CHAPTER - 4

Education effecting and effected by the interplay of socio-economic and political factors in the State

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY - "Education does not proceed in a vacuum, its character is determined by the group culture and schools, institutions created by society to attain specific ends."¹

Society cannot by its very nature be static, it is constantly changing, and like any other organism it continues to grow and develop. Simultaneously education is a creative force, which supplies new ideas, transforming the minds of society, and which has far reaching effects upon society. It can alter, reform, reconstruct and revitalise the social fabric that prevails. The main agents for the transformation of human thinking is education. Education does not mean mere acquisition of certificates, but learning about environment, using human resources.² Education brings the realisation that a society to be strong, must be united, and so educated people in Manipur realise that despite the different elements in the population of the state; elements of different ethnic composition, religion, etc. must unite together to

¹. I.L. Kandel, Conflicting theories of Education, pp.78, 79
bring about development and progress of the state, for this can be achieved only through oneness and unity. "In our cultural, plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism." From the earliest times it has been recognised by all, that the cultural tradition of India is characterised by unity in diversity. In order to develop this feeling of unity in the mind of the rising generation and instil their mind against all pernicious influence of casteism, linguism, communalism, factionalism, and narrowism, education should endeavour to lay the firm foundations of national consciousness in the mind of the Indian youth. There arises the necessity for a new type of education which will teach boys and girls "how to unite".

The British following their old maxim of divide and rule, had converted the tribal section of Manipur's population to Christianity, leaving the people in the valley, i.e. the Meiteis, to follow Hinduism, or their own indigenous religion.

They feared that the Meiteis would revolt, if Christianity would be propagated in the valley. Nevertheless, by propagating Christianity only among the tribals, a wedge was created between the two main elements of Manipur's population, the Meiteis and the tribals. The Apokpa Marup (Meitei Association), founded by Naoria Phullo in the 1930's stands for "hill and valley integration." It rightly maintains that the Meiteis and the Tribals were at one time a compact social group. Another active group of revivalists is the Manipur Cultural Association. In their aims and objectives they do not differ from the Meitei Marup. Catholic Mission Education by affording equal educational opportunities to all, is narrowing the wedge, which may disappear in the not too distant future, for children of different communities and religions are educated in Catholic institutions, and no preferential treatment is meted out to students of any particular community or religion.

If education is to be dynamic it must reflect the social growth. It is an undeniable truth that any educational system is dependent for its values on the purposes of the community for which it is

an institution. Education as a force for social regeneration must march hand in hand with the living and creative forces of the social order. While education maintains the continuity of the physical and social life, it conserves social heritage and culture, and also reorganises, reconstructs and improves human society. Society also plays a vital role in the development of education. "In view of this situation it is probably not extravagant to claim that education is primarily a social process, and that the social process constitutes one of the main dimensions of any philosophy of education."¹

It is the education given to the people that enables them to choose or determine their professional activity, and so become active and responsible members of society. Catholic Mission Education aims at achieving this; moreover its effects on society can be seen practically, in the cleanliness and discipline of its students, who as they take their place in society, raise the standard of living not only in their own homes, but also in the social milieu that surround them, who owe their position to their catholic education, which laid

the foundation of their character, developed their all round personality, enabling them to contribute greatly to the advancement of society through their professional activities. There are many examples of well known pupils of Catholic institutions now holding important or responsible positions in society and state.

Education and social life impinge on one another in various ways, (a) the former is affected by the latter by reasons of inequality in social status of the children, (b) the former affects the latter by giving young people an education which directly or not, will to a greater or lesser extent determine their professional activity.

In Manipur, concessions are given as in other parts of India to students of tribal communities or scheduled castes. This is as it should be when it applies to people living in the remote interior of the state, away from the mainstream of life, where literacy is practically non existent, and the standard of living very low, and it is difficult to eke out a livelihood. In fact, the

1. ibid., p.12.
Catholic missionaries exerted themselves in the first place to educate those people who did not even know or understand the necessity and importance of literacy. But in urban areas of Manipur especially in the capital town of Imphal, socio-economic factors could also play their part in determining whether tribals or scheduled caste students should be given concessions, in education, whether in terms of aggregate marks or financial concessions, because especially while English is the medium of education in Catholic missionary institutions, it is an undeniable fact, that the tribals who have been converted to Christianity, have a better grasp and understanding of the English language and western culture, and so fare better in school or college leaving, or competitive examinations, largely by virtue of the fact that they have greater fluency in the English language, and in competitive exams, too, the medium of answering is usually English. And yet to qualify, these same students require a lower aggregate of marks. So also, financial concessions to students (tribal), coming from financially sound families could be given instead to economically deprived and intellectually backward children in Manipur, no matter to which section of the population they
belong. Catholic mission education inter relates to society and helps to eradicate this social inequality by giving scholarships, stipends and other concessions, for scholastic performance on a broad basis to all deserving candidates, no matter of what caste or creed. Take for instance the example of the Indian Administrative Service in the state. It is chiefly manned by non-Meiteis, whether they be non-Manipuris or tribals, an instance of inequality. Catholic education tries to eradicate this by affording equal educational opportunity to all.

In an under developed state like Manipur, family influence operates greatly on the economic level, in that education involves great incidence on income, which a family even in modest circumstances cannot sustain. This economic handicap is reinforced by a social one which is often not apparent, viz. a child with a high social status is better fed, better housed, and better equipped, and this itself puts him in a better position as far as his future development is concerned. In other words certain transmission of knowledge takes place in a non-hereditary manner and as a result of environmental phenomenon.¹ On the average, families in Manipur are

although modern education is bringing about a change in outlook, and many young couples today prefer having smaller families, so that they can bestow more care on an individual child, rather than allowing patience to wear thin when there are the needs of too many children to attend to, and so more often than not, one or other child is neglected. And naturally the incidence on income is much lower in the case of smaller, compact families. Undoubtedly schools play their part in character building and all round development of a child. And the success of Catholic schools in Manipur is such that the pressure of numbers is mounting too rapidly, especially in Imphal. More and more, as people benefit from Catholic mission education, parents realise that they too have an active role to play in educating their children, not merely by assisting in home work, but by example and action. About a decade ago, one could witness the phenomena of the numerous offspring of well educated, socially and economically well placed families in Imphal, leaving their children to their own devices after school, often even being ready in collecting them from school, on the premise that the less they are at home the better, so their responsibility is lessened, and they are certain that the children are well looked after at school. In
1980 a small child was left uncollected from the Little Flower School, and the child having been in the school from early morning to late evening was distraught and tearful, and yet after 6 p.m. when the Sister Superior had the child dropped home, the parents were not even apologetic or remorseful at their negligence. Now however such an incident is hardly likely to occur, as parents take their responsibilities more seriously, and moreover because of the rush to Catholic schools, they would not like to be on the wrong side of the school authorities. Parents are increasingly exhibiting more interest not only in supervising their children’s home-work, but also taking an interest in their leisure hours, as also appreciating their children’s efforts in school, whether in academic matters or proficiency in sports, S.U.P.W. etc. The attitude of parents who are an integral component of society, towards their offspring is closely intertwined with education, and it is educated parents who act more responsibly towards their offspring; many parents who themselves have been educated in Catholic schools in Manipur.
There is the further point that handicaps resulting from social status are often accompanied by geographical handicaps (remoteness from towns equipped with suitable schools), and those resulting from the size of the family. It is only in recent years that the state of roads has considerably improved, and it is an indisputable fact that a better communication system, together with facilities for modern mass media, availability of more books etc. stimulates the desire for learning. Society realises the necessity of educating all its members, and so there is now a network of road transport reaching into much of the interior hills and villages of Manipur, bringing in its wake education, as also stimulating the desire for higher education. This in turn has facilitated the further growth of Catholic Mission Education in the interior, more remote parts of the state.

Again with the facilities for modern Mass Media, especially books, journals, radio, television and video, new ideas take growth, to revitalise and restructure the fabric of society. But it is the duty of the educationist and of society to see that ideas gleamed from the utilisation of modern mass

1. Ibid, p.15.
media facilities do not act in a detrimental manner upon society. Take for instance, the incidence of drug imbibing and drug trafficking in Manipur in proportion to its population. The evil has not in the first instance been caused by utilising facilities of modern mass media, it has been caused by the free availability of such drugs which are being constantly smuggled across the border from Burma and beyond. Nevertheless, there are too many films watched by youth which focus on drugs, excessive drinking, and other unhealthy aids to entertainment. This can and does often stimulate among the youth the desire to experiment in drugs, to freely imbibe vast quantities of alcohol, to smuggle drugs because of the vast profits generated by such an operation. Many students thereby get hooked on the drugs with unfortunate and sometimes fatal results. Not many parents, especially the more affluent in Manipur, to whom facilities of modern mass media are more readily available, take care to choose or censor the films their offspring are watching daily on the video or to check the books and magazines perused by their children, and yet they lament and bemoan their fate, when all too soon they
discover that their children have grown away from them, and are not receptive to advice, correction or reform in any manner. There are numerous examples of children of prestigious families in Imphal, Churachandpur, Ukhrul, etc. being ruined because of drug abuse, and it is pathetic to see the corpse of a drug addict. Yet this evil largely springs from lack of parental care or guidance, too little supervision or interest exhibited in the leisure hours of children and youth. Parents as responsible members of society must inter-relate with the educational system to prevent such evils that plague society. A prominent hoarding on a main thoroughfare in Imphal reads, "Halt the human tragedy of drug abuse."

Many Catholic educational institutions are utilising mass media facilities in their schools. Don Bosco, Imphal, was the first to introduce them as aids to teaching. Films, as for example nursery rhymes which are entertaining and at the same time instructive especially where elocution is concerned, musical films, historical and documentary films, sports programmes, quiz programmes etc. make the process of learning both interesting as also informative,
and stimulate the desire to know and learn more. They also provide incentives to the youth to utilise something gleamed from this instruction, for the purpose of revitalising society when they grow up, and society is dynamic and constantly changing. Children brought up in Catholic schools when they take their place as full fledged members of society, try to bring about progressive changes as for example, raising the standard of living as evinced in cleaner and neater houses, healthier food habits (especially as a large part of the population seems to suffer from stomach and gastric problems), adequate sanitation, and drainage facilities, in and around their homes etc. A few years ago, hardly any drainage worth the name existed, but now educated people forming society realise the necessity for an adequate planned drainage and proper sanitation facilities, and the practical effect of education is seen in the provision and building of such facilities in the state, especially in Imphal. So also, people were in the habit of dumping garbage indiscriminately anywhere, especially into the rivers, but here again education's practical effect may be seen in that people no longer do so, especially as when rivers flood, disease and pollution results, which causes harm to all.
The joint family system prevails in Manipur. But society is slowly changing, individual educated members of a family increasingly realise the importance of earning their own living, standing upon their own feet, having their own pride and self respect, supporting their own wives and children, rather than being dependent on old parents or the eldest brother in the family. These changes owe a great deal to Catholic Mission education. For only two to three decades ago, young members of a joint family especially in urban areas, were content even after completing their higher studies, to go on being dependent for all material things on the head of the family, even after they were married and had children of their own, and yet the income of the head of the family showed no appreciable increase, in ratio to the increase in the members of the family. This was done with no untoward intention, but rather, because they had been brought up to be dependent for everything on just one person, the head of the family. But today 25 years after the introduction of Catholic Mission Education to Manipur, we find the products of this education, talented young men and women taking up different professions and contributing their mite to the progress and development of society.
A dowry system is prevalent in Manipur. And yet it is an understood fact that at the time of marriage, certain gifts have to be given by the bride's family. For affluent families giving of such gifts amounting in value to one or two lakhs rupees or more according to the social status of the family concerned, may not make much of a dent in the finances of the family. (Among the Meiteis wedding gifts are in the form of complete household furniture, cooking utensils, a fully furnished wardrobe, a certain amount of gold ornaments, and other items, such as a t.v., video, refrigerator, scooter, music system etc.) But it certainly causes financial handicaps to those families not so well off, causing them to mortgage the family property, or their little gold ornaments, to take loans and incur debts, and it is difficult to clear the loan. Expenditure on marriages is much less among tribal communities, perhaps because by and large they are not as financially well off as the Meiteis, and non-Manipur business families settled in the state. Of course in the case of the latter, expenditure on marriage ceremonies is considerably great, and there

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1. Before a Meitei bride enters the bridegroom's house all the gifts given to her at the time of the marriage, are already transferred to the 'groom's house, where the room or rooms in which they are to reside have been kept bare for this specific purpose.
is a kind of dowry system in vogue especially among affluent Marwari and Punjabi families. But even among the tribals where expenditure on marriage is centered around the marriage feast, it can still be an incidence on income for people in the lower or even middle economic bracket. But with Catholic Mission education, people learn and understand that it is but natural for parents to provide the best and the most they can afford at the time of the marriage of their offspring. For instance, instead of completely providing everything new at the time of the wedding, additions to household furniture, crockery, etc. can be provided at the convenience of the parents, which in fact is far better because it is only after residing in her new residence awhile, that a bride knows what bests suits the requirements of the family and household in which she stays. Education also impinges on society in that wedding guests provide the bridal couple with gifts in cash or in kind, which can be of practical use to them in setting up a home.

