

FORTY-EIGHTH REPORT
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1980-81)

(SEVENTH LOK SABHA)

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND
CULTURE**

(Department of Education)

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Presented in Lok Sabha on 30 April, 1981
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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

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CORRENDAS TO FORTY-EIGHTH REPORT OF
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (SEVENTH
LOK SABHA).

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*P A R T - II

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20-2-1981 (FN)	
21-2-1981 (FN)	
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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1980-81)

Shri Chandrajit Yadav—*Chairman*

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1. Shri H. G. Paranjpe—*Joint Secretary*
2. Shri D. C. Pande—*Chief Financial Committee Officer*
3. Shri K. C. Rastogi—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

INTRODUCTION

1. I, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Forty-Eighth Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Seventh Lok Sabha) on paragraph 32 of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil) on the National Council of Educational Research and Training relating to the Ministry of Education and Culture (Department of Education).

2. The Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil) was laid on the Table of the House on 26 March, 1980. The Public Accounts Committee examined the audit paragraph at their sittings held on 20 and 21 February, 1981. The Committee considered and finalised this Report at their sitting held on 23 April, 1981. The Minutes of the sittings of the Committee form Part II* of the Report.

3. The Committee have expressed the view that it would be preferable to have an eminent educationist as the head of the NCERT as this would be in tune with its autonomous character. The Committee have recommended that a Task Force consisting of the representatives of the Ministry of Education, the NCERT and some eminent educationists should be set up to consider the urgent problem of its restructuring. The Committee have also stressed that the NCERT must intensify its efforts to bring out quality text books at reasonable price.

4. A Statement containing the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee is appended to the Report (Appendix). For facility of reference, these have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

5. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in the examination of the subject by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

6. The Committee would also like to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Department of Education) and Planning Commission for the cooperation extended by them in giving information to the Committee.

CHANDRAJIT YADAV,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

NEW DELHI;
April 26, 1981

Vaisakha 6, 1903 (S).

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CHAPTER I

ORGANISATIONAL SET UP AND FUNCTIONS OF THE NCERT

(a) *Objectives*

1.1. The first phase in the national programme for the improvement of school education began with the establishment of a few institutions by the Government of India in 1954. After a review of their work and of the progress of the entire programme of school improvement, it was decided that these institutions should be brought together under an autonomous organisation. Thus, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) came into being on 1 September, 1961 and took over the functions of these institutions.

1.2. The objectives of the NCERT, as indicated in its Memorandum of Association, are to assist and advise the Ministry of Education in implementing policies and major programmes in the field of education, particularly school education. For the realisation of these objectives, the Council undertakes the following programmes and activities:

- (a) Conducting, aiding, promoting and coordinating research in all branches of education;
- (b) Organising pre-service and in-service training mainly at an advanced level;
- (c) Organising extension services for institutions engaged in educational research, training of teachers and providing extension service to schools;
- (d) Developing and experimenting with improved educational techniques and practices;
- (e) Collecting, compiling, processing and disseminating educational information;
- (f) Assisting States and State-level institutions in developing and implementing programmes for qualitative improvement of school education;
- (g) Collaboration with international organisations like the UNICEF, the UNESCO, etc. and with national level institutions of other countries in developing educational personnel of other countries;

- (h) Serving as the Secretariat of the National Development Group of the Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID).

(b) *Role and functions*

1.3. By virtue of its objectives and its unique position, the NCERT plays an important role in the nation's educational development. By developing and trying out suitable educational materials and practices at the school level, by organising programmes of teacher education and by conducting research on educational problems, the Council makes the effective implementation of educational programmes possible. Over the years, the Council has come to acquire a status of its own and has developed expertise in various areas of education. As part of its activity, the Council has undertaken revision of curricula and preparation of textbook to suit the needs of the new pattern of school education. It has also undertaken experimental programmes of non-formal education so that sufficient experience becomes available for adopting non-formal education as a major strategy for universalisation of elementary education. It has assisted the States in conducting surveys and developing curricular and instructional materials and for the programme of vocationalisation of school education.

1.4. Research and innovations in the field of education are actively encouraged and supported by the Council through its Educational Research and Innovations Committee (ERIC). Financial assistance is given to individuals and institutions for undertaking research relevant to educational needs. Besides supporting the research effort of others, the Council itself conducts significant research in the different areas of education. The Council also operates a scheme of research fellowships to attract and promote research talent. The NCERT produces quality textbooks, low-cost science kits for elementary and secondary schools, laboratory equipment and teaching aids. These programmes have acquired renewed vigour in the context of the new curriculum.

1.5. The training and extension activities, through which the NCERT helps the practising teachers to adopt innovative practices, are important functions of the Council. In order to ensure a multiplier effect, the Council has adopted the strategy of training key persons at the State level.

1.6. The dissemination of educational information is a major function of the Council. As part of this activity it publishes four journals covering different content areas and catering to different levels of readers. The Indian Educational Review covers research and is meant primarily for educationists and research workers. The 'Journal of Indian Education' disseminates information about innovation attempts and approaches that are meaningful for teachers and teacher educators. 'School Science' deals with science and science teaching at the school level and is intended mainly for

science teachers and students. 'The Primary Teacher' is published both in Hindi and English and caters specifically to the needs of primary teachers and teachers educators.

1.7. Besides directly taking up programmes for the improvement of school education, the Council also assists professional educational organisations in the country which undertake work related to school education. The council has been operating this scheme of financial assistance for the past few years.

1.8. The NCERT is also one of the implementing agencies for the bilateral cultural exchange programmes entered into by the Government of India with the governments of other countries. It thus maintains a two-way flow of educational ideas with other countries by sending delegations there to study specific educational problems relevant to our requirements and by arranging training and study for foreign nationals from developing nations. This is also done under the sponsorship of the UNESCO and other international agencies. The Council deposes its officers to various international seminars/conferences and receives foreign visitors.

(c) *Administrative set-up*

1.9. In order to achieve its objectives effectively and fulfil its role, the NCERT has, broadly speaking five major constituents:

- (i) The Secretariat which is responsible for coordination and for providing administrative support;
- (ii) The National Institute of Education (at Delhi) which comprises different Departments/Units which concern themselves with the development of academic programmes of importance for the improvement of school education;
- (iii) The four Regional College of Education (at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Mysore) which develop and offer innovative teacher education programmes;
- (iv) The Centre for Educational Technology (at Delhi) which has the status of a Regional College of Education and is concerned with distant-learning systems and other educational technology programmes;
- (v) The Field Advisers' Offices (at State Headquarters) which maintain an effective liaison with the State Departments of Education and State-level institutions.

