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A Newsletter of
The Institute of
Cultural Affairs

serving the West/Southwest USA

Initiatives

CONCERNED WITH THE HUMAN FACTOR IN WORLD DEVELOPMENT

Educators share ideas, hopes in think tanks

"It's a lonely job being an innovator," said Bernard Kirsch, of the Institute for Quality Futures in Los Angeles, "so it's a tremendous support to know you're not out there alone."

Kirsch and dozens of other educators shared their ideas, experiences and hopes during educational "think tanks" initiated and facilitated by The Institute of Cultural Affairs.

The events were held in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle and Houston in April and May. Their purpose was to build a consensus on new directions for education among an emerging network of concerned educators.

Increasingly, our notions of "education," "teaching," and "learning" are being challenged by people both inside and outside of the educational establishment.

What is effective learning? What is successful teaching? How can either one take place within educational systems? If we find present educational assumptions and practices unsatisfactory, what kind of change are we aiming for, and how do we get there?

Structured to promote interaction among participants as they address these questions, ICA's think tanks open the way to collaborative planning and networking: ideas developed in the stimulating atmosphere of the conference mature into action when they have the support and encouragement of others. Thus participants may go on to experience firsthand the rewards of self-empowerment that they seek to provide for their students.

Conference participants are drawn from a variety of backgrounds, but have a common ground in their shared vision of learning as a lifelong process, involving body and spirit as well as mind.

Here is what some of the participants said:

"I am counting on this opportunity to lay down a lasting practical and economic foundation for change in the educational delivery system."

- H. Warren Dohemann
Sierra University
Santa Monica, Ca.

"We need to teach/learn a global perspective which means evolution of the mind, heart, body, spirit. Multiple perspectives,



interdependence, conflict resolution through experienced-based learning are some of the elements."

- Janet Boggia-Puthoff
Palo Alto, CA

"A focus for new directions is building a cultural appreciation for the uniqueness of each person and celebration of tribal traditions."

- Andy Mecca, California
Health Research Foundation

"Children need to experience a human day that deals with their personal issues as well as their classwork."

- Georgia Porter Richey
Pearl School, Houston

ICA sees the think tanks as a first step toward creating a critical mass of people from all walks of life who are interested in "re-imagining" education, so that it may move beyond its current limited and fragmented forms and become a vehicle for personal and societal development.

The process of transformation in education needs to take place from the bottom up -- that is, it must reflect the ethics and values of the society at large, while offering a more inclusive sense of humanity and an expanded understanding of one's place in the world.

New directions proposed by the think tanks were input into the New Horizons for Learning (NHFL) Conference held in Tacoma, Washington in June. The NHFL annual conference is one of the most innovative and popular educational conferences in the U.S.

The big results, though, will be the ones that happen at home. "There are a lot of visionaries around," Kirsch said, "but not many that act on it." The Los Angeles and Seattle groups are planning to meet again in September and the San Francisco group next April, "to see where we're going, to see if we're really doing it."



Program Highlights

"Buy Food For All Whenever You Shop"

That's the slogan of a year old non-profit organization in Southern California which makes it easy for shoppers to donate money for hunger programs at the same time that they are purchasing food for themselves and their family members. **Food For All** has so far raised \$70,000 which was then distributed to established hunger relief and development agencies.

ICA has played a pivotal role in this enterprise. Led by ICA facilitators, Hunger Think Tanks have enabled six area committees to reflect on their awareness of hungry people in their immediate vicinity and to propose potential solutions. Participants then join task forces to help promote the plan, or to advise on funds distribution.

The generous amounts of money collected through small donations indicate that many people feel the impact of hungry people and will contribute regularly to relieve hunger if they are given a simple and appropriate means.

The innovative means for donating money is strikingly simple. At participating supermarkets, the shopper finds a display rack near the checkout stand. The rack contains color coded cards in three denominations: 50 cents, \$1 and \$5. Each card has a removable stub. As a shopper you choose a card and place it with your groceries. During the checkout process, the amount on the card is conveniently added to your grocery bill. The stub from the card, combined with your grocery receipt, becomes your record of a tax deductible contribution.