It is a common practice among young couples in Manipur to elope if they are doubtful of getting parental consent to their marriage. Elopement is not a social stigma or evil, it is not frowned upon,
and so rectified as soon as possible by religious and customary sanctions. Education however teaches young couples who have not yet completed their education, or who are jobless, not to venture into matrimony even after an elopement, for thereby, not only would they be adding to the financial burden of a family, but they could and do create new problems within the joint family. For example, the newly weds have a child or even children, before they are ready or mature enough to accept such a responsibility, they resent losing the carefree days of their youth, and often acrimonious disputes arise, often leading to infidelity and disrupting the peace and harmony not only of their married life, but of the entire joint family. This in turn leads to quarrels and feuds within a joint family, which in today's social and economic milieu, often causes irreparable dissensions and divisions between members of a family, especially those who have many sons and daughters-in-laws, each having children of their own. An educated couple's way of running the home will differ radically from that of a couple who have married too early, before completing sometimes even their school education. If two such couples,
are members of the same joint-family, schisms and jealousies are bound to arise because of the difference in thinking of the two couples. Catholic mission education brings an awareness that elopement and early marriage are not desirable, unless the couple concerned, know, understand, and are ready to accept the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood.

When there are sweeping changes taking place in the national and international sphere, it is imperative that education adapts to changing circumstances, and becomes responsive to realistic elements in a current situation. Education must help to bring into existence a new co-operative social order. Catholic educators of youth are cognisant of changes in the milieu surrounding them and adapt themselves and the education they impart accordingly.

Catholic education contributes to a more homogeneous, compact and equitable social order. "Coming to the school, the students come to know each other, thus enlarging their circle of friendship and movement for social contact. As the children enjoy the same facilities and fall under the same span of discipline,

1. Nurullah and J.P. Naik, A students history of education
they naturally develop a sense of homogenity not only in the school premises, but also in the society at large. The school is also instrumental in bringing the parents together, so that they get to know each other. This adds up to the equitable and social order, which the society stands in need of."¹ These are ideal things towards which we should strive with the involvement of the whole social system. Education, in as much as it is the formation of the whole man should give the students a sense of honesty, sincerity, spirit of service, and other social virtues. Such ideals are set before the students constantly. But state's reconstruction is possible only when those in whose hands the destiny of the nation has been placed, work sincerely. As long as these people are selfishly motivated, only a revolution can change the situation. Students spend most of their time in such environments. A few lessons they learn in the right direction will disappear soon, due to pressure of circumstances or remain dormant. At the same time we shall have to try to do what we can, to put a lot of social sense into our children.² The headmistress of Nirmala Bas, a leading

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¹ Good Shepherd Parish, Churachandpur.
² A Catholic School, Imphal.
girls school in Imphal made plans to take the students of the higher classes to visit slum areas in the town, not only to show them how the less fortunate are living, but to instill in them a sense of social consciousness, so that as they grow into responsible members of society, they will utilise the lessons taught in school practically by raising the standard of living, each contributing in their own way and in the manner best suited to their talents, by means of social service, adult literacy, teaching cleanliness and hygiene, treating common ailments, distributing clothes or other utility items, teaching perhaps some practical, useful craft, etc. The most urgent task for government and anybody interested in the welfare of the country is to raise its standard of living, to lift the people out of the stark misery in which they grind out their existence. There are two aspects to this task; the development of the physical resources, and of human resources. People often assume that the former is more important. Increasingly, now it is realised that the latter is more important. Apart from being an end in itself, whereas the first is a means to an end, investment in men through education, is an absolutely necessary
condition for any adequate development of physical resources. For e.g. the G.N.P. of the United States has more than doubled in the last fifteen years without any corresponding increase in the physical resources of the country, or their exploitation. Increase is due to a growth in the extent and quality of the education imparted. Almost the same can be said of Japan, which is one of the most highly industrialised countries of the world, and yet one of the least favoured from the point of view of physical resources.

Nevertheless Catholic Mission Educational Institutions have not adequately awakened a socio-economic consciousness in youth, and a sense of personal responsibility for the socio-economic development of the people. They have tended to impart academic education, and prepare students for examinations. But education to social consciousness, social responsibility, social justice etc. has not received adequate attention so far.

Perhaps it is time that this matter should be seriously, discussed with competent educational authorities and suitable theoretical and practical

courses devised for the educational institutions (Catholic), of North East India. This could be a major service that Catholic educational institutions can render to the socio-economic development of the region.

There should be systematic efforts at encouraging specialisation in different areas of higher education, and this will be the task of those who plan the future of Catholic Mission Education in Manipur. They will have to prepare their students in such a way that they are capable of specialisation. It is obvious that the growth and socio-economic development of Manipur also calls for more professors, politicians, civil servants, engineers, scientists, businessmen, industry managers etc. And the enlightened Catholic missionaries can and should guide the youth in these directions. But if Catholic educational institutions are to adequately carry out this task, training of teachers, initial and continuing, must receive serious attention. The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society. It is said that no people can rise above the level of its teachers. Catholic missionaries should endeavour to

create conditions which will help motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines. Teachers should have the freedom to innovate, to devise appropriate methods of communications and activities, relevant to the needs and capabilities of, and the concerns of the community. Reform and improvement in education can only come about with change of social attitudes and money. For instance, is society willing to accord teachers the sort of monetary and public status they enjoy in Western and some Eastern countries, where they are looked up to and paid decently, so that better talent is attracted to the profession, and they are properly motivated and can inspire their wards? More specifically to achieve this, Catholic Mission Education can offer a better deal to its teachers in Manipur.

There is an increasing trend for students to go out of the state to pursue their higher education, whether at the college or university level. But the majority of the population cannot afford the expenditure involved in sending their offspring outside the state to continue their higher education, and would welcome the establishment of good Catholic

colleges where there would exist a proper academic atmosphere, a maintainence of high educational standards and discipline, proper provision of extra curricular activities etc. Twenty-Five years ago, when the Catholic missionaries first came to establish their mission in Manipur, schools were a prime necessity, but today efforts are being directed towards establishing and running centres of higher education, so that a more effective contribution to the socio-economic development of the state can be made. This requires a great deal of capital investment and a great investment of dedicated, qualified personnel. The missionaries possess the skill, training and above all the dedication to make this a successful reality. Many of them are now specialising in fields of higher education. But finances for starting the Catholic Colleges will be much harder to come by, and poses a formidable obstacle. A society gets the kind of educational system it deserves, and change will come only if society at large is just not willing to, but actively wants to make that change. The impulses that guide the conduct of schools and colleges emerges not from what the government decrees, but from what society wants. People who are simultaneously products of the educational system and its users, must want change and want it badly enough to actively participate
in that change. Unless this realisation goes home, all policy changes put together will result in little more than superficial change, and a new educational culture will remain a distant dream.¹

The new and manifold tasks of education cannot be performed in a state of disorder. "Education needs to be managed in an atmosphere of intellectual rigour, seriousness of purpose and at the same time of freedom, essential for innovation and creativity. While far teaching changes will have to be incorporated in the quality and range of education, the process of introducing discipline into the system will have to be started, here and now in what exists. The country has placed boundless trust in the educational system. The people have a right to expect concrete results. The first task is to make it work. All teachers should teach and all students study.² This last is a reality in Catholic schools in Manipur, but to make the system work better the strategy laid down in the national policy of education may be more fully incorporated in Catholic Mission Education i.e.

(a) better deal to teachers with greater accountability,
(b) provision of improved students services and instance on observance of acceptable norms of behaviour,
(c) provision of better facilities to institutions, and
(d) creation of a system of performance, appraisals of institutions according to standards and norms, set at the national or state level.

Every society finds itself saddled with a number of social evils. They naturally hamper the progress of a community. Identifying the social evils, searching out their root causes and finding suitable remedies is partly the task of Catholic educationists, for they guide and direct so many of the youth in their formative years. Undoubtedly the Catholic schools lay stress on moral science, and instill in students a sense of discipline, obedience, respect to elders, love and care for one's fellow beings, etc. but they can do much more. They must instil in their students a greater sense of personal responsibility and decisiveness, so that they can resist the temptations of drugs, drunkenness, subversive, anti-national activities, drifting through life with no fixed goal or ambition.

1. Ibid.
striving towards nothing, etc. "It is the task of our Catholic educational institutions to create a greater social consciousness than before, acquaint the students of social problems, and of gross social injustices prevailing in our society, their causes, and possible remedies for them. Our religious and moral classes should be means of social conscientization and the formation of a better social conscience.\(^1\)

Education has continued to evolve, diversify, expand, and naturally every country develops its system of education to express and remote its unique social cultural identity, and also to meet the challenges of the times. In the Indian way of thinking a human being is a positive asset and a precious national resource, which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care, coupled with dynamism. Each individual's growth presents a different range of problems and requirements, at every stage from the womb to the tomb. The catalytic action of education in this complex and dynamic growth process, needs to be planned meticulously and executed with great sensitivity. India's political and social life is passing through a phase which poses the danger of erosion to long accepted values. The goals of secularism, socialism, social justice.

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democracy, and professional ethics, are coming under increasing strain. The rural areas with poor infrastructure and social services, will not get the benefit for trained and educated youth, unless rural urban disparities are reduced, and determined measures are taken to promote diversification, and dispersonald of employment opportunities. The growth of our population needs to be brought down significantly over the coming decades. The largest single factor that could help to achieve this is the spread of literacy and education among women. Life in the coming decades is likely to bring new tensions, together with unprecedented opportunities. To enable the people to benefit in the new environment, will require new designs of human resource development. The coming generations should have the ability to internalise new ideas constantly and creatively. They have to be imbued with a strong commitment to human value and to social justice. All this implies better education. In our national perception, education is essentially for all. This is fundamental to our all round development, material and spiritual. Education has an acculturating role. It refined sensitivity and perception that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper, and independence of spirit and mind, thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism, and democracy enshrined
in our constitution.

Catholic missionaries are meticulous in their educational planning, and recognise the worth of every individual child. Manipur has been a great home of culture in the past, and is also that in the present. Catholic Mission Education makes its contribution by holding debates and symposiums, familiarising and strengthening opinion in favour of cultural traditions and customs (especially as a lot of functions in schools are centred around films and songs popularised on t.v., video and the radio, and not in the least suited to cultural activities in school), educating the youth about the ills that plague society, and how to avoid being ensnared by these, publishing regular periodicals about the aims, objectives, growth, development and progress of Catholic Mission Education in Manipur, school magazines featuring articles by the children on different aspects of life, history and culture of Manipur. American Baptists have been accused by government officials like Hutton and Mills, and anthropologists like Elvin and Haimendorf, of demoralising and destroying the solidarity of the Naga.

by forbidding the joys and feasting, decorations and
time of communal life. For e.g. "Longshim," (communal
dormitory) of the Tangkhuls, was the crucible wherein
the Tangkhul men and women were shaped into respon­
sible, adult members of their society. Catholic
missionaries are not in favour of such an institution.
But they cannot be accused of destroying the solidarity
and harmony of communal life, as they work among all
the different tribes and people that inhabit the
state, not as a people apart but rather as integral,
intimate members of the community among whom they
work and live. They familiarise and adapt themselves to
the way of life and the customs prevalent among the
people. They direct their efforts not towards
erosion of long accepted values and beliefs, but
rather towards humanitarian tasks as education, works
of commiseration, and healing, social development,
and so on. Nevertheless, in many of the youth today,
commitment and courage is of less degree than it
was earlier, when the Catholic missionaries first
came to Manipur. As a matter of fact many youngsters
coming from village backgrounds are becoming so
aliened, that on completion of their studies, they
do not go back to their villages but stay in towns,
losing their attachment to family, home, culture, etc.
Gradually, youth is a powerful force in Manipur which must be handled with care, and channelised in the right direction. Catholic mission education has to co-ordinate the activities of youth in various fields, hold youth meetings, open study clubs etc. and thus broaden the scope of school activities. The first batch of sisters (nuns), came to Manipur more than 25 years ago. Others came in 1967, and since that time, different congregations of sisters have come into Manipur at various times. On the one hand everybody heaps on us generous praise for our dedication and zeal in running institutions, noted for efficiency. But we have to admit, that people meet us more often at the fee collection counters, and in the classrooms with text books. Now seldom do they get a chance to meet us in the village and homes of our people. Heart of heart everyone of us wanted to live a different type of life than the ones we had lived in our native convent. Had we stayed on there, we could have earned more in terms of finances for our communities. We left all that behind and came here. But as soon as we reached here we somehow got settled down to our previous mode of life. Honestly I feel that something has gone wrong.

somewhere in our setup in Manipur. We have to find out what that is. ¹ Infact, to impart a true education and to utilise the benefits of this education, Catholic missionaries must identify themselves more closely with the people of Manipur, and establish closer links with them in daily life. They have already done much to do away with rural urban disparities in the educational field, and been pioneers in bringing education to some of the more backward, inaccessible parts of the state. As for educating the people to limit their families Fr. A. C. George of Shanti Shavan, Imphal has taken the initiative, and established the north-east Catholic Health Association. Two Catholic doctors resident at Imphal, as also the students of the regional medical college, Imphal, assist him in the task of teaching natural methods of family planning to the people, and also render assistance in the community health service. Health education at the primary and middle levels will ensure the commitment of the individual to family and community health. In Little Flower School for example, a lady doctor, Dr. Biona Jodha, is invited to give talks to the girls in the senior school on health education etc. Sisters specially trained for youth formation, also give talks to the students on family life and personal character formation.