1.10. The apex body is the Council with the Union Education Minister as its President, the Union Minister of State for Education as its Vice-President, and the Ministers of Education from the States/Union Territories, the

Chairman of the U.G.C., the Secretary of the Ministry of Education, four Vice-Chancellors of Universities drawn from each region and eminent teachers and educationists as its members.

1.11. The NCERT is administered by a smaller governing body called the Executive Committee. The Committee operates through a number of Standing Committees and through the Programme Advisory Committee.

1.12. The Programme Advisory Committee is an academic body which oversees all the programmes of the Council, lays down broad guidelines and decides the priorities of the various programmes of the Council. These programmes are processed by a number of other committees and boards in the light of the guidelines laid down by the Programme Advisory Committee. The first-level consideration and approval of programmes is by the Departmental Advisory Board (DAB) of each Department/Unit of the NIE. The Academic Committee/Coordination Committee/Educational Research and Innovations Committee, makes a second-level examination of proposals, particularly from the point of view of ensuring inter-departmental coordination. The research programmes are examined by the Educational Research and Innovations Committee (ERIC); it approves research proposals received for financial assistance from outside as well as from within the Council. While the Academic Committee under the Chairmanship of the Dean (Academic), considers the programmes of the academic departments of the NIE, the Coordination Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Dean (Coordination), considers the programmes of the service/production departments of the NIE.

1.13. There is also a Coordination Committee under the Chairmanship of Dean (Academic) for the Regional Colleges of Education. In order to ensure closer links with universities and the State Governments of the region served, each Regional College of Education has a Management Committee; the representatives of the State Government concerned are members of this Committee and the Chairman is the Vice-Chancellor of the university to which the College is affiliated.

1.14. An Advisory Board under the Chairmanship of the Dean (Coordination) advises the Council on the programmes of the Field Advisers' Offices. This Board includes representatives of the State Governments. At the State level, an Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of the Education Department of the State concerned advises the Field Adviser.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES

(a) Sixth Plan Objectives

2.1. The Committee desired to know whether Government had laid down any priorities in the field of education during the Sixth Plan. The Secretary of the Ministry, replied:

"The priorities have been prescribed for the universalisation of primary education and the adult education. In order to achieve this, an alternative strategy and structure will have to be developed at the State level. We are also able to maintain quality in certain categories of higher learning."

2.2. The Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education further elaborated:

"In the 6th Plan period, two priorities have been prescribed for universalisation of elementary education. The Working Group gave 10 years' perspective and suggested that in the 7th Plan period, we should concentrate on middle education, to achieve universalisation in the 6th Plan period. We seek to achieve 95 per cent enrolment in the primary classes. We will move to achieve 100 per cent during the next plan period. At the middle level, we seek to achieve 50 per cent enrolment now and the other 50 per cent in the next five year plan. Today there are 50 million children outside the school in the age group of 6 to 14. We seek to bring the all of them into the school during the 6th Plan period."

2.3. Explaining the approach of the Planning Commission to the problem of Illiteracy, the Advisor (Education), Planning Commission stated during evidence :

"The Ministry of Education and the Planning Commission have been very much seized of this problem. We have been presuming that the entire educational system should work on two legs, one is that of elementary education and the other is of adult literacy. Unless these two legs are very strong and hard and capable of mobility the whole structure of education cannot stand. That has been our view for a long time. For some time there was allergy towards the whole problem

of adult literacy. But gradually it was found that it was a mistaken impression. Education of the age group of 15 to 35 is a programme which was taken up four or five years ago in a vigorous manner. In the Adult Education programme it was planned to bring about 60 million adult literates in the age group of 15 to 35 in some sort of formal or informal education in a period of five years. The other plan was universalisation of elementary education. This was the earlier plan, when for the first time in the history of planning it was aimed to provide 60 per cent of total education outlay on elementary and adult education. This kind of trend, with thrust on these two sectors, is continuing in the Sixth Plan also. As early as possible, it would be desirable to have cent per cent enrolment in classes I—VIII. As our friends have already clarified, there is no constraint of resources for worthwhile programme and as you know, money alone does not make the mare go. But the only constraint is the non-availability of management. We find that in some areas, for instance, in educationally backward States, in the country the progress is not good. These are responsible for bringing the all India averages down to the minimum. These are the States like, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal etc. We think we should be able to devise a new system of non-formal education which is non-segmental where children can join at any stage depending on their convenience and time. We have also to consider whether it is at all necessary for young children to go to school for all the six to seven hours a day. At such a young age say 6 to 8 years, shorter duration will be alright. Of course, in case of non-formal education, it all depends on the children. The programme has to be worked out according to their local environment and the condition of the parents. So, for this functional and non-formal education programme, for the first time, we are trying to provide more money. The Planning Commission persuaded the Education Ministry about three years back to evolve a special scheme for assistance to educationally backward States to pursue this kind of programme which has not been so far exploited by the academic world because in addition to the usual difficulties, the educationally backward States are coming up with problems peculiar in their particular areas. In the experimental programme, which was a pilot programme in Madhya Pradesh, success was possible because of the short duration. We wanted to change the curriculum of non-formal education programme in relation to the actual needs of the children and of the areas. We hope that the Ministry of Education and the State Governments in the

course of the next two or three years will be able to do this in respect of education, both formal and non-formal and that distinct projects will emerge for both the kinds of education namely elementary and adult education. That is the approach of the Planning Commission to which we are according the highest priority."

(b) *Plan allocations for elementary education and adult literacy*

2.4. Explaining the Sixth Plan strategy to accelerate universalisation of elementary education and to remove illiteracy, the Adviser (Education), Planning Commission stated during evidence:

"The Sixth Plan alone cannot indicate development in this area. There is some sort of momentum which has been gathering over the last thirty years or so. You will bear us out that as far as Education sector is concerned, the outlay for education has been increasing. In the First Plan it was Rs. 153 crores. In the Fourth Plan it was Rs. 786 crores. In the Fifth Plan it was Rs. 1,285 crores. In the erstwhile Sixth Plan it was Rs. 1986 crores and in the Sixth Plan which has now been approved it is Rs. 2524 crores. In addition to this there are major outlays in other Departments—Medical, Agriculture, Housing, Railways, Social Welfare, etc. Our reckoning is that if Rs. 2524 crores is the outlay for education departments, in the Sixth Plan another about Rs. 800 to 900 or even Rs. 1,000 crores would be for similar activities of formal, non-formal training and research activities in other sectors of development. The outlay for education has thus been increasing.

Another aspect which you have to bear in mind is that there is something like non-plan expenditure. This Plan outlay reflects nine or ten per cent of the total expenditure. Currently, *i.e.*, 1980-81 we spent about Rs. 3200 crores on education and out of this Rs. 299 crores was in the Plan. The total educational expenditure increased at the rate of 17 to 18 per cent annually. As you are aware, we are now in the region of 4 per cent national income being spent on education. If it is compared to total governmental expenditure, it is about 11 per cent. It is not a mean achievement for a country like India where the pressure on resources is too much and it is increasing."

