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COSMO PIETERSE:
(NARRATOR)

This week adult education. A few weeks ago the foundation of the International Extension College was announced in London, and today we talk to its Director about their plans, but first to Zambia.

Zambia University is famous for, amongst other things, the speed in which their Extra-Mural Department under Professor Bown, not only became operational but also achieved some remarkable successes in taking all types of learning to Zambia's adult population.

In this programme some two years or so ago Professor Bown discussed the importance of adult education for development, the importance of those who pay taxes for education benefitting themselves from that education, the importance of people who are beyond full-time school age learning new skills. Well in order to do this of course you need as many well trained adult educators as you can get. And Professor Bown talked then too about their plans for the University to run a full time course to help fill this need. That course is now a reality - and it's just ending its first experimental year, so in Lusaka John Barnor has been talking to Dr. Beryl Steele, who has been much concerned with the setting up of the course. First Dr. Steele explained exactly how the course operates.

DR. STEELE:

Well, the certificate course is a full-time one year course, and its syllabus contains four full courses, as we call them, in other words, courses that last the entire academic year. Two of these courses the students take along-side under-graduates, along-side first year degree students. These are an introduction to Sociology and a half course on the structure of the Zambian economy, this is as it were, the basic background we like the students to get as adult educators about the sociology and economy of Zambia. And then the Adult Education Courses consist of two full courses, one is the principles and history of adult education, and the other adult teaching and the administration of adult education. There's another half-course in adult education, this is concentrating on language problems, because as you know, there are a great many problems of language in Zambia, and we thought it was important that anyone who was going to be involved in teaching or administering in adult education/^{should} at least have done some thinking about some of these problems. And then at the end of these courses, which are all held in the university, the students are required to do a field study. During this period at the end of the courses they'll go to various parts of Zambia, be attached to some agency engaged in some form of adult education, and they'll be asked to enquire into a specific problem which that agency will suggest itself. We were very keen that the field study shouldn't be vague and general as I'm afraid field study is apt to be in a subject like this, so we are really going to try and tie it down to some specific problem they'll be required to investigate.

COSMO PIETERSE:

In the first experimental year only ten students were taken. All were sponsored by Government Departments or employers like the Mines. These sponsors, therefore, made an initial selection.

COSMO PIETERSE:
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Along with academic merit a further criterion in the choice of students was that agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture Extension Colleges or the Ministry of Education Night Schools, should all be represented, and then also, very important - job merit: the applicant's devotion to, or extreme interest in adult education. Students with a difference or not? John Barnor then asked Dr. Steele how the Certificate of Adult Education students differed from the university's other students.

DR STEELE:

Of course a lot of students at the university are on government bursaries and to that extent are sponsored and others are on bursaries from firms, and so on, but I think that these students are a bit different from the others because they are coming from a job, and going back to that job, with the full support of the employers who let them off for a year to do it. Applications are now coming in for the 1971 course and the number of sponsors is obviously increasing because we have some people such as the co-operative department putting up people this year when they didn't last year.

JOHN BARNOR:

In an earlier programme of University Report broadcast two years ago, Professor Bown talking about adult education in Zambia, made a point that there was a woeful shortage of middle-range staff as far as adult education in Zambia was concerned. How is the certificate course in adult education at the University of Zambia geared towards meeting the specific needs of Zambia?

DR. STEELE:

This is a very big question I think, but also a very interesting one. Perhaps I should say what the aims of this course are, we laid down five main aims for having the course at all, and I think these are closely linked to different needs of Zambia. The first aim was: that we wanted to increase students' understanding

DR STEELE:
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of the role of adult education in development, because a lot of people may be teaching adults but haven't really thought out, or seen connections, about how it exactly helps development. And secondly we thought one important aim must always be that the students must always get their knowledge broadened of the possibilities of planning adult education programmes. We hope that the course will help them to see the connections between different forms of adult education better, and also, through having thought about these subjects a lot they might have more imaginative ideas about how to go about their jobs. And then again we hope they'll all have had plenty of practice and a very wide range of techniques, and I don't mean just techniques for teaching adults, but also techniques of administration, we're going to have a workshop in administrative techniques for example. Then another aim which ^{is} a bit unlike the others, but I think equally important, is that we felt they must during this course get a sense of belonging to a profession, because very frequently people are adult educators and don't realise it. And finally, and certainly not least, we're very keen that this course should strengthen the general academic background of the students because we feel this is very important too. One of the big problems about middle-range staff, as you call them, is that they have lacked sufficient general academic background to be able to do their jobs with maximum competence.

COSMO PIETERSE:

In Lusaka that was Dr. Beryl Steele talking to John Barnor. And so in three short years Zambia's Adult Education Certificate grew from a gleam in the eye, to a toddler, to an adolescent. And similarly spectacular has been the development, in the United Kingdom, of the National Extension College set up in 1963 as a sort of experimental fore-runner for Britain's 'Open University'. Since then they have gained a great deal of experience and expertise in three-way teaching -

COSMO PIETERSE:
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that is by correspondence, by radio or television, and by face to face tuition. Now the National Extension College is about to become an International Resource Centre. It hopes to make the experience of Britain's National Extension College and Open University available to the third world. Therefore, also, it hopes to establish headquarters somewhere convenient in Africa.

