

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN KAWANGWARE

One of the things I know about myself is that I am, constitutionally, a pessimist. If somebody says that there are going to be twenty at a meeting, I say that really means ten and in my heart of hearts I know that it means there will be seven. That is sort of where my stance in life begins. These last six or seven months in Kawangware have been shocking months for me because my pessimism has been irrelevant. On December 20th, in Maliwada, we constructed the village square. I was convinced that we might have a hundred people, although we had told everybody to come and bring their shovel or whatever. By 7:30 in the morning, there were 200 people down there waiting to go to work, and during the day well over 500 people participated in creating the village square. It has been like that every day since in Kawangware. We have only to put the word out on the grapevine and people are there. My pessimism, as I said, has proven to be irrelevant to the decision of the community of Kawangware to work and to build itself in and through the Human Development Project.

I want to begin by pointing out the four key categories in our work in Kawangware this first year. The first of these, of course, is the whole area of symbol. I have come to appreciate much more deeply than ever before, that everything that is done is symbol: digging a ditch, cleaning a street, painting a wall, building a square, putting up our community symbol, putting the grid on everything we touch. Everything is a symbol. Everything is a sign of a new day. When you live in Kawangware day after day you don't notice that the village is cleaner. There seems to be just as much paper and garbage all over. But a few months ago I was in a meeting with the Town Clerk of the Nairobi City Council and when we came out of that meeting, Her Worship, the Mayor, Miss Margaret Kenyatta, was coming down the hall. Miss Margaret is always surrounded by people and moves very fast. But she stopped and said, "I know you. You are working in Kawangware." I said, "Yes, your Worship. My name is James Campbell, I met you last November." Then she said, "I have been out there several times." I managed to keep my mouth shut but interiorly a whole chasm had opened up. "It looks very good out there. I like your village square. It is clean out there now. What are you doing?" She went on to say that she has been out there two or three times, just driving around. We never knew it. Nobody in the community knew it. And she saw the difference. Everything is a symbol. Everything you touch in Social Demonstration must become a symbol both for the immediate community and for the larger community.

Another thing we have held before us is what we have called Impactment. You come out of a consult in a Social Demonstration with a great deal of confidence and trust having been given to you by the community. The task in the first weeks and months, and indeed the first year, if not always, is to confirm that confidence; is to give it flesh in terms of the actualization of the project. We have worked constantly to build on that kind of confidence and trust and enable the community to decide to move with us. I think the clue that that is happening is wherever they begin to come and

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Say, "We want you to do this." In one of our states the people are finishing a building that they have been working on for several years for a nursery school. They came to us and asked us if we could help get it finished. They had the materials, they had everything and asked not only could we help them get it finished, but would we take it over and operate it? Would we help them to staff it? Would we provide the curriculum? This coming and saying, "This is what we want. We want you to work with us to do this," is a continuation of the confidence that is generated by the confidence.

The third area that we have been deeply concerned about is what we call momentum. Momentum is doing all of the program at the same time, immediately, as soon as you begin the project. Now, momentum is not a chant's auxiliary staff. The auxiliary staff may be frantic but that is not momentum. Momentum has to do with spirit. It is a light in the eyes, if you like, not only of the community but of the auxiliary staff itself. I wondered what was meant by the statement that Social Demonstrations were fun. We have a lot of fun in Kawangware. Momentum has not only to do with doing all the programs but with the spirit that is generated in the lives of the people in the community. It has to do with a new kind of liveliness, a new kind of spring in the step. It has to do with a new kind of laughter and a new kind of seriousness. That is momentum. It is just not a kind of frantic doing, but it is the awakening, or the eliciting, of a new life in what you and I would call the spirit.

Finally, we have been concerned that whatever we do be massive. I mean this to apply to all of our projects whether there are 250 people or 20,000, as we have in Kawangware. You have to decide how it is you are going to impact: reach, involve directly every family of the community. This month we are approaching 2000 people a week participating in the program. This is about 10% of our population. At the end of this year we intend to have 8,000 participating which is about 40% of our population. We should be dealing directly with every family in that community. This is crucial to the actualization of any of these projects whether there are 250, 500, 2000 or 20,000. You have to decide how it is that you are going to reach and touch every family of that community.

Now the programs. That is where our focus has been. It is how we organize ourselves in terms of assignment. It is how we have built our battleplans, established our tactical systems and worked. The programs are symbols in the community. We have placed around the community the grid with a circle around it and outside the circle, it says: Agriculture, Commerce, Services, Training, Well-being. We have a chant we do at the end of our meetings where we all stand up and clap our hands and we chant three times: "Agriculture, Commerce, Services, Training, Well-being." Those five programs are symbols in the community.