2.5. The witness further added:

"We have found that in many States the enrolment ratio is not going up because there is a limit after which the curve does not grow. What shall we do when the enrolment ratio in the States reaches

60 to 65 per cent? Then it will take about 10 or 20 years to achieve cent per cent enrolment. We have done some calculation. Even by the end of 1999 of 2,000 there will be still 20 children out of 100 children in the age-group 6—14 who will not be going to school.”

2.6. As regards allocation on primary and adult education, the representative of the Planning Commission stated:

“You will be glad to know that when money was asked especially by the Education Ministry, the Planning Commission did not reduce even a single naya paise on adult education. Rs. 60 crores were proposed by the Ministry of Education for Literacy Programme in the Sixth Plan. This was accepted *in toto*. There was some reduction only in the allocation for States. That was also because the intention was not clear about their capacity to initiate a big programme like that. You will find that Rs. 128 crores have been provided for the development of literacy programme. As against Rs. 128 crores, only about Rs. 18 crores have been spent during the last five Plans on total literacy and adult education. This is a big massive investment that we have made. We have given the assurance to the Ministry of Education and the State Governments that money for these two important sectors will not be the consideration. My own experience in the Planning Commission is that if there is an on-going scheme and it has been proving a success, money is made available. We would like that by 1990, the problem of universalisation of elementary education could be covered. But, there may be some areas like the hill areas or in any tribal areas where the achievement may be low. This percentage does not indicate anything unless we make a massive effort. Here the whole responsibility will have to be borne by the State Governments....

We do hope that with the massive doses of the non-formal methods the problem of spread of education could be overcome. There is one consideration especially among those who are deprived of the education. For instance, the Third and Fourth Educational Surveys have indicated that 95 per cent of the habitations have been covered by the provision of a primary school. Thus, lack of school is now no more a hindrance. It is the socio-economic backwardness which is retarding progress. The emphasis has been laid on a certain programme like ‘Continuing Education’. In the existing formal education, we could not reach the unreached. Reaching the unreached can be only by

having a new formulation where we would like to have the community participation. Wherever there is too much of governmental bureaucracy, we could not take up these programmes. Therefore, a number of voluntary organisations are now coming forward. As regards adult literacy our emphasis is not so much on awareness as on literacy, numeracy and functionality.

The plan document mentions about the intensified use of the existing facilities including adjustment of schooling hours. This will make some savings both on facilities and manpower. In the plan document we have also referred that 170 lakh children will have to be enrolled during the next five years. We have also mentioned at the middle stage ten to twelve lakhs children will have to be enrolled every year i.e. about 63 lakh children during five years.”

2.7. Referring to the observations of the Adviser, Planning Commission, the Secretary, Ministry of Education observed:

“The Planning Commission have proposed an outlay of Rs. 2524 crores which is 2.6* of the total proposed 6th Plan. I also believe that we have to optimise our resources and improve the delivery system and our administrative system, but the allocation is less than what was in the earlier plan. For the Sixth Plan, the proposal of the Ministry was for about Rs. 3500 crores and the idea was that by 1990 we will be able to achieve the goal of investment on education of 6 per cent of the national income. As I said, we are getting about 1000 crores less from the view point of the proposals that we had worked out in the Planning Commission working group. Out of that, the centre will have about Rs. 735 crores and Rs. 1788 crores will be the States’ share.”.

2.8. The Committee enquired how much amount had been asked for by the Ministry of Education for primary education during the Sixth Plan period and the how much had been agreed to by the Planning Commission. The representative of the Planning Commission stated:

“The Working Group proposals amounted to Rs. 3500 crores and the approved outlay is Rs. 2524 crores. The break-up of the Working Group proposal and what is finally approved is like this. For elementary education, the Working Group had suggested 1700 crores and now as a result of discussions with the State Governments, who have the real interest in this, it has been reduced to Rs. 905 crores. For adult education, the working group recommended 230 crores, the final allocation is

128 crores. Rs. 100 crores was knocked off here and about Rs. 800 crores knocked off from the elementary education. The rest of the sectors have got the same as was suggested by the Working Group. For higher education, the proposed outlay was Rs. 500 crores and the finally agreed outlay is Rs. 486 crores—hardly any difference. For the secondary education, the amount as proposed has been more or less agreed to. The amount proposed for physical, technical education, scholarships etc. has been agreed to. The sum total is that only two sectors, i.e. elementary education and adult education have suffered as a result of the reduction. Priorities have been discussed with the States.”

2.9. Asked to state his comments on the above, the Secretary, Ministry of Education stated:

“Primary education does find the main point of focus in the 6th Plan. Still we feel that much more will have to be done in terms of allocation. In primary education, the States and the Union are both involved. I wanted only to point out some difficulties and problems which arise. The Working Group on primary education had asked for Rs. 900 crores. It was given Rs. 760 crores. We wanted, for adult education, Rs. 230 crores; at the moment we have Rs. 200 odd crores. We are just now trying to reorganise and re-vitalise the adult education programme, because its basic importance is recognised. But so far as the Plan is concerned, the emphasis is now on the universalisation of primary education. Our target is 95 per cent of the coverage at the primary stage and 50 per cent coverage at the secondary stage. That is why we feel that this is a very important thing. Our emphasis all along is going to be on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, landless labourers and other weaker sections and women. For this we also want to have an internal system to reduce wastage. The focus in the Ministry’s approach and in the Plan all along is that opportunities should be provided from the regional angle for the rural and urban weaker sections and better schools should be provided for them. All along in the Plan and in our Ministry’s proposals that has been the thrust and this will be the supervening or overriding consideration.”

2.10. The Committee pointed out that the outlay on elementary education had been going down in the five year plans. In the First Plan the outlay on elementary education was 58 per cent of the total outlay on education, in the Second Plan it came down to 35 per cent, in the Third Plan it was 34 per cent, in 1966—69, in the Annual Plans it came down to 23

per cent. In the Fourth Plan it was 30 per cent and in the Fifth 32 per cent. This showed that there had been a considerable fall in the allocation for elementary education. The Education Secretary stated:

“Your point was well made and that position cannot be disputed. The only point which I would like to submit is that the investment made in each Plan becomes the background or infra-structure on which we can build in the next Plan.”