¹ Dr. Alvin Mary, C.M.C., What I expect from this seminar, Seminar on Evangelisation, Diocese of
Manipur is a developing state, and naturally there are numerous opportunities for development, progress and expansion in diverse fields. Catholic Mission Education is trying to develop in students the ability to act and think creatively, and constructively, while at the same time maintaining dignity and respect for others, as also belief in social justice. People are seeking development and education. In human society, individuals are seeking more and more the meaning of life, and are daily becoming more involved in the discussion of this matter. Modern culture and trends, tends to interpret man and human life and events without reference to God. The social conditions of people are changing. Ethical principles which flourished in days gone by, are called into doubt. It is now necessary to take in to account the real need or the requirements and exigencies of the social milieu of our people as also their cultural and religious heritage, present day trends and aspirations. Following the mandate of Christ to go into the entire world, the Catholic missionaries here have to integrate themselves with all variety of life and activity. The whole world of arts, science, technology, commerce, agriculture, politics, industry, in short, in every

sphere of life, in every area of human activity. They must be a leaven in society, visit frequently the homes of people, on occasions of both joy and sorrow, as for example, the birth of a child, success in examination, marriage, business success, sickness, death etc. Catholic Mission Education can fully relate to Manipur's society as the missionaries familiarise and identify themselves more completely with the culture and language of Manipur, and nurture for instance their inherent talent and interest in music, singing, dance etc. and so carry out their primary mission to 'preach, teach and heal.' The Catholic missionary is sent first of all to proclaim the 'Good news of the Kingdom' (of God) to every tribe, village and individual, to teach, to heal people from sin and sinful ways, from malnutrition, poverty and miserable conditions and sometimes sub-human housing, and living conditions. This is what the Catholic missionaries are engaged in, for they realise that people can be made use of, manipulated, exploited, instrumentalised, disposed of, made use of for one's own ends, and discarded, by persons at the helm of affairs in society and the state. Catholic Mission Education

1. Gospel of Matthew, chap. 4, Jesus went through Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom & healing every sickness & disease.
perceives the needs and aspirations of the people, as it possesses the capacity to feel for, and with the people. Catholic missionaries have come to Manipur, to care for those living in inaccessible villages without the benefit of education, medical care, housing amenities etc., that are consonant with man's dignity, and of course to preach the knowledge of God. Catholic missionaries possess a dynamic fidelity which looks to the actual needs of the people and church, a creative fidelity, meeting today's needs of the people and not yesterday's mission. The secret of success of the Catholic missionaries has been that they closely identify themselves with the people and their concerns, and try to preserve, protect and nurture the precious patrimony of the Manipuri people i.e. the rich heritage of cultures, customs and languages. However as educators of youth, they could encourage a wider circulation of good literature, run libraries, and reading rooms, equipped with t.v., video, computers etc. as mass and group learning media, translate some good literature into the vernacular (the missionaries should be quite proficient in this for they have been translating prayer hymns

1. S. Karotemprel, Jesus went to the Multitudes, Diocesan Seminar on evangelisation, Imphal, pp.36-40.

2. Ibid, p.47.
etc. into different dialects), encourage creative writing, promote a programme of school health service, a healthy work ethos and values of a human and composite culture and a consciousness of environment. There is a socio-cultural integration which 'consists in finding acceptable codes, norms and institutions for settlements of conflicts,' which in turn creates a team spirit. The spread of education leading to improved understanding and knowledge of people of different cultural backgrounds will not only promote emotional integration but also strengthen the political and economic foundation of the nation. Emotional integration brings political cohesion, and emotional disturbance threatens the political system. It is necessary for society to grow and change at an even pace, as the elements making up society are diverse and plural. Modern science and technology has caused revolutionary changes in various fields, contributing much to the progress and development of the country. But science and technology can also be utilised for destructive purposes, for example, use of firearms in the state for destructive purposes, for sabotage etc. Since a child spends his formative years in school, Catholic educationists must educate the

children in the use of scientific knowledge, so as to use it for beneficial purposes. They must also lay greater emphasis on human worth and dignity and upgrade moral values which are on the decline, not only in Manipur, but in other parts of the country, and the world at large. The children may be made aware of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, by means of study circles, debates etc. Children must learn as they grow in knowledge, that they must integrate themselves, in all aspects of family and community life and ultimately in that of the nation.

Study of art, literature and music are essential components of education. They appeal to human sensitivity and emotion, and can be utilised to create a necessary social and national consciousness in the students, and to amalgamate India's spiritualism with today's materialism. English education has been a major single factor of change in society for it brings in its wake, liberal, progressive ideas. Catholic institutions teaching through the medium of English, have raised the level of literacy in the state, and fostered the growth of political, social, academic and cultural activities, by exposure to new ideas and thoughts, adding a new dimension to society. 'A class of pupils hitherto unknown, emerged in
in society, and together with their teachers they formed a distinct community of intellectuals, composed of different race, sex, caste and creed, subsisting on the were a class of writers, book-sellers, newspaper agents, journalists, stationers and suppliers of educational paraphernalia. As a result of education many social, cultural and political organisations were organised with a view to reform or revive society by eliminating many social evils. Knowledge enlarges the horizon of awareness. Man's social consciousness grows. He learns the implications of his behaviour in the broader context. Values occupy the central core of one's personality. The way one thinks and behaves is the reflection of those values one is committed to. Catholic Mission Education provides these enduring values, which unite a people together. Brother Alexander, Director of St. Benedict's College, Colombo expressed these sentiments at the First Asian Bishops Education Consultation - "Our faith, vision of Christian Education impels us to promote full and integral development of the human person which is made to the image and likeness of God." 

In order to transform the minds of society, we need to undertake modernisation in every field and make the system efficient. To modernise education the mass media like t.v., radio, video, need to be properly equipped and utilised as a means of education. Knowledge regarding electronics, computers, new materials, bio-technology in agriculture, medicine, industry, have a tremendous potential for transforming society, and harnessing human resources of large magnitude. Thus the main agents for transformation of human thinking is education. Education does not mean mere acquisition of certificates, but learning about environment, using human resources. The value system is to be inculcated in education right from the beginning. Catholic missionaries are already beneficially utilising instruments of mass media and have set up a mass communications centre at Imphal. They have responded to the demand for modern education. They do believe that education is not merely acquisition of theoretical knowledge but wise practical use of it, and their education has and is transforming the mind of society.
The democratic ideal of education aims at dispensing equal opportunities to all. But in practice this may be difficult to realise because of disparity in the economic status of parents. Nevertheless, just as Catholic Mission Education does not discriminate on social grounds, the students entering their institutions, so also, they try to effect as far as possible equal educational opportunities to all, regardless of the income of the parents. There are numerous examples of children coming from economically handicapped families, being given freeships, scholarships, stipends etc. in order to enable them to receive a complete education. So also the boarding facilities in the Catholic schools here in Manipur, are primarily meant for children whose home circumstances prevent parents from educating them, as the little money available to them is utilised to make ends meet, and education is a luxury. Catholic missionaries gather such children into their boarding houses from all over the state, thus making a practical reality of equal educational opportunities to all. It is easy to cite instances of children in the boardings, whose boarding as also tuition fee, is free or at a very nominal rate.
One or two examples may suffice - Nirmala Bas School, Imphal - 40% of the boarding inmates pay no fees for education, board and lodging. 30% pay a nominal fee, and 30% pay the full fee. Little Flower School, Imphal - Average boarding capacity approximately 100. 10% pay no fees towards education, board and lodge, 80% pay according to their ability, averaging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 60 to Rs. 100/- per month, 10% pay the full fee i.e. Rs. 190/- per month.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, envisages the establishment of model school (Navodaya Vidyalas), not only to provide a standardised package to every student, and a basic direction for national cohesion, but also to provide an education which will be more productive in terms of development, and which will break down regional and linguistic barriers. About Navodaya Vidyalas he says, "It was perhaps the first major egalitarian step that had been taken in bringing good education to the poorest and the weakest sections. It was a quest for equality and quality - the best schools for the best children, no matter what their economic, cultural or social Background. The new educational policy must be egalitarian. It must give

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equal access to every single child at every level of intelligence of proficiency to the same type of education. At the same time it must make an attempt to give access to the best type of education to the most intelligent children, regardless of which section of society they come from. But this objective is a practical reality in Catholic institutions. The difference being only the curriculum which is prescribed by the state government. The Catholic Bishops Conference of India, Commission for Justice and Peace and Development, organised a National Workshop, with 51 specially chosen participants; it examined the present educational system, and recommended new value based content and methodology. "To-day's social order is by and large unjust and inequalitarian, so we suggest that the new pattern of education be based on the values drawn from our religious experience and cultural and historical heritage. 62% of our countrymen are illiterate, and more children are outside the school then in. The main reason is the low priority awarded to universal elementary Education in our planning. A educational system that is flexible in content and structure and which uses the existing environment as the source of

learning, with a multiple entry and adaptable school year, keeping in view the local conditions, be adopted.

While at the primary stage, the focus should be on literacy and numeracy, at the secondary stage, a flexible national core curriculum be evolved, to serve the needs of a region or a state. Education can modify the economic system gradually, through a changed curriculum, through a intensive training in citizenship and for right leadership. The role of education in the economic development of the country has been beautifully described by Kadhakamal Mukherjee in the following words, "The phenomenal economic growth in the U.S.A. in now attributed much more to education and advance of knowledge, accounting for 25% of the growth of total real national income, than to capital accumulation or improvement in employment. Education and advance of knowledge is responsible for 58% of the total increase in the real national income between 1907 and 1957. Economic determinants are at the root of the growth of education. As per the theory of economic interpretation of history as propounded by Karl Marx, the growth of education cannot be understood unless economic determinants are taken cognisance of. Such economic determinants

as, poverty of the people, low standard of living, economic depression, inflation, famines, growth of population, transport and communication, tariff policy of the government, availability of material resources, manifestoes of different political parties, self-sufficiency in education, problem of unemployment, under employment, cost of living, economic exploitation, wastage, stagnation, role of government and private enterprises, grants in aid, etc.

Poverty of the people is also inter-related with a low standard of living. But it was the poor people in the hills and interior of Manipur, to whom the Catholic missionaries went first and raised the standard of living through the education they imparted, both practical and theoretical. For instance, when the Catholic missionaries first set foot in Keihao, it was a poor, desolate village, and in April 1866, when the new Catholic Church there was blessed by Bishop J. Mittathany, the rise in the standard of living was apparent in the neatness and cleanliness of the villagers and the orderly homes, the discipline of the children of the Isen Christ Catholic School, the preparations they made on that occasion, the improvement in the surrounding because of the incentive

given by the missionaries, in increasing the yield of crops (Agriculture being the mainstay of the people), and other food requirements, by the practical example of growing paddy, vegetables, and other such essentials needed by the inmates of the girls boarding house, and for the new boys hostel. The Catholic missionaries educate by word and deed to become self-sufficient, even in the rugged terrain of the hills of Keibao. There is a bridge built by the Catholic missionaries over the river leading to the compound of the Catholic school and church, but a few years ago the missionaries had to cross over a precarious rope bridge which could give way at anytime, and yet with hearts in their mouth, they effected the dangerous passage across, several times over. Manipur certainly has its share of periods of economic depression and subsequent inflation. In fact, the latter would seem to be constantly on the rise. During such times of economic depression, and when those periods occur, where the state government keeps a tight hold on finances, releasing minimum amounts for public works executed, when the cost of essentials rises greatly, there are numerous incidents of looting, violence and killing. Very often these incidents are blamed upon the underground
elements, but this is not always the case, many such incidents occurring because people are in urgent need of money. Many young talented people, are driven underground because of lack of job opportunities and subsequent poverty. But education brings the realisation that acts of violence are not the answer to economic depression and inflation—rather the youth are to engage themselves constructively in economic reconstruction, by utilising their intelligence, talents and education to start for example, small entrepreneur schemes, e.g. candle making, manufacture of cycle parts, cold storage, cane furniture etc., for which loans are available from the Industries Department at particular times, and for which the educationist can give guidance and advice. The Catholic missionaries who started the Don Bosco Youth Centre in 1958, at Imphal, at that time made the institution self-supporting, as far as 'Potatoes, cabbages and the like are concerned.' And again in 1959, when the Don Bosco boys went home in July for the holidays, or 'better to help their parents in planting the paddy in the fields, twenty remained as they have no home and helped in preparing our new playground. Reports received from village elders were very

1. Don Bosco Chronicle, Imphal 1958, p. 3.
flattering; "enthusiastic and proud to see their boys so smart, clean and helpful."