In Agriculture: I think you have all heard of Kawangware French beans for the World. We have exported to London 500 kilos of those at about \$1.25 per kilo to the producer. The market for them is unlimited. We are

working with the Demonstration Urban Farm and also a piece of land we call the Cooperative Farm. We have just finished our first six month agricultural apprenticeship training program, where we have ten men who have been through both practical and theoretical training in agriculture. We are in the process of building a dam on the Nairobi river which is the northern upper boundary of Kawangware. The dam is twenty feet wide at the base, 30 feet high, almost 100 feet long and is the first of a series of six. It is being almost completely in-kind. We have had to find the engineers and the surveyors and are going to use the rock that is about five feet underground on-site. We are out to in-kind the sand and concrete. This will give us the way to provide massive irrigation to the whole community which is the key in agriculture.

Commerce: The businessmen have organized the Kawangware Business Association. They meet regularly, the society is registered; they have begun their training classes in management and bookkeeping. They have, out of their own pockets paid for the materials and for a sign that has their name, the grid, and the words, "Member, Kawangware Business Association." For some reason they decided to paint it blue. That has been a great sign. There are about 75 businessmen who have initiated that.

The handicrafts are moving well. For several months there have been women sitting around on one street corner making baskets and being taught how to improve their quality. We have begun getting export orders as well as people calling us from the local tourist shops saying, "I hear you produce this or that. I would like to place an order for 300. How soon can you deliver?" We have discovered that another center, after a year of work in handicrafts, has 100 women who are each making 400 to 450 shillings, or \$50-60 a month. We think we can do much better than that.

One of the exciting things for us is that we are working with the Ministry of Cooperative Development of the Kenya government to set up a multi-purpose development cooperative which will enable us to hold under one legal and financial umbrella all of the industrial work we do, all of the agricultural work, and KITCO. Even service organizations can be funded out of the proceeds of the business and industrial work. Our preschool can be supplemented by the cooperative out of profits generated by these other companies at the decision of the members. This is the first one of its kind in Kenya and it is seen by the government as their experiment in this type of cooperative.

Exciting things have happened in Commerce. We finally found somebody who knew how to take the mud of Kawangware and mix a little bit of cement with it and make mud cement blocks. We may not be able to drain all of the water out of Kawangware and get rid of all the mud, but we are going to mix concrete with it and cover the place with cement.

Another of the exciting things that happened a few months ago relative to commerce was that we went to the Esso company in Nairobi and asked them for \$10,000. Their response was that that was twice their charitable budget

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per year for Kenya, but they would give us a petrol station and help us run it for three years, at a loss if necessary, in order to get it established and going. They would train community people to manage it. So we have a whole petrol station on its way. They are going to install the tanks, pumps, and all of these things for us.

Services: Our focus in this program arena has been the Public Work Corps. There are 40 men between the ages of 20 and 30 who make up the PWC. When we announced that we were going to employ a small work force we had over 1000 applications in one eight hour period. We made the mistake of saying we were going to do it on the front steps of the house and it was a great day. Each man receives \$1.20 per day which we call a bursary in order to avoid social security, income tax, etc. It is a scholarship, not a salary. They work five days a week. The exciting thing there is that we have developed opportunities for them to move out into positions in the industrial community of Nairobi. Managers tell us that they would sooner take a man who has had work experience, knows what it means to show up on time, do a full days work, and work with a group of men than they would take somebody who has had four years of technical education. They all have their own training programs relative to the technical part because they are required to do that by the government. And what we are working to set up now is not individual job placement, but team job placement. These men are in teams of five with a team leader and we are writing a corporate team Curricula Vitae and are going out and selling a team to a factory. We are going to supply the support to keep them in training programs, work on their English and make sure they are getting on the bus in time. That will enable us to begin rotating numbers of people through that program. They are the ones who have done the drainage program that was laid out last November in the Consult. We now have what we call the Great Ditch of Kawangware. We have woven together all the little ditches along the roads, pathways, and through people's yards and found a large hole down at one end that they all come into. Out of the other end of this hole is the Great Ditch which winds across the land for almost two miles to empty into the Nairobi River. The PWC does anything that needs doing that will benefit the community.