(c) *Role of NCERT*

2.11. Elucidating the role of NCERT in this sphere, the Director, NCERT stated:

“With regard to the strategies of the NCERT in relation to the national objectives and the priorities to which you made reference particularly in the area of elementary education where universalisation of education upto Class VIII has been laid down as the target, the NCERT visualises a particular kind of policy which it has been trying to develop. There are two or three aspects in this. One is to produce instructional materials for the students. The second relates to the problem of teachers where methodology of training is outdated and the attempt is to improve their competence in this regard so that they can meet the challenge. The third is to pay particular attention to those nine states which are identified as backward states and within those states particularly the SCST and the girls who constitute largely the drop-out. We started out with primary curriculum renewal, a project which was assisted by the UNICEF.

In this our attempt was to involve State level personnel to be associated in this task in order to understand how we can develop materials which will be relevant in response to the needs of the children so that children will not tend to drop-out and they will find the lessons interesting. After some years of experience, it was appreciated by some other States which had not joined the programme earlier. Now, all the States and Union Territories are participating in this programme through their State Institutes of Education. We added another dimension particularly for the teachers so as to increase their capabilities. We have developed a programme which we are operating and which we called Comprehensive Access to Primary Education assisted by UNICEF. In the training of the teachers itself we have added that the teachers should also be trained to identify community needs and develop materials according to that and

make them available for the children to study. This is also now under operation. We have, in this process, found the need to educate the community. Unless the adults themselves appreciate that the child has to go to school in order to learn the alphabet etc., it will not be possible for us to implement the programme. We have to project also on what we call community education. It is not strictly adult education. It is really approaching the mothers, parents and others to make them understand that the school can also help in the development of community."

2.12. The Committee pointed out that the Administrative Staff College had in its study of the functioning of the NCERT stated that even for a limited role involving long-term policy, the Policy Planning and Programme Evaluation Unit was not adequately organised and that, seminars on policy issues were only held occasionally. The Director, NCERT replied:

"What I have just now said did not begin from 1978. Some of these started even earlier, as early as in 1975. But the comprehensive access to Pre-school Education emerged after 1978. But the other point which you have referred to from the Administrative Staff College Report was considered at length by the Executive Committee of the Council and they did not think that a very basic change in the character of work of the NCERT would be needed in terms of preparing policy, and it is for the Ministry to consider. On the other hand, they suggested that the Memorandum of NCERT said very clearly, 'to assist and advise the Ministry of Education', and to that extent as and when needed, the NCERT may set up groups. We have certainly strengthened the policy planning and evaluation department's working. We have got what is called planning, coordination and evaluation unit which is a stronger agency to improve the organisational efficiency and management aspect of it".

He added :

"Our work in the elementary education started later and we have now developed competence in the field of elementary education curriculum and instructional materials preparation."

2.13 Asked if the Ministry were satisfied that the objective conditions in the NCERT were adequate, the Education Secretary stated:

"So far as the NCERT is concerned, I think that we have a very high level expertise, but there is need for its optimisation and if there is a sustained effort put in, I think much more can be achieved by this organisation."

2.14. Asked to clarify their concept of a model curriculum for primary schools and secondary schools, the Director, NCERT stated:

“In this regard, we have developed what is called a minimum learning competence model. We call it a minimum learning competence model because we have visualised that at the end of five years of primary school, what are the abilities which a child should be able to develop, like, the ability to read, the ability to write, the ability to comprehend, the ability to analyse, etc. A booklet is published and it is available. Then, we have the curricular approach, that you can have different ways of achieving levels of abilities. This is the minimum that we expect because there will be difference in States. There are some States which are doing better; there are some States which are doing poorer. What we have said is that this is the minimum we expect at the end of five years in terms of abilities. As regards secondary schools, there is another document, the 10-year school curriculum, which is available where we have visualised what should be the curriculum at the secondary stage. This is known as the 10 years school curriculum. On the vocational side also, we have another document visualising what should be the curricular approach to vocationalisation of education at the high-secondary stage.”

2.15. Asked if continuous monitoring of the secondary school curriculum was not called for, the witness stated:

“Our difficulty has been with monitoring. This is a rather sensitive aspect because every State has a Board of Secondary Education which is an autonomous body. We have our inter-action with these Boards also. Our people are invited as experts to sit in these Boards, particularly, for science and mathematics curriculum. But in spite of this, the Boards do decide on their own as what should be their curriculum. We know that there are differences in the level and even in the approach to the curriculum. We have deliberately refrained from drawing the attention of the Boards to the kind of departure which they may have made from the 10-year school curriculum document which we have published. This is because, as NCERT, we have to work with all States irrespective of political differences and we cannot tread on their toes on matters which are rather sensitive matters so far as the States are concerned. I claim that our people who are working in the field of science and mathematics are well aware of the progress made in these subjects in the rest of the country. When occasionally they happen to participate in All

India Conferences, they take advantage of the occasion to voice their concern on this point. There is the All India Science Teachers' Association, the All India Mathematics Teachers' Association, and the Conference of Boards of Secondary Education. On the platforms of all these Conferences they express their views. Their concern about monitoring and the necessity to achieve a minimum standard of education has been expressed recently in the Conference of Boards of Secondary Education."

2.16. Elaborating further, the Adviser (Education), Planning Commission stated:

"The need for diversification of education at the post-elementary stage has been called for and, therefore, there is a very important section on the need for vocationalisation of education at the post-elementary stage. This programme has been pursued for a long time with the State Governments and vocationalisation has taken different form at different places. But the manpower requirements at the post-elementary level, at the technician level, are now going to increase, therefore, we are trying to have an integrated approach where education will play an important role in the total development. This is the kind of orientation which we have made in the Sixth Five Year Plan."

2.17. The Secretary of the Ministry added:

"I would like to add that, so far as vocationalisation is concerned, that has been the objective for quite some time, but its concretisation has somehow been quite ambivalent at different times. We started with the multi-purpose schools, and so on. It was felt that with the ten-plus-two pattern there would be much greater crystallisation of what is intended by vocationalisation in relation to the environment in the urban areas and much more in the rural areas. But, somehow, due to the climate of uncertainty which surrounded it and a little bit of financial constraint, it has not yet been possible; but we are trying to identify the vocationalisation aspect in some States."

2.18. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry of Education have furnished the following note* outlining the approach of the State Governments and the Central Government towards vocationalisation of education at the post elementary stage.

"A national conference held in June 1976 discussed the draft document "Higher Secondary Education and its vocationalisation"

*Not vetted in Audit

prepared by the NCERT. This document was finalised in September, 1976 by the curriculum Committee initially set up by the Ministry of Education and latter enlarged and supported by the NCERT.

The Conference of Ministers of Education of the States and Union Territories held in August, 1977 urged for a reorganisation of higher secondary education, specially its vocationalisation, by providing for suitable internal restructuring and modification of content and by developing strong links between education and the various development departments such as industry and commerce, agriculture, health and community development.

