between them need not necessarily be unbridgeable. Indeed, with wider historical perspectives, a synthesis might well ensure that Zimbabwean education benefits from a rich multicultural heritage and will at the same time promote stability by means of close attention to social justice.

The fourth set of proposals, *Education for Socio-Economic Reality in Zimbabwe*, by Fr E. W. Rogers, S. J.,¹²⁴ needs to be considered chiefly because it raises the question of whether or not local historical perspectives are of any use at all in plans for the future. Before this question can be considered, however, the reasoning and proposals made by Fr Rogers must be outlined.

In his justification for the establishment of an entirely revolutionary education system in Zimbabwe, Rogers claims that other planners have tended to make proposals 'without an overall look at the social, political and economic circumstances of the country'.¹²⁵ With special reference to the proposals made by the four professors, Rogers doubts if Zimbabwe will ever be able to afford the establishment of a sophisticated primary and secondary education system for all of the kind which at present is enjoyed largely by Europeans.¹²⁶ Rogers also feels that even if such an aim was realistic, it would be unsuitable for what he considers to be a typical Third World country like Zimbabwe.¹²⁷

Rogers is particularly concerned about large numbers who will not be catered for adequately by the essentially conventional kind of Western education system advocated by the four professors.¹²⁸ With reference to Kenya, and specially to the education schemes of Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, Rogers points out that as the majority of pupils can only hope to receive a primary education, they require something that is complete in itself.¹²⁹ Similarly, secondary education should not be geared towards the production of students at universities and colleges:

Thus the primary and secondary schools must prepare people for life in the villages and rural areas of the country. The only justification for secondary and higher education is that the few who obtain

¹²² Ibid., 36.

¹²³ Ibid., 34.

¹²⁴ E. W. Rogers, *Education for Socio-Economic Reality in Zimbabwe* (Gwelo, Mambo Press, Mambo Occasional Papers, Socio-Economic Series No. 13, 1979).

¹²⁵ Ibid., 5.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 6-21.

places in these systems will be seen as those who have something to offer to the community rather than seeking further advancement for themselves.¹³⁰

Before presenting his plan, Rogers discusses the question of whether education is an obstacle to development.¹³¹ A basic problem here is that conventional Western educational provision tends to stimulate the demand for more and more facilities and also aspirations which cannot be fulfilled in terms of employment and other opportunities in Third World countries.¹³² Hence, the creation of large numbers of under-employed, unemployed and discontented people.¹³³ Generally, limited resources are swallowed up by the provision of educational facilities which largely fail to serve any practical social and economic purposes.¹³⁴ Consequently, 'as long as educational expansion exceeds the expansion of jobs the interaction between the educational and political systems tends towards destabilization'.¹³⁵ To avoid this 'vicious circle', Rogers considers needs for completely novel education systems in Third World countries generally, and in Zimbabwe in particular.¹³⁶

In view of declining rates of employment increase — a trend which, Rogers feels, will not be greatly improved after the removal of sanctions — the following bleak picture of the local scene is presented:

The subsistence economy of the Tribal Trust Lands, comprising almost half of the land area, provides under-employment for over half of the African population of the country. However, a great amount of this land has been worked out and under the present system, will not provide opportunity for more jobs in agriculture. The drift of the school leaver is therefore, rather more towards the money economy in the urban areas where there are at present less and less opportunities for employment. With the enormous drop in the primary school system of Rhodesia and also the severe problems primary school leavers have in obtaining jobs, it would seem that, economically, the present education system does not give value for money. This may also be applied to the secondary school system to a lesser degree.¹³⁷

Judging from the performance of other Third World countries, Rogers does not think that an education system geared towards industrialization in Zimbabwe will ever do much more than serve the needs of 'a small elite who enjoy a high standard of living'.¹³⁸ Greater emphasis, therefore, should be placed on the needs of the masses, with the general 'quality of life' rather than increases in the G.N.P.:

'Quality of life' is concerned with harmonious relations between people, an adequate standard of food, clothing, housing and

¹³⁰ Ibid., 10.

¹³¹ Ibid., 12.

¹³² Ibid., 14-16.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 16.