The population of the state has increased rapidly after it joined the India Union and was no longer at war with the neighbouring country of Burma, which in the past had often taken a heavy toll of lives. Agriculture is the main stay of the populace; in the past the yield was adequate to support the population but now although large areas remain uncultivated, mainly in the rugged hills, the yield is not sufficient to meet the demands of a growing population, and Manipur is importing many essential foodstuffs. As there is no railhead in Manipur, the cost of many essentials is prohibitive, for the consumer. There are also very few industries. At the same time there are more mouths to feed, and an increase of unemployment among the educated youth. Catholic educationists have to direct their efforts to teaching some vocational or technical skill to students at the secondary stage level to equip them to undertake some worth while occupation when they have completed their studies, especially those who are unable to go in for higher education at the college or university level. Vocational training courses in consultation with representatives of employers of educated labour, such as banks, commercial firms, industrial concerns etc.
could be held, and also a sense of dignity of labour must more firmly be implanted in the minds of youth. This last is essential, for like educated youth elsewhere, hereto, in Manipur, they want to start their career from the top rung of the ladder, and would not appreciate employment for example in a Grade 4 category, of government service or such like. To be successful, one work upwards from the lower rungs. This drive and knowledge, that to succeed one must constantly strive harder, and still harder, must be engrained into students from the beginning, by the educationists. The Catholic missionaries fully equipped for this task, are already putting it into practice, but need to give a more practical bent to such ideas. When the Don Bosco Youth Centre was first established, it had a carpentry and tailoring unit with 20 boys in each in 1959. At the Technical Week held at Adinjati Technical Institute in September 1961, the Don Bosco put up a stall of carpentry and tailoring, although the actual inauguration of carpentry and tailoring workshops took place at Don Bosco, Chingmeirong on 31st January 1962. "In three short years our boys have made extremely good progress, physically, morally and intellectually. Results of final examination have reached the high level of 90%. Besides following their academic
course, some of the boys have also a chance of receiving a good training in carpentry, and tailoring.

The Catholic Mission educationists have announced their objective in the following: In fact we Catholics call it, (Don Bosco) not a Bible school meant for Christian boys only. Our vision is broader as its very name 'Catholic' connotes. We follow in everything the government curriculum, and our school is open to all children, irrespective of caste and creed.

Primary education should equip boys and girls to earn their bread, by the state guaranteeing employment in vocations learnt or by buying their manufactures in preference to importing goods from other places at fixed prices. Shri K.G. Saiyicain had written of Basic Education: "All education should centre round some basic craft, chosen with due regard to the capacity of the children and the needs of the locality for example, spinning, weaving, gardening, etc. The selected craft should be so taught and practised that it will make children into good craftsmen and enable them to produce articles which can be used and are integrally related to the child's physical and social environment. Technological subjects like wood and metal drawing, etc., could

1. Don Bosco Chronicle, Imphal.
and commercial subjects like bookkeeping, shorthand, typing, accountancy etc. could be included in the curriculum of the high schools. "Most often a student leaving school has no idea of what vocation he or she should pursue in the future, and little idea which specialised subject to opt for, when going in for higher education, and chooses the latter on the basis of marks secured in the school leaving examination, or is influenced by the decision of friends, parents, relatives or the majority of the school leaving group. If the child has had the opportunity to learn some basic technological subjects, this whets the interest, and also enables the student to judge what his or her talent lies in, and so to pursue this further, ultimately contributing to the economic reconstruction of the state. To this end, more visual and mechanical aids are utilised in Catholic schools, as for example, attractive pictures, illustrations, educational films and cassettes, phonograms, folk dances, vocal and instrumental music, drama etc. and S.U.P.W. as an essential part of the curriculum, right from the start. Unfortunately attention is centred on book learning, because of the demands of the government curriculum, and

there is hardly any time for creative handwork or practical studies in General Science carried out at the primary and lower school level, in any of the educational establishments. Nevertheless, it is at the school level that a child's creativity can be properly channelled and directed. Western education has already paved the way for a scientific and critical study of India's ancient culture, and Catholic mission educationists acquainted with western culture enable the students to enrich themselves by a simple, balanced, critical appraisal of India's culture, but more emphasis is given on the history and culture of Manipur. There is productive activity in education, a correlation of the curriculum with the productive activity, and the physical and social environment, and intimate contact between the school and local community, productive activity to be based on modern science and technology. It helps to eradicate the problem of unemployment, underemployment, economic exploitation, wastage and stagnation. If the destiny of the country is shaped in the classroom (youth are the hope of the future), then educational expansion must be made on the basis of man power needs. It is being attempted to incorporate it into the expansion of Catholic education in
Manipur as education is a significant factor in national development. "Education is the most important single factor which leads to economic growth and that order of economic development which we visualise would be unattainable, but for educational reconstruction."\(^1\) A mere expansion of the apparatus of education is not necessarily synonymous with progress. Educationists should be "imaginative enough to realise the goals of educational reconstruction, sensitive enough to know the needs and demands of the people, competent enough to plan and implement satisfactory programmes of educational reconstruction, and able enough to function as the friends, philosophers and guides of teachers, who in their turn would extend a similar service to parents and students."\(^2\)

There is in Manipur as in other parts of India, an increasing disparity between the output of the educational system, and the capacity of the economy to absorb it at this stage of development, resulting in young persons becoming disoriented and disenchanted, and rebellious. But Manipur is slowly and steadily developing, and in a state where there are so many opportunities for various kinds of entrepreneurs

\(^1\) S.Muruliah and J.P.Airk, op.cit., p.419.
\(^2\) Ibid, pp.421-422.
and industrialists, education from the secondary state onwards has to relate to the economy. Don Bosco, Imphal has taken the initiative in introducing computer science from the primary stage onwards. They were similarly the first school in the state to use modern audio-visual aids like television and video in education. Other Catholic schools have followed suit. Mahatma Gandhi had laid stress on craft work in schools, e.g. clay-modelling, mat weaving etc.

"Absence of vocational training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically." He believed that craft training should centre around a profit yielding occupation, so as to enable the student to pay for his tuition through the products of their labour, simultaneously developing the complete personality of the student concerned. Modern educational opinion is unanimous in its appraisal of craft work in schools right from the primary through to the high school level, for it provides an integrated, all sided education. Economically this results in an increase in the productive capacity of the people. And the Catholic church here entrusts its mission to different religious congregations, until a period of self sufficiency in every respect is attained in a given area.
Catholic missionary institutions do not receive grants-in-aid from the government. They are not geared to getting jobs for their students, but in a few cases self employment is realised. Catholic missionaries are willing to establish multipurpose schools to provide terminal courses in technology, commerce, agriculture, fine arts, home science etc. but the main obstacle is lack of funds and suitable personnel. Some missionaries feel that the government with all its resources and manpower have failed to achieve success in relating education to employment. Many of the missionaries are willing to try, but establishment of such schools entails much financial investment, the Catholic community is small and mainly drawn from the middle or lower income group bracket, and so the missionaries are largely dependent on charity in the initial stages, and nowadays, "not many people extend their charity even for good purposes." Catholic schools have to charge fees for the maintenance of their institutions, and the establishment of new ones especially in villages in the interior, for no grants-in-aid have been given either by the state or the central government. Although many highly placed persons in government and state are desirous for the establishment of Catholic colleges in Manipur, nobody has yet come forth with any concrete moral or material assistance to realise such a scheme. Despite this, the fees charged by the Catholic schools in the

1. Catholic missionary, Imphal.
state are lower than many other educational institutions, whether run by government or private persons, (e.g. the Manipur Public School). The Catholic schools depend for their existence on missionary zeal and toil, and the fees charged.

Nevertheless, in a limited way, Catholic education is related to economic development in content and methodology. A Catholic missionary of Manipur graphically describes this inter relation; "The students and the villagers around, watch the beautiful vegetation of our farms, the large and beautiful pigs, cows and chickens that we rear, and thus get motivated in keeping a model farm of their own on these lines. Their attempts are always economically beneficial." Catholic education opens the eyes of the people. "A large number of our people educated in our institutions are holding responsible jobs, or are engaged in some form or other of activity that has improved their lot. The difference can be noticed by those who have lived for a sufficiently long time in Manipur. And liquidation of illiteracy is bound up with the liquidation of poverty in that, liquidation of illiteracy would mean more awareness to new forms of social life. The educated naturally seek higher grades of employment, which in turn brings a steady rise in the standard of living, this again liquidates,
poverty. A missionary working in Nungbi is of the opinion "Nungbi is one of the most educated villages compared to villages around, having more than 15 graduates, who are mostly employed in schools, government offices, security forces etc. Their education has brought in civilisation and money to their families. Around and in front of the school we had planted some 2,000 saplings, and these are now quite beautiful trees. The local population too have started planting trees around their houses, churches, etc. Definitely our trees in the church compound have made an impact in the minds of the children and the local populace." Trees can earn revenue in many ways, by selling its products example fruit, firewood, eucalyptus for oil etc. and so in this manner too, Catholic education relates practically to the economy of the state. "Holidays and vacations are arranged in such a way that the students are free to help their poor parents in cultivation, harvesting etc., and the students do help." So also in the first ever visit of a Director of Education to a Catholic school, i.e. Don Bosco, Imphal, the Director left a very flattering comment in the Visitor's book appreciating particularly,"The spirit with which

1. Catholic Missionary, Churachandpur.
2. Catholic Missionary, Nungbi.
the Don bosco rathers conducted this school and youth
centre." he then left a grant of Rs. 5,000/- for the
new carpentry workshop! however "in rural areas espe­
cially in schools with boardings, students get a first
hand knowledge in farming, vegetable growing, piggery,
poiltry etc. at least on a minor scale, as extra curricular
activities." and they enjoy it. The aim of the Carme­
lite sisters running nimala was in Imphal, and other
schools in different parts of the state, as for
example, aeniho, nairipok, is to uplift women and
children through education. This education is
practically effective; students passing out from
these schools are sought after to fill in vacant
slots in diverse spheres of employment as for instance,
teaching posts in school, secretarial jobs in govern­
ment offices or banks etc. There are in addition, a
number of Graham schools run by the missionaries
which teach practical, money-raising crafts like
sewing, weaving etc. and provide instruction in
how to manage or run a house and care for its members
in a proper manner. Of a Catholic school in Churachand­
pur, a missionary says; "The school does not cater
any vocational training. Education gives the children
a sense of value in life. Their vocational choice is

1. Don bosco chronicle, Imphal, p. 57.
2. Catholic missionary, Imphal.
is already a start towards our national reconstruction. The school however cannot provide a thorough and scientific orientation, but an overall orientation in the various fields of life. The school makes arrangements for students who show an aptitude for a particular vocational career, and it provides a small saving scheme with a view to instill in them, to be more thrifty and economical. The present educational system does not directly aim at getting jobs and self-employment. It provides the knowledge and impetus for higher studies. Those who can afford go up for higher studies, while others can well land at a lower grade clerks' work or be primary school teachers. "A large number of our people educated in our institutions are now holding responsible jobs in different spheres. Our school is only a junior high school, we try to send students to other states where technical and industrial training is given. Through our school agricultural farm, the students are given the practical knowledge of cultivation. In the school a new subject SUPW (Socially useful productive work) has been brought in, and is useful in our institution, since it has a lot of land. Real farmer's skill is displayed by every student." (Only 2% of the total students are not tribals).

1. Good Shepherd Parish, Churachandpur.
2. Catholic Missionary, Mungbi.
There is regional imbalance in the economical and industrial development of the country. Some parts of the country have little to show as far as industrialisation is concerned, and Manipur is one of these places. Other areas are suppliers of raw material. "This has already generated a feeling among the people of the area concerned, whether the Government is genuinely interested in the development of the area, for which industrialisation is a must." Manipur is an importer of so many commodities and her position is therefore one of great dependency. Catholic mission education should be so directed, as to create in students the desire and the initiative to set themselves up as entrepreneurs in the industrial field, and elementary knowledge of basic crafts can from a part of the school curriculum. SUPW's application has been greatly widened to relate more integrally with the needs and the environment of Manipur in almost all Catholic schools in the state. Children are taught the practical application of science (for e.g. Little Flower School, Imphal has a specially fenced section for the growing of plants by each student of the higher classes), how to grow cash crops in the interior, how to dig or clean the pukris (ponds which are almost an integral part of every family compound), how to

rear fish, chicken, other livestock, etc. In India, it is abundantly clear that economic stagnation is primarily due to inadequacy and failure in the human element. The realisation of the country's aspirations involves changes in the knowledge, skills, interests, values, of the people as a whole. This is basic to every programme of social and economic betterment of which India stands in need. For instance, there can be no hope of making India self-sufficient in food, unless the farmer is moved out of his age-old conservatism through modern education, becomes interested in experimentation, and is ready to adopt techniques that increase yields. This applies in a special manner to Manipur, where agriculture is the mainstay of the populace, and almost everywhere in the state, much has to be done to increase the yield, experiment with new cash crops, introduce modern farm equipment, new techniques of agriculture, and so on. The same is true of industry, which is urgently needed in the state. Only education can make the people of India want to have a better life. Education alone can produce that revolution without which there can be no real economic or national development. Speaking of the development of economically backward, traditional societies like India, Robert Heilbroner calls it 'the Great Ascent.'