The whole programme of vocationalisation was revised by the National Review Committee on Higher Secondary Education with special reference to Vocationalisation under the chairmanship of Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, then Vice-Chancellor, Madras University and by the Working Group on Vocationalisation, which was set up by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in consultation with the Planning Commission under the chairmanship of Shri P. Sabanayagam, then Education Secretary. Their recommendations were discussed by the Conference of Ministers of Education of States and Union Territories held in July 1978, and by the Special Session of the Council of the Boards of Secondary Education in India held in September, 1978. Both the Conferences have accepted these recommendations for implementation.

To ensure the country-wide acceptance of concept of vocationalisation and to assist State Governments in establishing the relevance and importance of this concept to our socio-economic needs a centrally-sponsored scheme for vocationalisation of higher secondary education was launched towards the end of February, 1977. However, this scheme has been discontinued from April 1, 1979 in pursuance of a decision of the National Development Council to transfer a number of centrally-sponsored schemes, including the scheme of vocationalisation of higher secondary education, to the State Sector. Under this scheme, financial assistance was released to conduct vocational surveys in 131 selected districts of Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. Financial assistance was also given for the introduction of Vocational courses in 9 districts of Karnataka, 8 districts of Maharashtra and one district of Sikkim. However, vocational courses could not be started in the State of Sikkim due to lack of response from the students. To strengthen the efforts of the Government of West Bengal in this direction, financial assistance as given for the purchase of equipment.

To facilitate formulation of concrete proposals for the programme of vocationalisation of higher secondary education, detailed guidelines were

formulated and sent to all the State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations in 1976 by the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Education.

The Working Group on Education and Culture for the Sixth Plan, while reviewing the vocationalisation of higher secondary education, recommended *inter-alia* that the Central Government would have to play a more positive role."

Out of the 15 States and 8 Union Territories which have so far adopted the new pattern of school education, 3 States and 1 Union Territory are yet to reach the +2 stage; and, of the remaining, 6 States and 2 Union Territories—Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Delhi and Pondicherry—have so far introduced vocational courses at +2 stage. However, some other States/Union Territories have also initiated various preparatory steps to launch this programme as early as possible."

2.19. Asked to state whether Government had worked out any uniform policy for vocationalisation of education at the post elementary stage, the Ministry have replied*:

"A uniform policy with regard to vocationalisation of education at the post elementary stage has been laid down in that all the States and Union Territories are expected to vocationalise education at +2 stage as a part of education of the 10+2 pattern of school education. No rigid policy has, however, been laid down in so far as details of the schemes of vocationalisation are concerned. This is because it is neither possible nor desirable to have a uniform course pattern for the vocational spectrum, as these courses are supposed to be selected and designed after conduct of vocational surveys and keeping in view the socio-economic needs of the area. The Adishesiah Review Committee (1978) has also recommended that "there be no rigid streaming of courses into the General Education and Vocationalised Education spectrums. Each school should be allowed to offer such General Education and Vocationalised courses in accordance with the facilities available and the demands in the region." Even otherwise, education is primarily the responsibility of the States even though it has been brought on the Concurrent List through the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution.

The scheme of studies/course patterns to be adopted in a State, is framed by the concerned State Board of Secondary Education/

*Not vetted in Audit.

State Government. However, detailed guidelines, model course patterns, etc. are forwarded by the Central Government and its agencies to the States and Union Territories from time to time, to facilitate them to formulate their programmes and to have broadly uniform scheme of studies.

All the States and Union Territories have agreed in principle, to adopt the new pattern of school education, with vocationalised education at +2 stage."

2.20. The Committee desired to know the reasons which led to rethinking on 10+2 pattern and whether the views of Government had since crystallised. In a note* the Ministry have stated:

"The Government policy regarding the structure of school education since 1968 has been that school education should be of 12 years. The National Policy on Education (1968) states, "It will be advantageous to have a broadly uniform educational structure in all parts of the country. The ultimate objective should be to adopt the 10+2+3 pattern, the High-Secondary stage of two years being located in schools, colleges or both according to local conditions."

When there was change of Government in 1977, different views came to be expressed on the 10+2+3 pattern of education. The syllabi and textbooks prepared by NCERT came in for criticism from the public, teachers, parents, and students. The main criticism centred around many subjects/books prescribed for study. The text books were also criticised as being too voluminous which meant that a student could have very little time left for self-study and physical activities.

Even though there were no formal orders about changes on these issues, opinions were being expressed at different levels that the educational system should be reviewed and modified. It is note-worthy that the Election manifesto of the Party in power then had also referred to 'a reform in the present education system'. All this had naturally caused uncertainties in the minds of State Governments and teachers who were to avail of the facilities offered by NCERT. There was general feeling that confusion prevailed in the field of education and that the Government should take a decision on these basic issues.

*Not vetted in Audit.

As indicated earlier, opinion had been expressed on various issues in different forums which added to this general feeling of uncertainty. In both the Budget Debates of July, 1977 and April, 1978, for example, the following issues were raised:

- (i) 10+2+3 is not a static system. It has to be found out whether from experience it can be justified or not.
- (ii) A reform in the education system is required.
- (iii) there is a lot of load on the students and they are unable to bear it. This book-load is to be reduce.
- (iv) should the structure be 10+2 or 8+4? In other words, should class 8 be made a terminal stage again?
- (v) Should all schools be upgraded to the +2 level or only few? How many of the +2 schools should be vocationalised?

The Government had also initiated the process of reviewing the National Policy on Education with the idea of revising it and making it more comprehensive. A high powered committee (The Ishwarbhai Patel Committee) was also set up (June, 1977) to review the curriculum for the 10 year school.

Even after all this, in the Education Ministers' Conference (July, 1978) also doubts were expressed by responsible persons about the soundness of the prevailing educational system and opinions were expressed about "a general agreement on the urgent need to bring about a complete change in the educational pattern from top to bottom."

In the result, notwithstanding the fact that there had been no formal change in the educational structure or system and the fact that the Education Ministers' Conference had actually endorsed the 10+2+3 structure, there still was widespread uncertainty about the shape of things to come."

(d) *Teacher Pupil Ratio*

2.21. Asked what should be the proper teacher-student ratio at the primary and secondary stages and how it compared with the actual situation in the country, the Director NCERT stated:

"On this question there is a very strong difference of opinion in the country. There is one view which says that the teacher pupil ratio should not be more than 1:20 and increasingly we should be in the direction of individualisation of instruction. On the other hand, the other view is that there is really no point in having a low teachers pupil ratio in a country which is poor, we could have even 1:60. I am talking about primary

stage. If you move more in the direction of quality, then the teacher pupil ratio begins to move in the direction of individualisation of instruction. At the secondary stage also. One beings to meet with this problem, particularly with regard to science teaching: if you want quality science teaching, then obviously you need to have a limited number of seats so that good practicals can be done and the teacher can attend to individual pupil's own interests and needs. On the other hand, in order to have a general appreciation of science in general, you need to have more pupils. These are the two very strong views—one on the economics side of education and the other on the quality—and I do not know what answer I can give you on this."

