

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### METHODS OF REPORTING

It is agreed everywhere that a merely statistical evaluation of the work of the Multipurpose Blocks is insufficient. At present most of the reports submitted by the Project Officers are tabulated records of expenditure and physical achievements. To know that ten cinema shows have been given provides a check on the work of a Social Education Officer but does not tell us whether these shows have had any real impact on the people or done them any good. Statistics about the number of acres brought under certain types of cultivation are very well but quite apart from the fact that such statistics may not always be correct, they do not tell us whether better crops are being obtained, or what the people's reactions to the new methods are. Reports on expenditure can be even more misleading: the whole point is whether the expenditure is wise. At the Seminar on the Multipurpose Blocks held in Ranchi last May it was resolved, therefore, that this Committee should prepare a list of subjects on which the P.E.Os should be asked to note in their Annual Reports. This will not only be of use to the Ministries and State officials concerned but will also be a reminder to the local officials of the values whereby they should estimate real progress among their people.

We suggest, therefore, that there should be a section of every Annual Report in which the P.E.Os should attempt answers to the following questions :

- (1) How many (a) local and (b) other tribal people are employed at different levels in your Block at present? What is their percentage in relation to the total number of staff at each level? Has there been any increase in the number employed during the past year? If the percentage is low, is there any special reason for it?
- (2) How many members of your staff have passed a Language Examination in the past year? How many others have at least a working knowledge of the language which enables them to carry on a conversation on their own subject with the local people? How many have received rewards for proficiency in the language? How many are still unable to make themselves understood by the tribal people and are unable to understand what they say? How many members of the Block staff have had orientation courses during the past year and what kind of courses did they attend? Has the result of this training made any appreciable difference to their work?
- (3) What social education activities have been carried on and what sort of success have they really had? If a library, for example, has been opened, how many (a) officials and (b) local people use it? What kind of books and magazines do they prefer? Do audio-visual activities have any real effect? Which aspects of this programme have the greatest appeal? What kind of films have been selected? Has any attempt been made to ensure that these will appeal to the tribal people or have any relevance to their needs? Do the officers supervising film-shows explain the films properly?

- before-hand and discuss their message with the people afterwards? How far is the propaganda carried on by the Block officials having any real impact on the outlook of the people?
- (4) What use is being made of tribal institutions, such as boys' dormitories or tribal councils, for development purposes? Are the indigenous tribal institutions decaying or has there been any progress in reviving them?
  - (5) Are money-lenders as active as they were last year? How are the Block officers attempting to solve the problem of indebtedness? Is local economy developing in a way that is lessening the burden of indebtedness?
  - (6) Do the people show signs of becoming more and more dependent on Government help? Are they losing their self-reliance or are they beginning to show an independent spirit and really taking up the task of self-development even if they are not paid to do so? How far are you finding real co-operation from other Departments of Government?
  - (7) How far have the people themselves contributed actual ideas and suggestions in the past year that you have been able to include in the Block programme? Do you feel that they are satisfied with what is being done? Have they made any criticisms and if so, what are they? What signs are there that a genuine people's movement is coming into being in the Block area? Do the tribal members of the Block Advisory Committees play any significant role in their deliberations?
  - (8) Have you discovered in the past year any urgent needs of a new kind that might be dealt with for the benefit of the people?
  - (9) Has there been any real progress in reviving the arts and crafts of the people? Has the quality, as apart from the quantity, of their products improved during the last year? Are the people dancing and singing more, or less, than formerly? Have there been any obvious changes in the customs and conduct of the people? Are they observing their religious festivals in relation to agricultural and other practices or are these beginning to die out? Have any new food-taboos been introduced?
  - (10) Where new agricultural methods have been introduced, are the people happy about them? Or, do they still desire to continue their traditional shifting cultivation where this exists? Have Forest Co-operatives been started and if so, how are they progressing? Are there any non-tribal members and if so, what positions do they hold?
  - (11) Where there are Statutory Panchayats, are the tribal people adequately represented and in general, how are they working? How many of the Sir Panchas are (a) tribal (b) non-tribal?
  - (12) What is the morale of the officials in the Block? Do they want to be transferred elsewhere or have they now begun to settle down and feel enthusiastic about their work? What are their relations today with the local people and has there been any improvement during the past year?
  - (13) What evidence is there that today the people are better fed, enjoy a richer cultural life and are happier than when the Block started?

We feel that if our P.E.Os keep these points in mind and realize that it is on progress in such matters as these, even more than on progress in the achievement of physical targets or in the spending of money, that their success or failure will be judged, it may inspire them to work better and along the right lines.

A report on these matters once a year will not impose too heavy a burden on the Block officials. We feel at the same time that every effort should be made to reduce paper-work in the Block headquarters. The P.E.Os and indeed all members of the staff, are tied down far too much to their offices and in general, they do not spend enough time on touring, without which they cannot give adequate supervision or sufficient inspiration to the V.L.Ws and others working by themselves in the interior.

We may, of course, be accused of inconsistency, for we have stressed the importance of regular surveys and the submission of self-evaluation reports outlined in this chapter. What we have suggested, however, is not ordinary paper-work. What we are anxious to ensure is that there should be a continuous process of self-education which will sensitize members of the Block staff to the tribal situation and will progressively acquaint them with the people's ideals and aspirations.