"The mere lay in of a core of capital equipment, indispensable as what is for further economic expansion, does not yet catalyse a traditional bound society into a modern one. For the catalysis to take place, nothing short of a pervasive social transformation will suffice; a wholesale metamorphosis of habits, a wrenching reorientation of values, concerning time, status, money, work; and an unweaving and reweaving of the fabric of daily existence itself.\(^1\)

**EDUCATION AND POLITICS**

The political situation in the country has its inevitable reaction on the educational system, and the political set-up of a state, influences the state's educational policy. The curriculum of the Catholic schools is prescribed by the state government's educational board. The Catholic schools are free to run and manage their schools in their own way; they cannot deviate from the government curriculum, the school leaving examinations are arranged by the Board of Secondary Education in Manipur, and the missionaries are not members of the Board of Education in anyway, whether advisory or honorary, "our educational system is not different from what is existing in the state. We cannot plan a system of our own. We have to follow"

\(^1\) [Laid, citing Robert Heilbroner, *The Great Ascent*, p.86.](#)
the programmes set up by the education department of the state, I have not come across any push given to education by the political party in power. Education remains in the same confused condition as it was before. The whole educational system in India has been borrowing from the British system. One wonders whether there is anywhere, a purely Indian or native system of education in the country. Of course, schools are established and funds are spent. I am not certain now far political parties have any impact on education. After all, politics in Manipur mostly is something that is convenient. How many really convinced politicians are there?" There are many Catholic schools in the rural areas of the state but higher education in rural engineering, rural extension and hygiene cannot be imparted. "The school falls under the purview of the educational system of the state, and local political power gives no special focus to education." Political parties do nothing for accelerating the pace of education and Catholic colleges have not been established because of the unstable social and political situation and the unrest among students mainly the collegians, lack of funds etc. "In Ukhrul, by spending a lot of money uselessly on shadow schools, they the political

1. Catholic Missionary, Imphal.
2. Catholic Missionary, Courtenandpur.
3. Catholic Missionary, Munqubi.
party in power), think that they are pushing forward education at an accelerated pace. But in reality they are ruining the future generation with the present method of execution of the Policy."¹ A Government officer in the state, on the contrary holds that

"The Manipur Government gives due priority to educational development in the state as it cannot afford to be unpopular with the student population which is very large in the state. Therefore in 1985-1986 the outlay for education under the annual plan was Rs. 2,950/- lakhs against the total state outlay of Rs. 7,000/- lakhs, which was the sixth largest outlay amongst the various heads of development. For 1986-1987, it increased to Rs. 509/- lakhs against the state outlay of Rs. 8,700/- lakhs."² But care has to be taken to ensure that the money set aside for education is actually utilised for the purpose for which it has been earmarked.

According to Article 30 of the Indian Constitution, "The state shall not in granting aid to educational institutions discriminate against any education institutions on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language."

¹. Catholic Missionary, Ukhrul.
². Govt. Officer, Manipur Govt.
Catholics are a minority and the government does discriminate against their institutions as far as grants-in-aid are concerned. No financial assistance is given to Catholic missionary institutions in urban and rural areas, and so the Catholic schools do not appeal for aid from the government. Nevertheless, the children of local politicians, bureaucrats and those highly placed in society and business, usually prefer to educate their offspring in Catholic missionary schools. Even when these schools are practically bursting at the seams with too many children; parents and guardians from all walks of life try to pressurise the missionaries into granting admissions to yet more students, especially in the leading Catholic institutions as Don Bosco, Imphal, Little Flower School, Imphal, Mirama Bas and St. Joseph's school, Imphal. Many parents and guardians come to seek admission armed with letters of recommendation from state ministers, M.L.A's and other prominent persons and they are often accompanied to the schools with such persons, hoping thereby to force the missionaries into accepting their children into Catholic schools. They overlook the fact that overcrowding of the institutions would in the course of time lead to a deterioration of the high educational standard; the classrooms had been built to accommodate only a
limited number of students, and a single teacher cannot be expected to give his or her best to a class of 100 and more children, especially at the primary level, for the pressure of admissions is greatest at the nursery stages. Despite preventive measures initiated by Catholic schools to restrict the numbers particularly at the starting stage, political pressure, subtly applied, compels the schools to accept admissions over and above the number regarded by the institution as ideal for a class. Would it be just to expect the class teachers to handle a class of hundred children, especially at the starting stage, where the child’s knowledge of English is marginal or non-existent. The accommodation and furniture is meant for limited numbers, but when there are more students than desired, the former becomes inadequate, and overcrowding of school benches gives rise to great discomfort, especially in the not, summer months. There are to many instances of parents even from the elite of society, resorting to petty bickering, and shouting, in order to force the issue of admission in a Catholic school, especially at Imphal.
The National Policy of Education lays down:

National System of Education will be based on a national curricular framework, which contains a common core, along with other components that are flexible. The common core will include the history of India's Freedom Movement, the constitutional obligations, and other content essential to nurture national identity. These elements will cut across subject areas and will be designed to promote values such as India's common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of the sexes, protection of the environment, removal of social barriers, observance of the small family norm, and inculcation of the scientific temper. All educational programmes will be carried out in strict conformity with secular values.

India has always worked for peace and understanding between nations, treating the whole world as one family. True to this hoary tradition, education has to strengthen this world view and motivate the younger generations for international co-operation, and peaceful co-existence. This aspect cannot be neglected.

And yet on the 29th April, 1986, the following circular was sent by the Director of Education, Govt. of

Manipur under the orders of the Central Govt. to all
recognised Catholic schools in the state. The circular
reads:-

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR

No. 46/1/75 ED(Misc) 1797

The Principal/Headmaster/Headmistress;

Nirmala Das B.J. School,

Imphal, the 28th April, '86

P.O. Imphal

Subject: Admission and Fees etc.

Sir,

The Government of India desire to have a uniform
policy of admission of students in schools, colleges
run by Christian Missionary/other private Organisa-
tions, and a uniform rate of fees in such schools/
colleges. Their desire may perhaps arise from the
complaints of the public that these schools have
been adopting policies of admission which are dis-
criminatory to the people belonging to certain
religious community, and also high rates of fees
without considering the effect of the same on
society. In this connection some questions were
raised in the Parliament for reply from the minister
concerned, and accordingly the State Government have
been instructed to let the Government of India know
the factual position in this regard. The Department is to furnish the required information to the Government of India at an early date. You are therefore requested to furnish the following information to the undersigned on or before 12.5.86.

(1) Criteria of admission of students to different classes.

(2) Number of seats reserved for the candidates belonging to Christianity.

(3) Are the same criteria followed in all schools run by Christian Missionary, for admission of students?

(4) Rates of fees realised from the students of different classes, monthly, annually.

(5) Is the rate of fees increased annually? If so, reason thereof?

(6) Is the same rate of fees followed in all missionary schools?

(7) Is the same treatment given to all students belonging to different religious communities?

The above information are also required from the schools run by private organisations.

No reply to the above query within the period mentioned above will be viewed seriously, and necessary action will be taken up by the Department for withdrawal of recognition of their schools, in consultation with the Government.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/- Th. Bira Singh
Director of Education(s)
Government of Manipur
Secular values are to be upheld as enshrined in the constitution, yet the threat of withdrawal of recognition of catholic schools was dangled, although both the central and state government are aware that a minority school must first and foremost, cater for the needs of its own minority, and Catholics form a definite minority in Manipur. Although there are only about 45,000 Catholics in Manipur, there are 33 Catholic schools scattered through the length and breadth of the state. This is not inclusive of private schools run by individual Catholics, for these do not fall in the category of missionary schools.

Conscious of the sad plight of Christians of Scheduled Caste Origin, (CSCO) and Scheduled Tribes and Backward Communities (BD) the Church in India declared the Sunday after Independence Day as 'Justice Sunday.'

"At the time of Independence more than 15% of the people of India were enumerated as the depressed, or commonly classified as untouchables, or the outcastes, and 5% were known as the tribals. These two categories of people have been the most backward
in the socio-economic and educational fields, the majority of them being illiterate, landless and farm labourers. After independence, it was strongly felt that this community required special protection, privileges and concessions for their social and economic uplift. In order to classify them as special groups, the President of India prepared a list of these castes, races or tribes, which for the purpose of the Constitution were deemed to be SC. It was further stipulated that the profession of Hindu religion on the part of a person was a condition to be recognised as a member of SC. Both the Central and state Government have reservations, privileges and concessions, extended to the SC's and ST's. The Sikh protested against what they regarded as blatant discrimination against SC converts to Sikhism. Consequently in 1956, the Parliament amended clause 6 of the Presidential order of 1950 and included the SC converts to Sikhism in the list. By this order those who profess religions other than Sikhism and Hinduism, are denied the Central Government special privileges, granted to SC people, such as reserved constituencies for Parliament seats, reserved seats for employment, scholarships for education, special rights for
allotment of agricultural land and housing sites etc. Prior to formulation of the constitution, the Christians enjoyed some reservations. This was voluntarily surrendered at the time of the framing of the constitution. When the Constitution Scheduled Castes Order of 1950 was introduced, the Christians were assured by the President and the Prime Minister that this order would not take away those aids, concessions, etc., and that it was meant only for the reservation of parliamentary and legislative seats for the SC’s. This promise is unratified and void. The Christians lost their reservation, as also their aids and concessions.

Church’s stance on Caste - Caste is a man made evil. It is alien to the spirit of Christianity, which professes equality of men. The church stands for the abolition of caste. Cardinal Pichachy of India says; "This problem is one of the urgent ones to be tackled if the scale of justice is to be balanced in our society. It is the long term objective of the church to create a casteless society, in which there will be equality of opportunity, and in which special treatment will be based on social and economic backwardness.

However, she demands that as long as special treatment is accorded to SC's, the same should be extended to CSCO.

The evils of centuries of oppression and exploitation cannot be remedied in the span of a few years. The term 'schedule caste' is a creation of law, to enable the untouchable members to better their standard of life, and acquire human dignity and equality, and not a creation of the society. In the strict sense it is not a caste at all. Therefore in the present context, the word SC means socio-educated, economic backwardness. This special treatment should continue until SC's will be able to enter the mainstream of Indian life, and complete with their fellow brethren on an equal footing.

The Presidential Order of 1950 is a clear discrimination against the CSCO on the basis of religion. While Article 15 of the constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth, and Article 25 guarantees the right to freedom of conscience and freedom to profess and practice religion, the Presidential order goes against the very constitution.

1. Ibid.
of India. One fails to understand the logic of the policy of the central govt. and certain state governments, in withdrawing reservations and benefits, to those of the SC origin, who leave Hindu or Sikh religion, and embrace other religions, like Christianity etc., and again extending the same when the revert back to Hinduism or Sikhism.

Therefore the C.B.C.I. (Catholic Bishops Conference of India), is of the view that special provision on a priority and guaranteed basis, should be made for them in matters of admission to educational institutions, where particular attention should be paid to them, through coaching classes if necessary. Caritas, India, which has already opted in favour of projects to assist the backward classes, is urged to set up its programme in this line, as to remedy the helplessness resulting from economic, social and other causes. In all cases, our efforts must be directed towards removing the sense of inferiority under which they have been labouring for centuries, and towards strengthening their feeling of being free citizens of India.

1. Ibid.
During the past thirty six years, many Christian pioneers from among the bishops, clergy and laity of all denomination, have been making strenuous efforts individually, and through their respective associations, for the removal of discrimination imposed by the Presidential Order, on a large section of the citizens. These efforts have been only marginally useful, the basic problem of discrimination and injustice still remains unsolved, affecting the lives of more than 60% of the Christian population in India.

Christianity does not believe in violence but in love. Hence all efforts must be made in a peaceful and non-violent manner as taught by Jesus Christ and followed by Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our nation. Jesus Christ, the embodiment of love and concern for others, inaugurated a kingdom of peace, justice and brotherhood. These are the general aspirations of individuals and nations, these are the ideals enshrined in the constitution of India. Through the celebration of Justice Sunday, every Christian is called upon to foster and contribute, a strong, secular and democratic India, where all will have equal opportunities without distinction of caste or creed, to live and work as brothers and sisters.¹

The Christian population of Manipur is mainly drawn from the various tribes resident in the state. Many of them live in villages dotted about the hills of Manipur, and it is to afford equal opportunities to them, that Catholic missionaries have set up schools in the interior without aid, material or moral from the state. Many of these children studying in Catholic schools in the rural areas belong to families who are just eking out a livelihood and all Catholic schools give freeships and scholarships to the needy and deserving. Even where fees are charged especially in the boarding houses, they are very nominal, and those who are unable to afford even nominal fees are excused totally or partially according to their circumstances. Many persons, inclusive of the higher echelons of government and bureaucracy, have often expressed a wish for the establishment of a Catholic institution of higher learning. But no offer of concrete assistance has been made, and the Catholic Diocese of Imphal is already straining its personnel and funds to the utmost, in the field of school education and in social service. More so as the construction of the Catholic hospital at Imphal is already under way.