2.22. The Secretary, Ministry of Education, added:

"Some thought has been given to higher education in this regard, but not so much to secondary and primary levels. The figures as we have from the 4th Survey are these. The existing situation as regards primary stage is 1 : 41; at the middle stage it is 1:25 to 35—it varies from 25 to 35. In the case of higher education, the optimum is 1:18 or 20, but the existing position, I am afraid, is 1:30 or 35."

2.23. Asked if it was not necessary for the NCERT to prescribe some guidelines in this regard while planning for mass education in the country, the Education Secretary stated:

"From the Survey we had, the picture that has emerged from the statistics gives a varying kind of pattern—Andhra Pradesh 50, some 35, some 28 and so on. You are right that we have to work out by way of guidelines some kind of an optimum pattern, taking into account the constraints of resources and the pressing requirements. We will certainly give due attention to it."

2.24. The Adviser (Education) Planning Commission added:

"You are correct that for a country like ours with meagre resources, we cannot have lofty aim of having the teacher-pupil ratio of 1:12 or 1:20 if we have to mover something like 12 crores children at the primary stage in course of time. In another twenty years, we will have to cover about 25 per cent at the elementary stage out of the total population of about 90 crores in the year 2000. This would mean covering over 20 crores of population in the elementary stage of education. When we

start applying the teacher-pupil ratio, to cover this population—we have made our estimates that out of the total revenue resources of the Governments both at the Centre and at the States, at least 80 per cent of it will have to be provided for the salaries of teachers only. Therefore, we have a constructive suggestion that to have a large number of teachers of quality. It also depends upon the quality of teachers the size of class rooms we have. A number of experiments have been done. For instance, at the elementary stage, we do feel that we should have a shift system. By introducing the shift system we can have a teacher pupil ratio of 1:20 or even 1:30. This Teacher Pupil ratio is not wrong. It is also not wrong to introduce the shift system in schools from one to two. After all the child of 6 to 7 years of age is not supposed to study for seven or eight hours continuously. Give them three hours' teaching would be beneficial. If we use that kind of teacher-pupil ratio, we may have three hours' teaching in a class instead of 8 hours' teaching in a class continuously. In the primary stages, we can overcome this problem of having a larger number of teachers. Similarly, this experiment has been going on in certain urban areas and in some metropolitan cities like Bombay etc. There they have succeeded. We have been saying that some ways have to be found to use the existing resources and by using the existing staff—the teachers—twice or thrice and the existing buildings. As the Chairman has rightly said, this is an experiment of non-formal education where non-conventional approaches have to be adopted. We do agree that there is need for optimum utilisation of teacher's capacity in the country.

2.25. The Committee pointed out that given the constraint of resources, the problem of mass education could not be tackled in the conventional way. Considering also the problem of unemployment, the Ministry could devise some unconventional methods such as these adopted in China in the field of medical care so that the unemployed youth could volunteer themselves for a modest remuneration to start with and later on given priority for regular employment when jobs became available. The Education Secretary stated:

“Sir, You have made a very valuable suggestions. We are also of the opinion that some un-conventional methods will have to be worked out with some monitoring as to whether the desired results are being achieved or not. Unless that is done the problem cannot be tackled.”

2.26. Asked whether the Ministry had given thought to the other physical requirements such as school accommodation, laboratory facilities, playgrounds etc. so that children could get attracted to the school, the Education Secretary, stated:

“Certainly we will look into this. Some work about the physical requirements of the accommodation has been done and our estimates are that we need 1.6 million rooms it would require Rs. 2000 crores. We have made some efforts, have contacted LIC for funding etc.”

(e) Coordination with State Governments

2.27. Asked about the efforts being made to bring about close coordination with the State Governments, the Education Secretary stated:

“The Ministry’s officers have been doing this in the past and we have been pressing on State Governments, about specific problems to ensure coordination within the State and between the State and the Centre, about the mechanism and they have also to optimise the limited resources that are at their disposal. I think that is a very important consideration and much of the concentration of the plan is on the programmes and similar coordination—the inter-sectoral coordination and adjustment between the various levels—the primary, pre-school, middle, the secondary, higher secondary and then the university education has to be ensured. That is very important. This inter-sectoral cooperation is also not the last word unless it is given a meaningful operational continuity. . . . But basically unless there is a social awareness and we are able to mobilise efforts of voluntary organisations at the primary level, the scheme will not be a success. So far as our allocations are concerned, we are still struggling with the Planning Commission to have it accepted as a centrally sponsored scheme. Their suggestion is that the States will do it and the States are doing it. But in the light of the situation now emerging, the Centre will have to play an important role in ensuring that the planning and monitoring units in the States are able to discharge their roles. Otherwise, if they play their role in a ritualistic way it will not be possible to make this scheme a success. That is why, we want the Central Government to play a more active role in this.”

2.28. He added:

“The second thing is about vocationalisation. Because, the secondary education is the terminal point in view of the

complexities involved, I think the Centre will have to play a more important role in this.

As regards the role envisaged in working out alternative strategies, I have no doubt that NCERT will play a very important role. Here it is a question of involving certain State level organisations. State Institutes and so on. Our effort in the Ministry is to ensure that there is very active and very live consultation and involvement of the State Government in each of these programmes by way of guidance and not only administrative support but even academic support."

(f) *Tribal Education*

2.29. Asked whether the NCERT had undertaken any research studies on tribal education, the Ministry have stated as follows:

"It is pointed out that the Department of Teaching Aids has not undertaken any research studies on Tribal Education. However, the research studies undertaken on this subject by other constituent units of NCERT are mentioned below:

- (1) Educational condition and economic condition and employment position of 18 tribes.
- (2) An intergrated and comparative study of a selected tribal community living in contiguous areas.
- (3) Developmental needs of the tribal people.
- (4) Utilisation of financial assistance given by Government to tribal students.
- (5) A study of methods and proceses of non-formal education centres in tribal areas.
- (6) A study of equalisation of education opportunities for tribal students.
- (7) A study of factors impeding universalisation of elementary education in tribal areas of Rajasthan.

The project No. 1—4 were completed and published in 1971. These have been disseminated to States in 1971-72 for appropriate necessary action.

The projects 5—7 are taken up at present and are yet to be completed in the States."