Dr. Michael Young is the Director of the International Extension College, having been Chairman of the National Extension College. When producer Gwyneth Henderson talked to Michael Young for University Report, she first asked him how the new project fits in with 'extension' education already existing in Africa - What needs will the International Extension College be meeting?

MICHAEL YOUNG:

Well, I think our first job is to try and give such support as we can to existing institutions in Africa, inside and outside universities, which are interested either in correspondence education, in radio education and in face to face education allied with correspondence and radio, and as you know there are quite a number of institutions which have done pioneering work already of this kind. We also hope that we might be able to help set up new correspondence colleges and the like in countries which might not have them provided they wish to draw on our advice be the particular needs that will be a priority will vary according to the country, what will be appropriate in one country will not necessarily be appropriate in another. The kind of thing though we think, is that in quite a few countries the priority needs will be the needs of teachers, practising teachers already in primary and secondary schools. There will also be needs, we think, on the part of government officials and officials of voluntary bodies and political parties who need up-grading, and then of course, there are the students

MICHAEL YOUNG:
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themselves who have failed, for one reason or another, to get into secondary schools, and who may already be taking correspondence courses, for instance with commercial colleges, and we hope that we may be able to help people in various countries to satisfy these needs rather more fully and efficiently than they are at the moment.

GWYNETH HENDERSON: But would these be for academic subjects, or for vocational subjects, or agricultural, or whatever which is where I would have thought the most need is?

MICHAEL YOUNG: Yes, well we think that certainly we'll need to do something about the straight academic courses, and so we will be concerned with courses at the junior certificate, at the O'level and the A'level standard. But we regard as the main challenge for this whole enterprise, the need to develop much more practical courses which are related to agriculture, horticulture and commerce. We want to try and show that three way teaching can actually be effective in helping people to grow more in agriculture, and there hasn't been a great deal of this done anywhere yet in the world and so one of the main efforts of the first five years of our existence will be to try to devise new practical courses, but making use particularly of correspondence and radio education in combination and always bringing in study circles and alike wherever they can be organised.

COSMO PIETERSE: But what about the students - and what can the International Extension College really contribute to Africa?

MICHAEL YOUNG: I should stress, I think, at this point, that the International Extension College will not have any students of its own, we're not seeking to enrol students in Africa or anywhere else in our own college.

MICHAEL YOUNG:
(CONT'D.)

Our own college is more in the nature of a technical assistance service or an educational resource centre. What we hope we'll be able to do is to make available to governments and universities in Africa, the course and other materials that have already been developed in Britain and in Sweden and in the Soviet Union and Australia, New Zealand and the United States and so on, so that when they are devising their own courses they can have the best of what has been produced so far anywhere in the world in front of them. They obviously won't take it over wholesale, they'll only take over such bits of it as they think are appropriate to their own local circumstances. Devising their own courses they'll have to have mainly in mind the needs of people, that is the students in their own countries, they'll have to put their own local examples and so on into each course. But we think that there is a case for a, I suppose we can call ourselves a 'Clearing House' of information about this which is still a very new form of education, and mainly by means of personal contact, travelling around Africa and seeing the people who are actually doing the job, or contemplating the job, and telling them what's being done elsewhere, and bringing the materials with us that we will just be able to add a little to the resources they have available when they are trying to develop their own indigenous programmes.

GWYNETH HENDERSON: But in a sense you are, in fact, going to be turning yourselves into another group of ex-patriate instant experts travelling round and giving advice or whatever. I mean, after all, there are experiments really going on in Africa on three way teaching which are firmly based and rooted there.

MICHAEL YOUNG: Yes, well, I don't think we are exactly 'instant experts' because we have been working in this field for seven years. But in spite of that I agree that we couldn't yet claim the name of expert and certainly

MICHAEL YOUNG:
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we're not experts in an African context. We may, however, over the next five years be able to develop though a certain amount of experience if not expertise, that can be shared with people in Africa. We will hope to be able to interest quite a number of African people in the whole venture and certainly have African people on the staff of the International Extension College. It will by no means just be an ex-patriate institution, and, of course, inside a particular country the work will be done by universities, colleges, units of ministries of education, and so on. Our function is merely to back up from outside, as far as this can be useful, the work that is being done inside individual countries.

COSMO PIETERSE:

Dr. Michael Young, Director of the International Extension College. And in a years time when the college has had deeper and more thorough consultations with Institutions and Governments in Africa and when its drawn up its first five year plan, we'll be going back to them and reporting again. That, I'm afraid, is all from University Report for this week. Until next time then it's goodbye from me, Cosmo Pieterse.