At regular intervals the grocers forward the money to **Food for All**. Participating markets are donating display space and handling costs. By this means, the food industry is coming to play an important role in feeding the hungry. **Food For All**, a non-profit public benefit corporation, has been endorsed by the Southern California Grocers Association.

Food For All relies on committees of local citizens who've been

through the 'think tank' process described above to decide which existing local hunger relief agencies should receive the money.

Currently, after administrative costs (limited to 10%), 75% of funds are distributed to fight hunger locally and 25% are contributed to meeting needs in other parts of the world. The international projects chosen for support are ones designed to develop indigenous resources for increasing food production.



The simple idea for collecting and distributing money was conceived by a couple with a reputation for community involvement. Former ICA staff members Milan and Linda Hamilton of Redlands, California, had noticed that their utility bills enabled them to contribute support for utilities for needy people. From this clue, they created a method for people to use the food purchasing process as a context for donating food for the hungry.

The plan is now in operation in a dozen independent stores and in 152 Lucky Stores in California. Retailers in 20 states have expressed interest in the program.

Events in Los Angeles

A talk on "The Principles of Kabbalah and Practical Methods of Enhancing Everyday Life," by Avraham Greenbaum, visiting professor from Jerusalem, will be hosted by the ICA on Sunday, August 23, at 7 pm. A donation is requested.

"Nine Gates," an introduction to a series of Initiatory Weekends based on ancient traditions, organized by Dr. Gay Luce, will be hosted Saturday, September 12, from 6:00 to 8:30 pm. This event is highly participatory, offering great potential for enhancing your life and vision.

Both events will be held at 1049 Magnolia, Los Angeles.

PAX Special!

PAX, a computer program designed for churches, will be offered to friends of the ICA on a one-time only basis. PAX was created by Computer Paradigm, a self-support venture of ICA.

The program has three parts: membership, leadership, and financial management. The leadership module has several of ICA's methods written into it step-by-step. This sophisticated system which has sold for \$1296 is being offered for a radically reduced price of \$500. Support is available through a subscription program.

Write Computer Paradigm, 1049 Magnolia Ave., Los Angeles, 90006 or phone (213) 381-7156 for more information.

What More Can We Ask For?

This intriguing question is the title of a book written by ICA staff member, Donna Marie West, about her experiences in a village project in Guatemala. Filled with anecdotes and a vivid portrayal of the local scene, this paperback should be of interest to those who are attracted to other cultures and interested in the problems of community development.

Available from our offices for \$7.95 plus \$1 shipping. (Add 6.5% sales tax if you are a resident of California.)

The Uniqueness of the ICA

The following article was written recently by an ICA team in Chicago. Since the focus of our work and the pattern of our life shift occasionally to anticipate changes in society, we thought you might appreciate this re-telling of our story.

It is difficult for an organization like the ICA to stand within its own life and work and evaluate its particular uniqueness. Whereas any of the qualities listed below can be found in other organizations, the uniqueness of the ICA lies in the combination and inclusiveness of these dynamics. The following categories describe the qualities of the ICA and its approach:

Self-supporting staff

The fulltime staff is totally self-supporting. Money is earned through either paid program consultancies or outside employment. The staff together decides the level of stipends and required living expenses. The integrity of the staff and its work is therefore controlled neither by the benevolent dollar nor by grants for program. All contributions go toward program implementation. Self-sufficiency is the operating mode of the ICA and the mode advocated for the communities, organizations and companies with whom the ICA works.

World-wide staff makeup

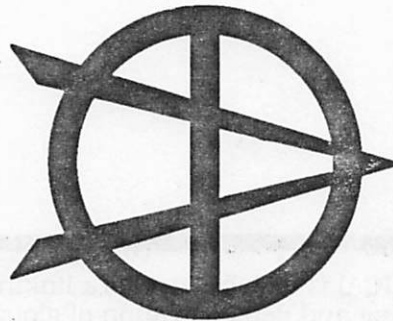
The greatest resource of the ICA is its international residential staff of 700 which comes from forty-two nations and is drawn from varied religious, secular, educational, and professional backgrounds. Its "in residence" approach intensifies creativity, stimulates intellectual investigation and enables continuous training. This allows the staff to operate as a laboratory on many social and individual development issues.