In this context a delegation of the C.C.I. and discussions with the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi
on July 18, 1986, on various problems facing the Church in India. The issues included the plight of Christians of SC origin, residential permits to foreign religious personnel, structures on some Christian institutions against receiving foreign contributions, and government's educational policy. The CBCI team consisted of its President, Archbishop Simon Pimenta of Bombay, Vice-President, Archbishop Benedict Mar Gregorios of Trivandrum, Secretary General, Bishop Alan de Lastic of Lucknow, and Deputy Secretary General Father Saturnino Dias.

While discussing the educational policy, the Government appreciated the efforts CBCI is making to develop spiritual, material and cultural resources. The Catholic Church has already been rendering signal service in the field of education. The delegation observed that great stress should be laid on the country's deep religiosity, as well as its spiritual traditions and values, that the human person and his full development should not be subordinated to the material needs of society. They emphasised the need to select and prepare carefully a new generation of teachers who will be leaders and models to the young. The Bishops expressed their concern that some educational institutions are facing difficulties in spite of the fact that the courts have constantly

clarified, defined and upheld the necessity to protect the rights of Christian institutions, as minority institutions. They draw attention to attempts made lately to reinterpret Articles 29 and 30 of the Indian Constitution. The Bishops reminded the Prime Minister that these institutions are rendering selfless service to the nation specially in education and the socio-economic uplift of the poor and downtrodden. The Prime Minister was told that the Church in India with its limited resources is not able to maintain these institutions entirely on their own, because their services are made available to the people of communities without distinction.

People from different walks of life, different sections of society are all aware of the continuous, tremendous contribution made by Catholic missionaries to the country as a whole. Of the Christian missionaries who came to Manipur, the Catholics were the most recent in the field, and yet it is they alone who have left their stamp on education in Manipur, and brought or increased the level of literacy in areas where it was non-existent or negligible. Although few in number, the Catholics have done more than any other community in the state to further the cause of education in Manipur.

How when the ugly spectre of communalism is raising its head and foreign Catholic missionaries who have been working in India all throughout their missionary lives, for two to three decades and more are being deported for no reason besides the trumpeted up charge of being anti-national (for example - Fr. Willy Van De Kerckhove, S.J. a Belgian national, aged 66, of St. Ignatius High School, Gumla, Bihar, who had been in India for 40 years and was recently deported, although no official reason has been given, although there are supposedly some reports accusing him of activities detrimental to national interests). But as in other parts of India, Catholic Missionaries in Manipur, whether of Indian or Foreign origin have completely identified themselves with the people and culture of the state, they live with the people as members of the same community, and although it is common to refer to non-Manipuris resident in the state, by the term 'meyang,' meaning outsider, the term cannot literally be applied to the Catholic missionaries who have travelled and lived all over the state as insiders, and who are part and parcel of Manipuri society, often knowing much more of the language, customs, culture, etc. of the different people resident in the state, because of the nature of their work, which brings them into
intimate contact with people of all communities and all walks of life, and because of their selfless efforts to promote only that which will benefit Manipur. The Catholic missionaries are for the most part, hailing from states in India other than Manipur. They have been brought up in a different milieu and culture and yet they freely dedicate their lives to the service of God and the betterment of the people of the state. Not many persons realise the magnitude of the sacrifices they have made to come to work for the rest of their lives in Manipur, where the lifestyle and culture, language and religion, is completely different to what they have been accustomed to. But they cheerfully learn new dialects of different tribal communities as also Meitei, the language of the Meiteis residents of the valley region in the state, and adjust to the different life-style prevalent here. A striking example of missionary zeal is displayed by Bishop Mittathany of Imphal who is continuously touring all parts of the state, where Catholic missionary institutions have been set up, seeing to their needs and promoting both the spiritual and material welfare of the people.

During British paramountcy (in Manipur), by which term we mean the period from 1891 to 1947,
the Maharaja's administration insisted on the Passport system. If anybody from British India or other princely states, wanted to come to Manipur, he had to procure a passport as if other parts of India were foreign countries. Indian people from other parts of India were called 'foreigners' in the terminology of British administrators. They had to pay a tax called foreigners tax, if they wanted to stay in Manipur. This invidious policy was calculated to keep different parts of India, separate from one another.

Manipur is now very much an integral part of India, and Indians, other than the Meitei and tribes who are the original residents of the state, and have permanently settled in Manipur, can no longer be classed as foreigners or mayangs, for the majority have completely identified themselves with the original inhabitants of the state, and they live and die in Manipur. Even more integrated are the Catholic missionaries working in the Catholic Diocese of Manipur. On the average, a Catholic missionary knows more about the habits, living conditions, customs etc. of the original residents than they themselves know, for the missionaries tour and work in all parts of the

1. R.K.Jhaljit, The Role of Kingship in the Integration of Manipur, p.3.
state, unlike the native population, who are usually confined to their home town or village, or area of work.

During his early missionary tours in Manipur, Bishop Marengo wrote that one evening during one of his visits to the large Mao Christian community of Punanamal, he was approached by a young man, whom he had never met, and who very distinctly was not one of the community. He looked quite refined, and after wishing the Bishop very politely, he asked whether he knew Fr. Iginio Ricca'ldone. Then he went on, "I have spoken to many of your people here, and I know that they are very nappy to have you here. But they are sorry, you come only once in a long while. Why don't you come oftener?"

"As you see I am a foreigner, and this happen'd to be a protected area. To come here I need a special permit from the Home Ministry, and I should not apply too often for it." "Now that is perfectly ridiculous." The Bishop began to feel a bit uneasy, and hastened to reply; "I should rather think it is only natural. Every country is naturally chary of foreigners in border areas."

"I tell you, they had better watch and protect the other border." That was years before the
Chinese aggression and the Bishop could not even imagine what he meant, but he apprehended that this soft-spoken, nice young man, could be objectively, a danger to him. So he looked at his watch, told him it was about time for the evening service and took leave. When he saw the catechist passing by, he called out to him to ring the bell for the Prayer Service. "Excuse me Bishop, for this evening. I must attend another meeting. So and so could lead the meeting in my stead." What meeting must you attend?" "A meeting of all the village leaders with that same man who was talking to you a while ago." "Ask the man to please let you off this time, when the Bishop is visiting your village after months." Lorence the catechist was dutifully present at the evening service, but many of the elders were not there. Only a short time after, the police station near Mac Gate (border between Manipur and Nagaland) was attacked by Naga hostiles.

Now if a CID or a police had by any chance seen the Bishop talking to that young man, that would have been enough to obtain for him a free ticket back to Italy. That was a time when suspicion was enough. Afterwards he learned that the polished young man was a Brigadier of the underground hostiles.

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1. O.Marongo, Memoirs, pp. 76-77.
Today Catholic missionaries are often viewed with suspicion and it is believed that forcible conversions to Catholicism or indoctrination in the religion, is being given to students in Catholic schools. This is far from the truth. Only essential moral instruction is given to all non-Catholic children who are in a majority in Manipur. It is only to the Catholic children that catechism is taught at the same time as the moral instruction class is going on for the non-Catholics. There is no compulsion exercised to become a Catholic either in the school, or elsewhere, and education is not utilised in the school by those running it for purposes of conversions. It is the example of the missionaries, and the spread of the Gospel and its understanding, that has increased the Catholic population in the state. Children of all communities are admitted to Catholic schools without bias, as is apparent, if one goes through the rules of any Catholic school at Manipur. Naturally being a Catholic school, preference at the time of admission is given to Catholics. The Catholics in most parts of India feel that the Catholic schools are not catering for the members of their own community in matters of admission to Catholic schools, especially the prestigious ones in big cities in India, and are
favouring affluent non-Catholic students. This is a charge which cannot be levelled at Catholic schools in Manipur, for they follow a definite policy of giving preference to Catholic children in matters of admission, but no favoritism or special treatment is given to them in matters pertaining to the school curriculum. Children of all denominations are taught in a uniform manner. Most of the Catholic schools have small boarding houses; these are meant for Catholic children who come from families, suffering social or economic disabilities. And as the missionaries are duty-bound, they must look to the needs of their community and help them in every way. This task they perform admirably.

"The nation is witnessing a new breed of leaders which have vested interest in keeping the masses isolated in their religious beliefs. Speaking on 'Secularism - true and counterfeit' at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, journalist and author Arun Shourie pointed out, to ill-informed religious leaders spreading a fear psychosis among their faithful, that their religion as such was in danger. Such fundamentalism was taking a dangerous direction. Mr. Shourie referred to Punjab as a case in point, where the new religious
leadership was sacrificing truth in favour of rhetoric. He said that if secularism was to have meaning and democratic institutions were to follow the philosophy, all religions in India should review how the faithful would employ it in life. But what was written centuries ago in the fourth century by St. Pacian (Epist 1); "Christian is my name, but Catholic is my surname, that names me, this describes me," this holds true of the Catholic missionaries in Manipur today and always.

What are the criteria necessary for an institution to be classed as an educational institution of the minority? While rejecting the claim of the Andhra Pradesh Christian Medical Education Society to start a medical college under minority right, the Supreme Court in its judgement that the government and the university had a right to go behind the claim of minority rights and to investigate whether the claim was well-founded. The Supreme Court also remarked the object of Article 30 (1), is not to allow a bogey to be raised by pretenders, but to give the minorities a sense of security and a feeling of confidence. These institutions must be institutions of the minorities in truth, and in reality and not mere masked phantoms." It is reported that the Court also stressed the need
for a real and positive index to enable an institution to be identified as an institution educational, for the minorities. Suggestions to include the following inter alia is such a positive index:

(1) No religious minority educational institution may deny admission to any applicant for admission from the minority community into any class group or course of studies available in the institution, subject only to the condition that the applicant is eligible for the admission according to the rules.

(2) Every religious minority educational institution shall provide for direct religious instruction in an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of their religious values.

(3) Every religious minority educational institution shall have at least a 50% strength from the religious community. Those that do not have it may be allowed three years to fulfill the condition.

(4) Every religious minority educational institution shall strive for a progressive increase of admission (at least 10%) year after year from the religious minority, as an index of its being established and managed for the benefit of the minority.

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With regard to Catholic educational institutions in Manipur, all the suggestions save for the third are realised. Catholic educational institutions here to, would like to have a 50% strength of its students drawn from its own religious minority, but it is not practically possible as there only 35,000 Catholics in the state, inclusive of children and adults, whereas the missionaries have established 29 schools in the state. And there is no reason for Catholic families resident in other states of India to migrate to Manipur and increase the Catholic population. So although the Catholic schools aim at a 10% increase of Catholic students in their schools in Manipur, it is not possible to reach that target, although they make every effort to do so. And when guaranteeing protection to minority institutions it is perhaps appropriate to recall the American President Franklin Roosevelt's emphasis on the value to all nations of the four basic freedoms; freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

India became independent in 1947 and three years after, the Constituent Assembly gave her a constitution based on the lofty principles of democracy and secularism. But it it an irony of fate that even after 38 years of independence, India is faced with the problem of developing a true national identity. In fact, at
present the emergence of separatist tendencies based on religion, region, state, caste, language etc. in many parts of the country, seems to be eroding the very concept of Indian unity. This ugly trend has not only lead to violent agitations in India, but poses a threat to the security of the country.

However the approach of the Catholic schools in the state has been to emphasise the common Indian nationality of all students, and extra-curricular activities include learning and appreciating the culture of other Indian states, all being citizens of one country.

India needs integrity to nurture and enrich its age old traditions. The legacy of the long cultural traditions and solidarity built through successive socio-religious and historical movements, had acted as buffers against any fissiparous activities. Indian tolerance and absorption of many racial groups and cultures without losing its own identity, served as a model for integration. Thus the traditional social system served as a means of bringing about the political stability of India. But the very fabric of that system has now entered a process of fragmentation.

there are subversive forces at work cutting at the core of Indian nationalism. The large numbers of army and police personnel in the state are trying to curtail and do away with underground movements which are anti-national in character. The Catholic educational institutions are trying to teach students to the proud to be Indians, and are focussing on India's rich spiritual and cultural heritage and her achievements in various spheres.

The National Integration Council has defined national integration as "a psychological and educational process, involving the development of a feeling of unity, solidarity and cohesion in the hearts of the people, a sense of common citizenship and a feeling of loyalty to the nation." The Council, the Union and State Governments, and different officials and non-official agencies in the country for a long time have been suggesting, ways and means of controlling and countering the evils of communalism, casteism, regionalism and linguistic. But they have not succeeded in evolving national emotional integration. Today, no part of the Indian sub-continent is free from tension or unrest. There is also tension in the North-East part of India.¹

¹ S.K. Barpujari, op.cit., p.2.
The most important aspect of this region (North East India) is its multi-racial and multi-lingual character. It is also situated in a sensitive area, almost surrounded by foreign countries, not very friendly with India. Historically speaking, from very early times, people belonging to different ethnic groups entered North East India, situated as it were at the gateway of South East Asia and China.\footnote{1}

People in Manipur as in other parts of North-East India live a hard life, in comparative isolation from other states in India, although the gap is being narrowed with modern means of transport and communication. The British created a wedge between the plain and hill people in Manipur through their administrative policy and by forbidding the Christian missionaries from propagating the Gospel among the Meiteis, and confining their evangelising activities to the hill people or the tribal population of the state.