¹³⁶ Ibid., *passim*.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 19.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 20.

recreation but not with the pursuit of riches, at others' expense. The system of education that we have at present tends to have problems similar to those outlined in the Kenyan situation where so many of our young people leave the rural areas looking for work in the towns as they have been 'educated'. Is there a way that we can make rural education more relevant to its environment and also provide economic incentives for the youngsters to stay in and develop their own areas?¹³⁹

The answer, Rogers feels, lies in the creation 'on a non-racial basis' of an entirely new education system for Zimbabwe:

1. The primary school system, a system complete in itself but leaving the way open for a limited number to proceed to higher education.
2. The secondary school system being a unit complete in itself but again, like the primary school system, leaving a possibility of higher education for a limited few who can make a valuable contribution for the many.¹⁴⁰

As primary-school leavers are at present only at the age of thirteen or fourteen years, which is too young for employment, Rogers suggests that the entrance age should be raised to eight or nine, depending on whether seven or eight year long courses are adopted.¹⁴¹ The primary curriculum should include 'minimum learning needs' which comprise the following:

1. A positive attitude towards cooperation with one's family, fellow students and the community to work towards national development.
2. Functional literacy and numeracy which should be sufficient to read a national newspaper, a manufacturer's instruction sheet or information on agriculture and health . . . to write a legible letter and handle common computations such as measurement of land and buildings, calculation of agricultural input costs, etc.
3. An elementary understanding of the processes of nature, especially in the area in which the student lives.
4. Functional knowledge and skills for raising a family and operating a household which includes health, nutrition, shopping, use of money, making of clothes.
5. Functional knowledge and skills for earning a living, including . . . skills required for a particular local occupation . . . also knowledge of a variety of locally useful common skills specifically for agriculture in a rural area.
6. Knowledge and skills for civic participation which include a knowledge of national and local history . . . government structure and functions, taxes and public spending, the principles of voting and the aims and functions of cooperatives and voluntary organisations.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 22-3.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 23.

The second area is that of basic human needs and this comprises:

1. Food: how to grow and to preserve food . . . how to cook and the nutritional value of various foods.
2. Health: preventive and remedial health care, hygiene and first aid.
3. Clothing: the making, care and maintenance of the normal clothing that a person and his family will need.
4. Shelter: the building and maintenance of domestic structures and other structures necessary to the environment in which the pupil lives.
5. Motivation: this area is concerned with music, culture, literature, dancing and traditional and national cultural pursuits.¹⁴²

As for secondary and higher education, this should be 'worked out with close reference to manpower needs . . . [in] a vocationally orientated society'.¹⁴³ Although Rogers feels that the academic side, the arts and social sciences, and social and cultural pursuits should not be ignored, the emphasis is clearly on what is considered to be immediately practicable and socially desirable:

An important part of the secondary vocationally orientated system is that of 'on the job' training which is coming more into vogue in certain educational systems outside this country. This is a sort of apprenticeship system in which school pupils have to work in factories, offices or in services for a realistic period of time during their school years. This pattern should also extend into the tertiary education system whether at university or technical colleges.¹⁴⁴

The suggestions by Rogers have been presented at some length for unlike those of Shamuyarira and to a lesser extent Chidzero, they represent a definite plan of action for the provision of an education system that seeks to realize socialist aims. Rogers, therefore, provides a sharp contrast with the plan suggested by the four professors. In his attempt to take 'an overall look at the social, political and economic circumstances of the country', Rogers has given special consideration to the aspirations and problems of the mass of the people and in doing so he has compensated for what the four professors, who tend to see things from an elitist standpoint, have largely overlooked. Certainly, for the masses, doomed as many of them seem to be by the plan of the four professors to many years of continued deprivation from the full benefits of formal educational provision, it must be small comfort to know that high standards will be enjoyed by the fortunate few. On the other hand, the somewhat restricted nature of educational provision envisaged by Rogers, and particularly the late age of entry to primary schools, is unlikely to inspire educated parents with confidence in the revolutionary system. Indeed, unless a socialist Government is established with widespread popular support, the proposals by Rogers are likely to require regimentation of much the same kind that seems to be advocated by Shamuyarira and which is criticized by Chidzero. The 'reality' of the situation, it seems, is that if the aspirations of the few are to be ignored, then they will probably leave the country in order to secure what they

¹⁴² Ibid., 23-4.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 24-5.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 25.

consider to be a sound education for their children elsewhere. Should this happen on a large scale, then the socialist road to the achievement of even the most meagre 'quality of life' will at best be an arduous one.

The possibility of the exodus of a large proportion of the educated few raises the question of the validity of heavy reliance by Rogers on the comparative education approach. For expertise generally, as Chidzero appreciates, the few are necessary, specially in Zimbabwe where a relatively sophisticated economy has been established over the years.¹⁴⁵ Comparison with Third World countries in general, and particularly Kenya and Tanzania, by Rogers, despite careful analysis of statistics, tends to overlook the fact that Zimbabwe is in many ways unique in Africa.¹⁴⁶ As the Report of the four professors suggests, a good answer to the exodus of relatively large numbers of well trained and educated local people will probably not be found in the utilization of expatriate skills and expertise. As for the assertion made by Rogers, again based upon local as well as foreign evidence, that even when sanctions are dropped, Zimbabwe cannot expect rapid economic progress,¹⁴⁷ this is essentially speculation. Certainly it would be dangerous to expect too much economic progress too quickly, but, unless an uncompromisingly doctrinaire socialist Government is installed and confrontation with South Africa arises, the future may not be as bleak as Rogers imagines.

