

resources of a particular country. And as most developing countries have oral and not written traditions, they start with an amazing advantage in using these oral techniques.

In a sense we have only put the problem back one step, because if we are not careful we will find ourselves in a situation where the developing countries obtain tapes, television films and radio programmes which have been programmed just as the books were written, by men with Western concepts trying to force people to see the world as the West sees it. The West has for so long believed that all its ideas must be right that it finds it very difficult to understand the very simple anthropological insight that a culture is valid when it works. Ruth Benedict, the anthropologist, called a good society a synergetic society and she argued that the difference between a synergetic, creative, positive society and a negative society was that in the synergetic society what people wished to do and what the culture required them to do was the same. If this is true it is possible for us to imagine many types of culture which could be effective. We have then moved beyond the old anthropological issue that there was no way to evaluate whether a culture is successful or not. In Benedict's theorizing, a culture is successful when people are able to do what seems important to them, and a culture is unsuccessful when people are forced to continue to do things which they do not wish to do.

Now, if we take this model one begins to look at the whole development process very differently because the critical issue is not whether gross national product goes up or not, but whether an index of social welfare goes up or not, and that index is a much more complicated thing to construct than the index of gross national product.

In the West these days we are becoming concerned about how much we are paying to get our annual increases in gross national product. What we have in pollution, both of the air and of the water, high crime rates, frustration of all sorts and the general feeling that despite the fact that we may be getting richer in money terms we are not getting richer in

other terms. It would be somewhat ridiculous if you choose to take a route which has led to a condition that satisfies very few people, certainly in the United States and increasingly in the other developed countries. I am not suggesting that an increase in the gross national product, an increase in production, an increase in standards of living, is not crucial for you or for other countries in your position. But if it is achieved at the cost of certain things which are more fundamental, you may not have gained anything. In addition, we must recognize that the way to get increases in welfare, gross national product and income may be extremely different from those which have existed up to the present time.

Most development economists are very negative about the extended family, for example, claiming that the result of the extended family is that people do not work because they are afraid that their relatives may descend upon them. We have therefore been extremely busy breaking down the extended family, because people wouldn't work efficiently because whenever they got enough money they would go home to their extended family. But if you say: 'Well, we want to give people a meaningful life', it may well be that one says we must somehow find a way to operate with the extended family. This is not going to be as difficult as it sounds, because one of the few things that is perfectly clear about every developing country is that "full employment" is an impossibility. The only reason we ever reached full employment in the countries which are now developed is because technology required using all the people who were coming into the cities. Today, on the other hand, technology is so advanced that even if industrialisation takes place it absorbs very few workers. Yet we are still trying to get full employment instead of accepting that today our only hope is to break the links between income and employment, to recognise that we must treat the problems of production and the problems of distribution of resources as separate problems.

The first thing to do is to find out how to increase production, then we must worry about how to ensure that the fruits of that production are fairly distributed. The economic theory we use to prove that people get what they deserve is based on Western assumptions and even those assumptions are less than useful. This is a very interesting example of self-hypnosis. Our income-distribution theories are based on the assumption that all firms are small, there are no labour unions, there is perfect movement of information and there is no government intervention in the economy. Economics is a branch of politics and that is true internally and internationally.

There is no way that our current problems can be solved so long as you accept the definition of growth and development which the West gives you. However, if you recognise what your strengths and your weaknesses are at this point in time, it is quite possible that the developing countries, that the scarcity regions, may be more successful in

