

Introduction

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Researchers in the Human Resources Problem Area Group (HUMPAG) at the Institute of Development Studies work on questions of improving the quality of life for people: population growth with its manifold implications, employment and self-employment, patterns of industrial organisation, the effects of new modes of production on older patterns of economic and social organization, manpower planning, the relationships between employment and schooling, the distribution of income, the distribution of social services such as health care. Most of this work is represented here and most of it is offered as preliminary reflections on research which has been completed only very recently. This issue of the *Bulletin* can claim then to be narrowing — even if in a minor way — the lag between research and dissemination. It helps to soften the complaint of the urgent practitioners of ‘development’, that the insights of research too often come too late to be of use.

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The first set of contributions — fully half of the entire issue — comes from a single research project, an investigation into the development of employment relations in three countries which started late in the process of industrialization. The field work ended during 1974, so that what are presented here, really are early thoughts.

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Whereas this project concerned larger industrial organizations, the second report, drawn from an employment survey in Tanzania, deals by contrast with the small operators, the self-employed and with those earning exceptionally low wages. It attempts an assessment of their future in relation to the world of larger capital and more sophisticated technology.

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There follow two contributions which relate to estimating future employment and planning the creation of the required human resources. The difficulties involved are clearly drawn, not merely in the process of estimation, but, more important, in controlling the forces which compete for future employment.

Next, a way of educating, modestly but successfully, not for employment, but for a better quality of living, is described and partially

evaluated. Some lessons are drawn, of use to planner and educator alike.

Finally, there is a brief discussion on the proliferation of human resources, who can neither be fully utilized nor properly cared for. If this is a problem, it is suggested, the cure may lie much more in international policies of trade, investment and aid, than in local programmes of population, education and birth control.

John Oxenham