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**ACP/EEC ECONOMIC & SOCIAL INTEREST GROUPS**

*DRAFT*

With regard to Vocational Training and Farmer's Training, might I make some comments. I fully agree with the point of view expressed in the Overview, namely that investment in human resources is the key to independent development. I would say that the development of human resources has been ignored for too long and indeed, development is hampered more by human development obstacles than by technological obstacles. Therefore, more effort must go into getting human development as an integral part of the overall development programmes. Human development is best achieved by targeting, but it is not as easy as a simple division of a population into this group and that group. There is a need for sociological and scientific division to ensure that the target group is appropriate and homogeneous.

There has been mention of the obstacles in many ACP countries to the implementation of training and advisory programmes via the Mass Media e.g. the high level of illiteracy and the plethora of National languages. I would point out that Mass Media as we know it, need no longer ' Mass ' in the sense that we now have local Media, local Radio and local communication systems allowing education to be focussed on local language, local methods etc.

Having regard to the right to educate, I can only fully agree with the Overview that ' basic education is a right '. We must, however, focus on humanising education rather than allowing it to be converted into a saleable commodity, totally tied to the funding available. This is what has happened to food and we have to be very careful to ensure that it will not now happen to the opportunity to develop people.

One must strongly support the concept that the provision of any training, must follow and be based on, an analysis of the need. It follows that the identification of a local situation is therefore highly important, otherwise we may be found guilty of disregard for careful, systematic analysis of need. At local level, in most developing countries, there has been a death of many native and traditional crafts. While such skills are unnecessary in a modernised world, they are essential in a world that has not achieved and will not in the near future achieve, modernisation.

In many Third World villages, it is difficult to get an ox-harness made, a plough repaired or good storage bins made. As the talent has been drained away to the urban centres, where they are under-utilised and their creativity is unchallenged in a positive way, the rural centres are left with poor craftsmanship and no apprentice system.

Donor agencies are largely ignorant of the concept of apprenticeship, in the traditional form, that was practised in villages and if interested in Vocational Training. They fund Vocational Training Centres that are expensive, removed from the Community, removed from the needs of local people and elitist. The craftsman loses the sense of Community service and the sense of operating as part of a team for the betterment of the Community.

With regard to the volatility of the commodity prices and price trends, for ACP countries' main exports, the fact that the price increases is most evident in non-food product items, and least in food crops, is central to the problems in trade between developing and developed countries. It is a fact of life that the needs of the developed World are not for food crops. In order to increase the terms of trade, developing countries would have to export what the developed world requires, not what they have to sell. But this gives rise to the difficulty that the developing world has in producing industrial or processed products, while they are still at primary stages of development.

This situation is exacerbated by the performances of the major world trading blocks. The U.S. and EEC trading blocks are 'protectionists' for their members. This leaves non-members open to the ravages of a fluctuating world-market. There is a need for developing countries to form a trading block rather than be led by the established trading blocks.

How much of a reality this is for the countries concerned, I just do not know.

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*Note – this a draft document and not the final one delivered by Michael*