Mobile staff team

The fulltime staff understand themselves to be available for assignment to any part of the globe. For this reason, teams comprising unique combinations of skills and styles can be readily created to accomplish any given task.

Transformational methods

Throughout its thirty years the ICA had developed a wide range of group processes and methods



"A fine wind is blowing the new direction of time . . . like a fine, an exquisite chisel, a wedgeblade inserted."

D. H. Lawrence

applicable to education, strategy development, personal and social perspectives, training and implementation. These methods have been employed with all sectors of society and are continually being updated and expanded.

Experiment in unified and decentralized decision making

The staff chooses to operate an experiment in the demonstration of a polity system. Although in some sixty locations worldwide, the organization has neither a "central office" nor a bureaucratic structure. As a single global body it corporately articulates common visions, strategies and approaches and then allows each geographical location to forge the

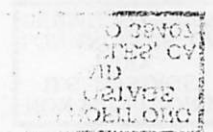
ways in which these common elements will be put into practical application.

Broad global network

Thousands of people have received training through the ICA. Forty thousand events and programs have put the ICA in touch with people in more than fifty nations. It has been suggested that the ICA has touched over ten million people. From these associations there has developed a broadly based network of concerned persons including leadership from governments, UN agencies, businesses, the voluntary sector, development agencies, local organizations and village communities. This network makes it possible to hold global thinktanks on important concerns. A broad spectrum of persons have spent from two weeks to two years working with the ICA, affording an invaluable critique and direction to its work.

Covenanted in a human quest

The slogan of the ICA, 'concerned with the human factor in world development,' forms the basis for all of its work. The staff is continually concerned to raise the underlying questions that effect both individual and social change. This intent is based on the premise that human beings not only must be given the opportunity to participate but must also be equipped to engage effectively in the responsibility of their birthright which includes the development of self-esteem and self-sufficiency. The corporate culture of the community of fulltime staff provides a framework in which study, research, and reflection can take place.



Nigeria Health Care Project

The ICA in West Africa has recently been requested by the Nigerian Ministry of Health to create a Primary Health Care Demonstration project. The government is offering 500,000 Naira as seed money for the three year project, which will take place throughout the N'dokwa government unit of 300,000 people, located 400 km. east of Lagos, Nigeria.

The program is designed to augment the system of hospital based services already in place in Nigeria, by creating village based institutions which will carry on after government and private funding has expired.

The plan begins with community health forums in 43 villages. The forums will produce proposals for a three year working plan for each village. This will include models to upgrade water supplies, latrine construction and other sanitation, improved systems for crop storage and village cleanliness, all aimed at preventative health care measures.

Experienced African staff from Kenya and the Ivory Coast will be working with the Nigerians. Part of their task is initiating the "Pharmacy Box" program and training village volunteers in a ten day course in basics to function as primary health care workers in the villages.

In addition to knowing the proper use of basic medications of the pharmacy box, these workers are trained in oral rehydration for diarrhea, child spacing education, wound cleansing, immunization schedules, the use of vitamin A to prevent blindness, and basic nutrition. They will also undertake an extensive infant nutrition program.

ICA has found that the system of village health volunteers continues in most villages for years in those projects which are undertaken as self-help programs.

The ICA

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) is a global network linking 18 major centers and over 50 offices in research, training and demonstration of global responsibility in the local community and workplace. Within the multitude of programs the ICA is doing, there is a common thread -- the desire to release the creativity of people that allows them to shape their own destiny.

INITIATIVES is a quarterly publication of the ICA serving the western/southwestern United States. Contributions of \$35 or more entitle you to membership and are needed to support the pro-grams and projects of the ICA. Send your tax-deductible contribution to the Institute office nearest you.

1049 So. Magnolia
Los Angeles, CA 90006
(213) 380-0725

1504 25th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 323-2100

1741 Gaylord
Denver, CO 80206
(303) 333-1984

ICAF Chicago
Institute of Cultural Affairs
4752 N. Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60642

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
1049 So. Magnolia Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90006



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