2.30. During evidence, the Committee desired to know if the NCERT had made any study of the special problems of tribals in the educational field. The Director, NCERT stated:

“We have a unit devoted for this purpose called the Tribal Education Unit. We have got a committee also, consisting of experts, to advise us on the kinds of studies that we are to undertake in these areas. This Committee, as I said had done some useful work. We have studied the problem in some three or four states on the basis of the expertise that we have. We made a close study about the problems of Saura tribe in Orissa in Chota Nagpur and Gonda areas of Madhya Pradesh also there are some three or four tribes and we made some in-depth studies to find out their problems and the reasons for their economic backwardness.”

2.31. Asked how the NCERT/Ministry of Education maintained coordination with the Home Ministry regarding Ashram schools, the Education Secretary stated:

“We are having a dialogue with the Home Ministry. I have had some discussion with the Tribal Commissioner of Madhya Pradesh who was earlier in the Home Ministry. He has given some suggestions. We are trying to coordinate our efforts in this direction and work out some scheme and submit it to the Minister. The studies are being carried out about the problems of tribals in general, and also with reference to the educational problems. About five studies have been carried out by the NCERT. Two or three studies have been carried out by the State Governments. But I agree with you that a fair amount of coordination is necessary in this regard.”

2.32. The Committee enquired about the steps being taken or contemplated to provide elementary education to tribal children on an extensive scale during the Sixth Five Year Plan. In a note*the Ministry have stated as follows:

“The Planning Commission had set up a Working Group on development of S.T. and Scheduled Castes and Weaker Sections of Society in connection with the formulation of Sixth Plan (1980-85). While summing up the objectives for Tribal Development during the Sixth Plan, the Working Group observed that apart from the effort in the core economic sectors, education should become the key sector in the Sixth

*Not vetted in Audit.

Plan period. Taking the recommendations of the Working Group in relation to primary education in tribal areas into account, the following steps are contemplated:

- (i) Norms for establishment of educational institutions at the primary, middle and secondary level should be scrutinised once again with a view to ensure their relevance for tribal areas in the context of the low density of population and scattered habitations. The structural balance among the primary, middle and secondary institutions should be properly struck and maintained.
- (ii) With reference to the relaxed norms, the States concerned may draw up master plan for locating primary, middle and high schools. The deficiency in the availability of such institutions with reference to existing institutions needs to be made up.
- (iii) Low literacy pockets, backward communities and areas where intensive economic programmes have been or are being taken up, should be identified and special educational effort mounted.
- (iv) Attention needs to be paid to low enrolment ratio, sparseness of educational institutions serving tribal areas, high wastage rate, absentee teachers. Inducements might be in the form of a more comprehensible educational system, scholarship assistance, attendance incentive, uniform, mid-day meals and compensation for opportunity costs.
- (v) There should be a special drive to locate and appoint tribal and women as teachers.
- (vi) Particularly with a view to boost education among tribal girls, recruitment of women teachers should be paid special attention.
- (vii) By the end of Sixth Plan period, at least 5 per cent of schools in tribal areas in a State should run primary classes as per the revised syllabi.
- (viii) The States should be asked to consider and take action for instruction at the primary stage in mother-tongue of tribal children.

The Tribal sub-Plans for 1980-8/ and 1981-82 have not yet been finalised. Currently, discussions are being held in Planning Commission for finalising the outlays and targets of the tribal sub-plans for Sixth Plan.

As has been indicated, schooling facilities for tribal children are looked after either by the Tribal Welfare Department or by a Department like Community Development/Social Welfare or by the Education Department of a State. Apart from the education component in the Tribal sub-plans of the concerned states, inputs into the tribal sub-plan from the State programmes or Central or centrally sponsored programmes are also being quantified. Thus, in the programme for Universalisation of Elementary Education, either in the State Sector or in the Central Sector, attempts have been made to quantify the inputs into the tribal sub-plans and/or for tribal children outside the tribal sub-plan areas. States were requested to do this exercise while drawing up their programmes for elementary education. Full information in this regard is not available at present. However the proposed coverages under the various incentive programmes, namely, mid-day meals, free uniforms, attendance Scholarships and free textbooks and stationery as available in the state-plan documents are as below:

Programme	1980-85	
	Coverage (figures in lakhs)	Outlay (Rs. in lakhs)
1. Free Textbooks and Stationery .	867.34 including 153.814 SC/ST children	2501.35
2. Free Uniform	54.033 including 36.254 SC/ST children	798.91
3. Attendance Scholarships	60.4 including 50.203 SC/ST children	740.3
4. Mid-day Meals	726.262 including 99.164 SC/ST children	(The available figures of outlays are totally in- adequate and hence no mention).

2.33. The Committee desired that a statement might be furnished indicating number of tribal children in the age group of 6-11 and number enrolled, state-wise. The Ministry have accordingly furnished the following

information: @

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Estimated Population	Enrolment
1	Andhra Pradesh	328000	228567
2	Assam	349500	267479
3	Bihar	750600	592112
4	Gujarat	565900	465512
5	Haryana
6	Himachal Pradesh	19800	16344
7	Jammu & Kashmir
8	Karnataka	40100	72776
9	Kerala	28200	23539
10	Madhya Pradesh	1737800	638184
11	Maharashtra	565400	479133
12	Manipur	54000	70369
13	Meghalaya	131000	173068
14	Nagaland	68600	105423
15	Orissa	751600	491386
16	Punjab
17	Rajasthan	542100	217797
18	Sikkim	..	8564
19	Tamil Nadu	60400	32486
20	Tripura	83800	44828
21	Uttar Pradesh	29500	19390
22	West Bengal	427500	233434
23	A. & N. Islands	3100	2469
24	Arunachal Pradesh	54400	40068
25	Chandigarh
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	10100	10731
27	Delhi	1200	1275
28	Goa, Daman & Diu	1200	1279
29	Lakshadweep	4100	6685
30	Mizoram	*	67222
31	Pondicherry	..	100
ALL INDIA		6330100	4309060 ^{''}

@ Not vetted in Audit.

* Included in Assam.