Training: We have shoved hard on training because it has cost us no money and it is a radically felt need of the community. We have over 20 different kinds of training programs. We have what we call a Youth Corps. There are about four or five times as many kids who are not in any kind of educational structures as those who are. A couple of weeks ago, they were lined up and marched down the street and we counted them. We don't count them very often because it keeps getting bigger. Anyway, there are about 750, between the ages of two and thirteen, with 300 of pre-school age and the rest spread across the elementary school age years. They are being taught not only a great deal of Imaginal Education, but also a full basic educational curriculum. And the program is entirely done by community people. There are 38 teacher volunteers who work 8 to 5 every day, five

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supply doctors for that clinic. And then there is the back up necessary for all of this. We are experiencing the other side of the gift of money. That is, we haven't had any in Kawangware, this past year. We have spent, as of June about \$7,700 in program actualization. About \$18,000 to \$20,000 has come to us in-kind. What you have to remember about in-kind is that you can get anything. And you have to be ingenious when you operate on in-kind. We are in the process of building a series of children's playgrounds in each stake with a mini-park beside them. We wanted swings and teeter-totters. Nobody in Kenya builds swings or teeter-totters. So what we have done is go to steel companies, pipe companies and engineering companies and have persuaded them to give us the parts--pipes, swing seats, etc. Then we went to another series of engineering companies and metal fabrication companies and said "Now, we have all these parts and if you put it together for us, do the welding and supply the brackets and fittings, lo and behold, we will have a swing set." It worked. So the swing sets are on their way.

We spend a half day a week doing in-kind. I went out to get a swing set. I walked into this company and looked around and saw a huge warehouse full of kitchen stoves. It turned out that this engineering company assembled Magic Chef stoves. We went upstairs to see the manager and he said, "Yes, I will give to you. What do you want a stove or a refrigerator?" So I came home that day with no swings but a stove. Nobody in Kawangware uses a stove but I have a certain existential involvement in figuring this out and we will find a way to use that stove in some program. You have to use what you can get but you have also got to go after what you need. We had an exciting year.

The other kind of support that we have been setting up is advisory panels, out of Schumacher. June 8, there was a meeting with about 26 people, businessmen, government officials---people like the General Manager of IBM and the man in charge of community development in the Ministry of Housing and Social Services. They are now divided into an economic, a services and a social advisory panel. They are meeting again next month and are going with us on specific tasks and they are enabling the project. This has been exciting for us and for them. Several of the men called up and said, "I want to bring my wife." That night when we had them decide which panels they were going to be on, all of the wives signed up and we are in the process of using them as well. The Guardian dynamic has got to be there and is crucial in actualization the first year. You need more than one person who can plant french beans and nine people who know how to teach seminars. I am a seminar man myself, although I am moving quickly in the opposite direction. We have to have people who can advise us and work with us in various fields. And don't just trust the first man you ask. Ask four of them. If four men who haven't consulted with each other tell you the same things, then you begin to believe them. Using experts is not just going out and saying "What should be done about this?" You have to know what you are after and what you want to do with them.

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days a week. One of our staff goes down every morning, and meets with the two women who are in charge to go over any problems in curriculum for the day. Then those two women meet with the nine head teachers (we have nine classrooms for our 750), go over the curriculum and deal with any problems, and then the nine head teachers meet with the three or four assistant teachers who are in each classroom with them.

There are several adult literacy programs, tutoring programs for the children who are in school, a family community training which is for the mothers and deals with health, nutrition, basic education, reading, and writing--and family planning. We have been give seven sewing machines and there are 75 women who come every week and practice on those sewing machines. They are self-supporting. The first thing they made were blue knickers which they took and sold in the market. They used the money plus the shilling or two a week they put in themselves not only to buy their own needles and thread, but to buy materials. They are now on their second round of dressmaking. They are generating the income and supporting that whole area. We have a typing class of 35 young women a week. The first few weeks of that class we had no typewriters so they practiced on sheets of paper with keyboards drawn on them. Then we scrounged up an old Smith-Corona and one of these little flat portables that you have to blow up, really a portable, and they are using them. IBM has given us four selectric typewriters and we will soon be able to make a shift there.

Well-being: We have emphasized the community organization. Again, you have got to have this kind of thing in the community for the sake of actualizing the project. The constant input and the constant sense in the whole community that they not only can participate in a program that they get something out of but also are helping to provide the direction for where it is moving has to be there. We meet on Tuesday evenings. We have our stake meeting one Tuesday evening and the next Tuesday evening we have Guild meetings, which are the five program areas. There are economic and social commissions which meet every six weeks which are the planning bodies and then, on the 13th week of the quarter, there is the community council, which would be like the community congress that you and I are familiar with in Fifth City.

Part of Well-being is health. We have done six weeks of battle planning with the City Council Clinic workers and are now set up to the point where there is a referral service with and through them to the national hospital. We can put our people through that system and get reports back so we are able to follow-up on them, much as the Fifth City Clinic was able to do with Cook County. One of the Lion's Clubs in Nairobi just a few weeks ago agreed to set-up, equip and maintain a health clinic in Kawangware. The Lion's Club is mostly made up of medical people and we are talking to them about how they might, on some sort of rotating basis,