Generally, the somewhat radical suggestions of Rogers, appear to be impracticable. Even so, they should perhaps not be dismissed lightly on this account. In view of the unique difficulties affecting education planning in Africa generally, a radical plan of some kind would appear to be necessary sooner or later.¹⁴⁸ On the one hand, a major problem is that, unlike the historical situation in most industrialized countries, educational provision on a relatively wide scale and at sophisticated levels has already been made in Zimbabwe, and this has stimulated demands for universal primary and secondary education, particularly amongst rapidly increasing numbers of young people.¹⁴⁹ On the other hand, again unlike the past in most industrialized countries, Zimbabwe already has universal suffrage which means that widespread education is necessary for the creation of a responsible electorate. The problem in Zimbabwe, therefore, is much more difficult than it ever was in most industrialized countries in the triple contexts of education provision for immediate economic needs, the expectations of a rapidly in-

¹⁴⁵ Chidzero, *Education and the Challenge of Independence*, 33, 39.

¹⁴⁶ Atkinson, 'Changing the school structure: The experience of Zimbabwe Rhodesia,' 1-8.

¹⁴⁷ Rogers, *Education for Socio-Economic Reality*, 17-22.

¹⁴⁸ Rogers feels that this is an urgent necessity and he hopes that the contribution which he has made to the debate on education plans for Zimbabwe will stimulate fresh thinking on the subject, personal interview, 15 November 1979.

¹⁴⁹ In this review little or no mention has been made of problems arising from the rapid rate of population increase in Zimbabwe; this has been a deliberate omission, for it is felt by the author that structural problems affecting African education provision and its nature over the years are as much at the root of problems affecting education today as are population difficulties. All too often, the rapid rate of population increase is cited as an excuse for inaction or inability to provide facilities, but the structural basis of African education provision is not seriously questioned.

creasing population and the creation of a responsible electorate.¹⁵⁰ In view of these three imperatives, it would appear that plans must somehow incorporate free enterprise aims to sustain economic progress as well as socialist aims to remove injustices arising from colonial exploitation.

It is not the place here to engage in a lengthy consideration of the various proposals and strategies suggested for Zimbabwean education. The main concern is that three of the sets of proposals considered in this essay possess certain common weaknesses in their historical perspectives and a fourth set of proposals only considers what has happened in very recent years. Certainly, great changes have taken place in recent times which have already had revolutionary effects in the territory. If it is agreed, however, that the local colonial experience has been in many ways a unique one, then it cannot be ignored in efforts to understand the full significance of recent events or in an appreciation of what is indeed of value or not in the contemporary situation. Generally, it seems to be fair to say that weaknesses in the historical perspectives of the four sets of proposals that have been considered in this paper have relegated many of the suggestions that they offer to the realm of mere opinion rather than firm convictions of either an ideological or any other kind.

In conclusion, it is apparent that there are elements in all four sets of proposals that have been considered which are of value in the search for the best possible kind of education system for Zimbabwe. However, a clear answer cannot be given to the question of whether evolutionary and revolutionary approaches are irreconcilable or not. Unless misrepresentation and superficiality are removed from historical perspectives, it seems to be unlikely that an answer will be forthcoming. In this respect, it seems to be appropriate to quote once more from de Kiewiet:

My admiration for the great British Universities is high, yet it has always been qualified because not till after the Second World War was a proper effort made to realize the late Victorian promise of an era of vigorous and creative imperial studies . . . failure to invest the study of the British Empire and Commonwealth with the stature, the intellectual excitement, the diversity and the imaginativeness which it deserved, is related to the inattentiveness, the misunderstanding and the error with which the affairs of the Empire and Commonwealth have sometimes been conducted. In no field is this statement more meaningful than in Africa.¹⁵¹

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¹⁵⁰ A well-known critic of Rhodesian Front Government education policies, past and present, Mr Ken Mew, D.F.C., who is the Principal of Ranche House College in Salisbury, apparently endorses the view that local problems require completely fresh thinking by all who are involved with educational planning. Mew has asserted that a major problem affecting education policies in Third World countries is that they 'have slavishly followed the Western system of education, which was never designed for conditions in emerging countries'. In Zimbabwe, therefore, Mew feels that there is an urgent need to ensure that 'new ideas' are introduced so that the present system can be transformed into 'an entirely new system', *The Herald* (4 Apr. 1979), 'Mew critical of education system'; for further reference to what appear to be the particularly valuable suggestions for Zimbabwean education made by Mew, see *The Sunday Mail* (16 Feb. 1979), 'Mew wants revolution in education', and *The Herald* (29 Jan. 1979), 'Ranche House College — a review'.

¹⁵¹ De Kiewiet, *The Anatomy of South African Misery*, 4-5.