Even after the attainment of Independence, the North-East India region remains a region of "neglected potentialities and unrealised opportunities." It has got a wide range of problems. In the context of other

\footnote{1. Ibid.}
regions of the country, the region is not balanced politically, socially, culturally, leaving aside economic development. Instead of deliberately playing up the differences between communities in respect of religion, region, language and culture, the strong sense of unity which India possessed should be highlighted. In this context, in their endeavours to further the cause of education in Manipur, the Catholic schools have to put greater stress on regional history and literature, for regional history and national history are part of one whole. "National history without regional history," said Prof. H.L. Gupta, President of North-East India History Association, "will be truncated and incomplete, and regional history in isolation, will be with out moorings." The Cheitharol Kumbaba and Wingthourol of Manipur as also oral literature of different hill tribes are replete with stories of political, social, economic and cultural relations between people of different states? It has however to be borne in mind that the syllabus and text books are prescribed by the state govt. for all recognised schools.

3. Ibid.
In order to develop a feeling of unity among the youth, education must be geared towards creating a sense of national consciousness. The Catholic missionaries are striving to implant this consciousness into the students in their formative years, when they are more receptive to ideas and principles. The missionaries educate all without bias, and so are well fitted for this task, especially necessary in a border state like Manipur. The school curriculum does include 'study of the different parts and peoples of our country, learning about children in other states, study of the great men of our nation. They (the children) will come to know that 'unity in diversity' is possible.' Today when national integration is an urgent priority, it would be beneficial if the missionaries too possessed an intimate knowledge of the history and literature of Manipur, for they are part and parcel of the state having made it their home. Educational policies and practices are largely determined by the nation's need and requirements, and an urgent requirement is the development of national consciousness among youth, especially in the sensitive areas of North East India.

1. Catholic Missionary, Imphal.
The problem with education in this country is very easily put. Too serious a business to be left to governments alone, education is a mess, because there is not enough money, teachers do not teach, children often do not learn, most schools and colleges don't really equip the young for productive work, and education by and large doesn't prepare the next generation for modern, civilised, responsible living.

But in the Catholic schools the missionaries teach, and ensure that all teachers employed in their institutions teach, as also that the students study. The Principals make a check of the work progress each week, and exercise an overall supervision over the teaching in all classes. However with the Government's increasing insistence on vocationalisation (for example, the government's desire to shift a growing stream of school leavers, 'almost a quarter by 1995'), the Catholic schools who have pioneered modern methods of education in the state, have to make their educational pattern more productive and specialised. A start has already been made by the introduction of computer science and a wide application of S.U.P.W. (socially useful, productive work).

Children in Manipur usually possess talent in music and dance. Along with art and literature, this is utilised as a means of fostering national consciousness, and it all forms part of the curriculum of the Catholic schools.

Separatist tendencies exist in Manipur as also in many other states of India. Political solutions for separatist tendencies may appear desirable, but cannot be long-lasting. Such solutions are symptomatic cures, but not the cures for the underlying malady. The cancerous growth of separatism has to be gradually burnt or exercised. Education can perform this surgery in a painless manner. Catholic missionaries are endeavouring although in a limited way, to emphasise the organic unity of the country, the mutual economic, social, cultural interdependence of various parts of the country, the importance of harmonious co-existence of various states, and the possible dangers of discord, through debates, workshops etc., and by allowing no distinctions to be made between students in schools.

Some sections of the population feel alienated. But India is a country composed of states, differing radically from one another in many ways. To promote the ideal of 'unity in diversity,' the missionaries

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admit children of all castes and creeds, and treat them uniformly. This teaches children of different communities to live, work and play together harmoniously. The student teams for different sports, etc. visit also other states to participate in national or inter-state competitions in a spirit of competitive friendliness. No state in India should claim superiority over the other, and education provides the breadth of vision and clarity of thinking, which discriminates truth from falsehood. All states are interdependent, and existence of any part in isolation, cannot serve their interests. Education would provide this awareness. The Constitution of India provides equality before law to every citizen. But equality before law is only a theoretical equality. We have in our country so much disparity between various classes. For example if one reads a novel which tells of the tragic death of a dowry victim, one is moved, but the next moment he may think about the dowry he may receive on the occasion of his son's marriage! Education is directed towards teaching that each individual has some contribution to make to state and society, thus contributing both to national development and transformation of society for the better.

1. Ibid, pp.8-10.
Catholic schools would have no objection to becoming part of a national pattern of uniform education all over the country. But even in a single state the pattern of education varies from school to school, not to speak of education in states far apart from one another. The idea of uniform pattern of education has been proposed time and time again, but it yet has to take root in the soil and clime of the country. Catholic missionaries in Manipur as else where in India, are trying to adapt the best of Western civilisation with our own indigenous form of education, and Manipuri is taught in their schools, and active encouragement is given to indigenous forms of dance, drama and song.

As Annie Besant had remarked of Indian Education; 'It must hold up Indian ideals of devotion, wisdom, and morality, and must be permeated by India's religious spirit. National education must live in an atmosphere of proud and glorious patriotism, and this atmosphere must be kept sweet, fresh and bracing by the study of Indian literature, Indian history, Indian triumphs in science, in art, in politics, in war, in colonisation, in manufactures, in trade and commerce.'

1. S. Nurullah and J.P. Nalk, History of Education in India.
While making a comparison of North East India to a reference in the Book of Genesis, (Chapter-II), Fr. Linus Nellie compared the diversity of tongues spoken at the Tower of Babel, which gave rise to confusion confounded, to the condition of Manipur, which has only recently been awakened to the benefits of education, and stressed the need for a joint identity of the different, composite and ethnic elements of the population of Manipur. Catholic missionaries provide something to hope for, a vision without which an individual cannot be alive.

Catholic missionaries have often been pioneers in educational programmes and practices which have raised the standard of education not only in Catholic institutions, but have stimulated others to raise theirs, and gradually have induced Government itself to introduce reform. Through association with the Christian spirit, many traditionalist attitudes that impeded modernisation have been undermined. Because of the influence of that same spirit, communities traditionally alienated from one another have lived in peace and harmony under the missionaries, and have carried forth that spirit of toleration and mutual understanding into public life. Last, but not least of all, through the extra-curricular programmes,

Particularly those that foster social service, students in Catholic institutions have deepened their character, broadened their perspectives, and gone forth with a deeper sense of responsibility towards their country and their people.

There are many who maintain that because 'Christianity is a foreign faith,' it cannot be interested in national development, and because it is a proselytising faith, its interests are actually opposed to national development. "Your colleges deserve no credit for maintaining the highest standard and getting the best results. After all, you get the best students, and the merit is theirs, not yours. But in the process of training them, you unfit them for our country. The atmosphere of your colleges is that of an affluent society, where the rich are at home, and the poor lifted to a level they cannot afterwards maintain, where the brightest students acquire a dissatisfaction with conditions in India and yearn for countries, where your atmosphere is native."

Similar apprehensions are more discreetly and objectively expressed in the Kothari Commission Report. Explaining why government will have to assume greater responsibility for education at all levels, the report says; 'Social and national integration is crucial to the creation

of a strong united country. To make the social and psychological revolution possible, it is necessary to deal with the short term problems facing the country in this field. These express themselves, as the widening gulf between the rich and the poor, the privileged and the unprivileged, the urban and the rural, the educated and the uneducated. They are reflected in the general weakening of the feeling of national solidarity under increasing impact of local, regional, linguistic, religious and other sectional, and parochial loyalties. Effective steps must be taken to bridge these dangerous gulfs and strengthen national consciousness and unity.

Implied in the accusations against Catholics is that while they have made substantial contributions to national development, these contributions were often accidental to their main purpose, in no way part of conscious design. Certainly there is no denying the fact that the inspiration behind Christian schools and colleges in what were called 'mission areas' were one or other of the following: the training of native clergy, the education of the Christian native population, which was generally

drawn from the more backward classes; both economically and socially of the community; the creation of an atmosphere where the nascent faith of the Christian converts could be nurtured to solidity and maturity, and the endowment of certain advantages for these native Christians, to offset the many disadvantages under which they labored, by reason of their paucity in numbers and inferiority of social status.

So, long as the rulers of India were Christians from another land, these objectives of Christian education were both attractive and successful. And because of the dedication of Christian effort, to say nothing of the resources that sustained it, the Christian schools and colleges were universally acknowledged to be the best, in the country, and soon all considerations of caste and race forgotten, 'The sons of Mohamadan gentlemen, and of Hindu assistants to European judges, 'clamoured for admission to our institutions.' There is no doubt that Catholic schools and colleges were more cosmopolitan than those around them. Christians were few in number, and too poor to pay even relatively modest fees of those days. The missionaries needed the more affluent non-Christians to maintain
standards. Because of the missionaries reputation, the best and the brightest came to Christian institutes, and their achievements raised the missionary reputation still higher.

The first task is to prove to the country that Christians are no less committed to the country's aspirations than their fellow-countrymen of other religious persuasions. This can be no easy task. Today, says Robert Caudio, in his study of the Indian University, "the Indian Christian takes the position that his religion is not at all foreign but native and germane; as true as he may feel this to be, the Christian educator is still a bit uneasy, not quite sure of his own position. He is on the defensive, very careful of being tolerant in all that he does. He honestly wants to prove that he is more interested in good education, than in the specific Christian inspiration. The Christian educator is sincerely liberal in conviction, eager to include good students and well-endowed teachers, Christians or not. There is little religious favoritism in admissions or appointments. Chapel and scripture classes are voluntary. The Christian education is uneasily balanced between the conviction that a religious foundation is essential to education, and the desire to continue to provide

an outstanding education in purely secular terms, in the terms of a churning, changing present. In his educational posture, the desire is stronger than the conviction! The Christian mission however, do not command the personnel or the capital for professional and technical institutes, especially in Manipur. There is something wistfully attractive about the kind of education that Cardinal Newman looked for in his ideal university; "the education which gives man a clear, conscious view of his own opinion and judgements, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect which is sophistical, and to discard which is irrelevant, it prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. He defined the role of the church in education; "The Church does not cherish talent, genius or knowledge for their own sake, but for the sake of her children, with a view to their religious welfare, and their religious influence and usefulness, with the object of training them to fulfill their respective posts in life better, and of making them more intelligent, capable, active members, of society." What Catholic

1. Robert Caudino, Indian University, p. 97.
missionaries do is to take cognizance of the setting, the milieu, and forge a relationship between the goals of the people they minister to, and the goals they have set themselves. Educational planning cannot be made in a vacuum. It must relate to goals of national development. National development does not consist merely in economic progress, but means the increasing possibility for all, of living a fully human life on the physical (material), cultural, spiritual levels. It also implies the growing ability of a nation as a whole to take its rightful place in the international field, economically, politically, culturally, i.e. to function with a proper degree of autonomy and prestige, the blueprint for this is all there in the Constitution of India. The greatest need of modern India today, and a sine qua non of national development, is leadership given by men of complete moral integrity and great moral courage. The greatest enemies to national development at present are two which are closely inter-connected; communalism in all its forms, and corruption, the solution of which, in the interests of national development, depends in very large measure, on the type of moral education which students receive. Catholic missionaries have national service and the welfare of the whole country before them as one of the important aims of their efforts in the
field of higher education. God loves the world, and the missionaries (Catholic) love, work for, and aim at the development and welfare of all, and not merely their own community. A Christian feels a deep solidarity with all of humanity. He engages himself in healing the wounds of men and building up the human community in this world. He seeks to resist the forces of division and hatred in himself and in society. He regards his professional life, his work in organisation, commerce, production and science, if done according to God's will, as a true contribution to the building up of the city of men. For this reason he collaborates with all men of good will in making the earth an abode of peace. He is willing to be well-informed about what is going on in the world, he takes seriously his social and political responsibility in his country.

In a democratic society there is only one instrument by which this change can be brought about, and that is education. It is a difficult instrument, whose effective use, requires strength of will, dedicated work and sacrifice. Christian educators resolutely develop the students power of personal thought. In every country of the world, national consciousness, and social and national integration

of the population are an important end result of good education. In India, the need for these civic virtues is crucial, owing to the extraordinary diversity of the population, and the divisions which cleave the nation along lines of religion, caste, race, language. Catholic institutions in Manipur feel a responsibility to reach out to the community and do something for its mental and cultural uplift.

National Development aims among other things at creating an economy of plenty, i.e. a larger way of life, and a wider variety of choices. It is therefore of the highest importance that the citizens should be able to make the right type of choices. A combination of ignorance and goodness is generally futile, but knowledge joined to a lack of spiritual and moral values is dangerous. The weakening of social, spiritual and moral values among young people is leading to a veritable crisis, and everywhere it is being realised that education in science, technology and the humanities must be seasoned with the insights and values associated with ethics and religion. The healthy development of any modern society depends on the right understanding of man's nature and the inviolable dignity of the human person. This essentially Christian concept is the foundation of the Indian Constitution.

India desperately needs unity. Catholic missionaries have the gift of understanding unity-in-diversity of the whole human race, as God's children, and in their schools they have the practical advantage of being able to demonstrate in daily living, that differences of colour, race, religion, set no boundaries to their love and service of each other. Every Christian establishment has at heart the moral and spiritual welfare of all its students. Catholic missionaries in Manipur continue and intensify their efforts in this direction, so that they can impart not only first class modern education, but also help to mould and form the spiritual character of the young. Their contribution to national development is in consequence out of all proportion to their small numbers.

to spread education throughout the length and breadth of Manipur. If one studies the list of schools affixed to Chapter 3, it will be apparent that although there are many schools in the capital city of Imphal, which has the greatest density of population, there are Catholic schools all over the state, in areas where prior to the missionaries arrival, there were no schools at all, sometimes. The channel of education is the highway to society. North-East India has recently been awakened to education. And every poor family too, is pouring its coims into the coffers of a school. When the need and desire for Catholic education is continuing to grow in the state, its relevance to the complex and multi-centred reality of modern cities, and its response to the challenge of an increasingly diversified society must be borne in mind. "Often lost and disoriented, contemporary man seeks communion. Having frequently seen his social context shattered or dehumanised, he yearns for an experience of authentic encounter and true communion. And Catholic education teaches the importance of a family home, fraternal and warmly receptive, creates a community animated by the spirit of unity."  

But how is community born? You know how, a community is not a reality that one can simply organise. Community means communion. There must be an effort on the part of all, contribution is vital. This is the concept that Catholic education in Manipur projects, so that those who benefit from it, become in a true sense builders of their own communities. But a community to be alive must have a firm belief in God, the source of life, for commitment to the community cannot be founded only on a passing feeling of enthusiasm or purely human motives. Catholic educationists teach Charity which must make itself visible, permeate and order all aspects of the community's life. "Our communities are called to be an anticipation of the civilisation of love. And this means that they must attain social structures conceived according to the demands of brotherhood, a way of relating shaped by the spirit of peace and mutual self-giving, a solidarity that heals the social body, a community spiritual life capable of joining, love of God with love of neighbour. These aspects are necessary for the maturity of the community and for the efficiency of its witness."

1. Pope John Paul, op. cit.
2. Ibid.
The Bishops (Catholic), at the Synod of Bishops felt for the struggle of millions to overcome everything which condemns them to remain on the margin of life: famine, chronic disease, illiteracy, poverty, injustices in international relations, and especially in commercial exchanges, situations of economic and cultural neocolonialism, sometimes as cruel as the old political colonialism. The Encyclical insisted on the Church's duty to proclaim the liberty of millions of human beings, the duty of assisting the birth of liberation, of giving witness to it, of ensuring that it is complete. This is not foreign to evangelisation. At the same time it found it necessary to observe that some, even generous Christians are frequently tempted to reduce the Church's mission to the dimension of a simply, temporal project. Many are asking the question, should one first deal with the requirements of human development, and only then go on to evangelise?¹

While experiencing the difficulties of their people and striving to formulate a theology which is appropriate to their situation, many missionaries and church leaders are perhaps also saying something about what they see as the inadequacy of the social

¹ Archbishop D. Ryan, The World Church Taking Shape, Catholicus, vol.73, May-June 1986, No.5 & 6, pp.7-8.
teaching of the Church. Or if it is not inadequate, at least it is not sufficiently known, and still less widely put into practice. This teaching is directed towards developing good relationships and influencing the organisation of society and the distribution of wealth, in such a way as to promote the common good of all. In approaching the subject of inculturation, it is sometimes said that, the first object of concern should be to know the culture of the nation or the people of it.

Illiteracy contributes greatly to perpetuating conditions where millions remain condemned on the margin of life. Literacy brings a ray of hope and vision and provides the opportunity to better one's condition in life, by utilising the knowledge gained through education, constructively and practically. In order to assist in the birth of liberation, to give witness to it and make it complete. Catholic missionaries of Manipur are giving the utmost priority to raising the level of literacy in the state through their educational policy. They are dealing in a constructive way, with the requirements of human development, through their contribution to literacy they influence the organisation of society, in that many reasons formerly classed as backward because of illiteracy.

1. Ibid.
can no longer be classed as such, and are able to take their rightful place in society, and contribute in some measure to its improvement and betterment. And the missionaries do inculturate themselves and know the people of Manipur.

And Catholic Missionary educationists here in manipur, while raising the level of literacy in the state, as a social concept, teach the true meaning of generosity, explicitly defined by Mother Theresa; "If you really want to be carrier's of God's love, make sure the love begins at home. Find out who is in need. Do you know the poor of your place? The poor are not only those who hunger for bread. There is a terrible hunger for love, a terrible loneliness that we see in the big cities. Nakedness is not only for a piece of cloth, nakedness is also want of human dignity, respect. Homelessness is not only for a house made of brick, but being rejected, being unwanted, being unloved.'

The bedrock of any community or society is its educated section. It is they who will shape the destiny of the people of North East India by their decisions and by their activities in various professions and areas of public life, such as law, medicine, government, politics, civil services, press, journalism,
creative arts, media of communication etc. And this is why Catholic Mission Education in Manipur plays a vital role.

**Education as an instrument of the State's reconstruction in relation to economic development**

There are no technical or vocational schools run by Catholic missionaries in Manipur. However to correlate education with economic development in the state, useful practical knowledge in basic arts and crafts is given through the teaching of S.U.P.W. in all Catholic schools, in the newly introduced subject of computer science, and in the practical training given to the boarding inmates in the Catholic school, who learn gardening, poultry care, fishery etc. as also how to keep their institutions neat and clean. The practical knowledge gained is put into practice by the students in their homes and in their villages, and their examples provide inspiration and incentive to their neighbours to follow suit. For Catholic missionaries here, it is not sufficient to discover the mechanisms by which people

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are exploited, but also the cultural values that allow them to remain exploited, as well as those values that motivate them to struggle for their own. This is achieved by solidarity with the people, by a combination of vision and co-operative work.

The potential of the youth who form a large part of the population of the state is tapped and directed into constructive, productive channels. Youth require trust and confidence in themselves. They are exposed to many temptations caused by unemployment, permissiveness, drug addiction etc. The missionaries are trying to channel the potential of their students into constructive channels, to attain employment in government or private organisations and institutions. The Catholic schools give employment to many of their past pupils in teaching jobs in their various institutions, and other vacant positions in the schools.

Catholic mission education does not however act as an instrument of the state's reconstruction directly. But by providing their students with all round education, the missionaries make the students realise that once having completed their education they must gain employment, and contribute each his share to state and society. And as part of the
experience necessary to develop the requisite value system, students should be involved at the school level, in meaningful service to the local community.

An educated community would lead in turn to the formation of healthy families. "The strength and stability of any society depends on good families, a healthy middle class. By middle class, I mean those who have achieved economic self-sufficiency and cultural adequacy. Unfortunately we cannot say that we have produced such a middle class with the help of our educational institutions. I fully understand that there are no easy ways to do so. But we can gradually work towards this goal through the proper organisation of our educational institutions, and the wise deployment of our resources. Our future leaders both of the Church and the civil society will emerge from them."¹

**Relation of Education to the social, Political, Economic and Cultural Background of Manipur**

In his address to the 64th Annual Conference of the Association of Heads of Anglo Indian Schools, Archbishop Henry D' Souza said: "What direction should be given to our schools to keep them at the service of the community for which they were founded. We sometimes hear that our

1. S. Karotemprel, op.cit.
schools are not serving the community for which they have been founded. Should the community change to adapt itself to the school, or should the school change to adapt itself to the community?

"Our schools are striving to give quality education. This is necessary. The problem is to determine the criteria for judging quality in education. Academic proficiency, discipline, character formation, skills, attitudes—these are some of the elements which make up quality education. Due to the interdependence of today's society, there cannot be large gaps between peoples and peoples. This will only lead to tension. Among the gifted, who get opportunity of studying in institutions of excellence, there is no evidence of the expected commitment to social responsibility. Quality education would demand that our students would so develop their personality, that they would be endowed with basic values of respect for others and concern for the disprivileged. It would foster community values, rather than individualism, co-operation rather than competition; responsible freedom with integrity and truthfulness. There is a feeling that the value systems of our elite schools are wrong—perhaps infected by the universal malaise of our society.

"For Christian schools, this is indeed a worthwhile challenged. There must be a conscious effort to effect
a value system in the schools. This effort must be as vigorous as that made for achieving academic excellence. In the face of the widespread erosion of values, it should be the special contribution of the Christian schools to recall spiritual realities. There would be need for continuous monitoring of the value systems in admissions, examinations, rewards and activities. Any motivation contrary to a healthy and morally sound value system, should be removed, both from pupils as from guardians. I believe that is a pressing challenge to our schools today. Due to social and economic pressures, students from the minority communities are not able to cope with the demands of our schools. It would be desirable to accompany such pupils with care and concern.

Our schools could become important pace-setters for education in our country, besides giving Christian witness to the love of Jesus for children. People of other faiths, Hindus and Muslims, readily send their children to Christian schools, attracted by the high standards of education and strict discipline for which they are known. Our schools should give powerful witness to eternal truths and deep moral values, so badly needed in our country today."

In Manipur, the Catholic missionaries emphasise these eternal truths and deep moral values, and there is no doubt that the Catholic schools in the state are all filled to overflowing, because parents and guardians want their children to receive a sound education, in a school, where they are assured of academic proficiency as also a sound character formation. This education enables them to grow into responsible members of society and they find this education in the Catholic schools.

Manipur is situated at the border of India and has been a gateway for foreign invaders in the past, and for the entry of secessionist elements in the present. It only became an integral part of India after India became independent, it had been an independent kingdom, ruled over by a line of Maharajas, upto the period of British Paramountcy (1891-1947). It is therefore situated in a very sensitive area, surrounded as it is by a foreign country, with easy access into the state. This is why Catholic mission education tries to instill the idea of 'unity in diversity' into the students, to make them conscious of their joint national identity, and teaches them the importance of being loyal and patriotic. These ideas are implanted into their consciousness in their formative years and so remain with them throughout life. Some youth under the strain of unemployment, dissatisfaction with their home circumstances, etc. might become unpatriotic and join underground activities, but the
majority certainly remain loyal and true to the values that have been inculcated into them.

Manipur is a developing state, and it has changed perceptibly in the last three decades. Much of this change has been brought about by increased and enhanced education, and much of this increased and enhanced education has been brought about by the Catholic missionaries. But there is much more that the missionaries can contribute to relate education to the economic growth and development of the state.

Culturally there is a co-relation between Catholic Mission Education and the cultural background of Manipur. All Catholic schools encourage and develop the children's talent in the field of culture, especially Manipuri music, dance and drama, and all school programmes are a colourful medley of folk dances and other items characteristic of the culture of Manipur. But the missionaries who travel all over the state could perhaps also compile a compendium of their impressions of different aspects of culture, and collection of folk-lore and thus make a material contribution to the cultural history of Manipur.

There has been no attempt made to wall in only the favored majority within the precincts of the Catholic educational institutions, and admission is
either on a first come, first-served basis, or decided by means of a lottery, as at the nursery level most children rare equally well in the interview, if it is held at all. The missionaries realise the need for rapid expansion so that Manipur can grow and develop, and this is the reason why they have concentrated their efforts largely in education, as it is necessary for all, and of great relevance to Manipur, which needs to attain self sufficiency in many spheres.

Since it is necessary to educate the people, especially in rural areas about healthy living habits, the Catholic association of NECHA (North-Eastern Community Health Association), held a training programme for health workers from all over North-East India. The programme was held at Ravalico College Hostel, Imphal, from the 9th to the 17th October 1986, organised by Fr. K.C. George and conducted by Fr. Thomas George and team from Hyderabad. The course was concluded at the Bishop's house, Imphal, at which the Bishop and the Honourable Minister of Health, and the Director of Health Services, Manipur, were the Chief Speakers. The Lamphel Catholic Youth Fellowship organised a free medical health camp at Dimdaijang village on the 1st November, 1986. A total number of 184 patients were examined and treated.

on the occasion. Medicines were dispensed free of cost to the patients. The missionaries have opened a number of dispensaries in villages in the interior. These are important to the people who live far away from the towns or cannot afford the fare to travel and be treated in a government hospital. Besides, the hospitals are already so crowded, it is not possible to treat all patients who come for medical aid. The Salesian Fathers are also soon opening a remedial centre for drug addicts close to Imphal. In these ways, Catholic Mission, Education is making a positive response through the education it imparts and through its programme of social service, to relate to the social, political, economic and cultural background of Manipur.