Ashram Schools

2.34. The Committee desired that a note might be furnished stating the number of Ashram schools, State-wise, with their aims and objects. The Ministry of Education have stated:*

"It is very difficult for the children of scheduled tribes living in sparsely populated tribal areas to walk long distance to attend schools which are sometimes located far away from their homes. In order to meet the needs of such students, Ashram Schools have been established in various States. These schools are residential type of schools providing free board and lodging facilities to the students. Besides general education, these schools impart craft-based education to the students. Such schools are run by State Governments as well as some non-official agencies. The programme for the establishment and maintenance of Ashram schools is also included in the tribal sub-plans of the States where such sub-plans have been formulated. The number of Ashram schools as well their inmates in various States/Union Territories are given in the table below:

S. No.	State/U.Ts.	No. of Ashram schools	No. of inmates in these schools
1	Andhra Pradesh	291 (1976-77)	17,267
2	Bihar	77 (1978-79)	10,982
3	Gujarat	182 (1978-79)	18,638
4	Himachal Pradesh	5 (1976-77)	125
5	Jammu & Kashmir	1 (1977-78)	20
6	Karnataka	66 (1977-78)	[4,125
7	Kerala	55 (1972-73)	1,650
8	Madhya Pradesh	138 (1975-76)	5,520
9	Maharashtra	329 (1977-78)	16,230
10	Manipur	6 (1973-74)	527
11	Orissa	160 (1977-78)	1,220
12	Rajasthan	8 (1977-78)	315
13	Tamil Nadu	79 (1975-76)	4,433
14	Tripura	1 (1977-78)	35
15	Uttar Pradesh	10 (1976-77)	935
16	West Bengal	5 (1976-77)	430*

* Not vetted in Audit.

2.35. Elementary education and adult literacy are the two legs on which the educational system of the country must necessarily stand. Unless these two legs are strong, the country would not be able to move forward. With a view to achieving the goal of universalisation of elementary education and adult literacy, top priority is therefore stated to have been accorded in the Sixth Plan to these two vital sectors. The Committee were informed that the targets is to achieve 95 per cent enrolment in the primary classes by the end of the Sixth Plan and 100 per cent by the end of the Seventh Plan. As of today, there are 50 million children in the age group 6—14 outside the school. While the Plan seeks to bring them all into the school, a study conducted by the Planning Commission has shown that in many States the enrolment ratio is not going up because there is a limit after which the curve does not grow and that it might take 10 to 20 years to achieve cent per cent enrolment. If past performance and the trends of population growth are taken into consideration, there will still be 20 out of 10 children who will not be going to school in the year 2000 A.D. It is obvious from the above trends and the allotment of funds mentioned in the next para that the projections made in the Sixth Plan are over-ambitious.

2.36. The Committee understand that even in the matter of provision of funds, the outlay on elementary education has been progressively coming down. Starting from 58 per cent of the total outlay on education in the First Plan, it came down to 35 per cent in the second plan, 34 per cent in the Third Plan, 23 per cent in the inter Plan years ending 1968-69, 30 per cent in Fourth Plan and 32 per cent in the Fifth Plan. Out of a total outlay on education of the order of Rs. 2524 crores proposed in the Sixth Plan as against Rs. 3500 crores asked for by the Ministry of Education, the outlay on primary education has been kept at Rs. 905 crores and on adult education at Rs. 128 crores. The Committee find that the Working Group had proposed an outlay of Rs. 1700 crores and Rs. 230 crores respectively in these two sectors. Thus the entire cut of about Rs. 1000 crores effected in the educational plan has been at the cost of these two vital sectors on which the educational system is supposed to stand.

2.37. Article 45 of the Constitution enjoins upon the State to endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. Even as the Constitutional directive for universalisation of primary education remains a distant goal, the Committee consider that all attempts to build up a new nation will fail unless a massive effort is made right now to remove illiteracy. Some unconventional methods and bold steps on mass scale will have to be thought of to tackle this gigantic problem with vision and courage. It is

here that the Ministry of Education, the NCERT and other educational organisations in the country should be called upon to devote their attention to the utmost.

2.38. The Committee suggest that the services of the unemployed youth should be obtained to tackle the problem of illiteracy. The youth who volunteer to work in this field should be given a modest remuneration and also some priority in the matter of obtaining a regular job. Efforts should also be intensified to secure the help of voluntary agencies to supplement the efforts of the Government.

2.39. The Committee also suggest that in order to encourage children of poor parents to attend the school, they should be provided some incentives in the form of stipends so as to compensate to some extent for the loss of earnings to their parents. For this purpose, objective criteria based on the socio-economic condition and income level of the parents should be laid down.

2.40. The NCERT which has so far been devoting much of its attention to the improvement of secondary education is now stated to have developed competence in the field of elementary education curriculum and preparation of instructional materials. The Committee consider that there is need for optimisation of effort particularly in the matter of training of elementary school teachers where some reorientation of attitudes is required. The Committee feel that the teachers have to be trained to identify community needs relevant to the area of operation. Particular attention will need to be paid to the nine States which have been identified as backward States and which are stated to be responsible for depressing the all India literacy level. The Committee consider that the NCERT must be equipped so as to be in a position to provide guidelines to the States in the matter of preparation of curricula, training of elementary school educators, monitoring of standards etc.

2.41. While planning for mass education, the NCERT should also work out an optimum teacher student ratio taking into account the pressing requirements both at the elementary and the secondary stages so that proper guidance could be prepared for the benefit of the education authorities in the States.

2.42. Increasing attention will also have to be paid to the requirements of accommodation for schools, playgrounds, laboratory facilities etc. The Committee consider that the Central Government must take initiative in these matters and carry out a comprehensive study of the requirements during the next 20 years and the measures that would need to be taken to meet the same. The Committee further consider that the question

of provision of low cost school buildings made of locally available materials must be considered seriously.

2.43. So far as the post elementary stage is concerned, the Committee have been informed that "vocationalisation of education has been the objective for quite some time but its concretisation has somehow been quite ambivalent at different times." A centrally sponsored scheme for vocationalisation of higher secondary education was launched towards the end of February 1977 but discontinued from 1 April, 1979 in pursuance of a decision of the National Development Council to transfer a number of centrally sponsored schemes, including the vocationalisation of higher secondary education to the State sector.

2.44. Although the 10+2+3 structure was endorsed by the Education Ministers Conference held in July, 1978, there is even now widespread uncertainty and doubts continue to be expressed by responsible sections of the public opinion and those in authority regarding the soundness of the 10+2+3 structure.

2.45. The Committee understand that the NCERT have a Tribal Education Unit to study the problem of education of tribal children. A Committee of experts advises the NCERT on the kinds of studies required to be undertaken in this field. A few studies have already been carried out by the NCERT in some of the tribal areas of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh etc. The Committee would like to emphasise the imperative need to study comprehensively the special problems of education of tribal children. The Ministry of Education/NCERT must, therefore, proceed in this matter in a systematic way in close coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the State Government.

2.46. The Committee find that the estimated population of scheduled tribe children in the age group 6—11, is nearly 63.30 lakhs of whom nearly 43.09 lakhs i.e. 68 per cent are enrolled. The number of Ashram schools in various States/Union Territories is stated to be 1,413 with 1.32 lakhs inmates.

2.47. The Committee observe that the working Group on development of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes and weaker sections of society set up by the Planning Commission in connection with the formulation of the Sixth Plan (1980—85) has expressed the view that education should become the key section in the Tribal Development Programme. The Committee desire that the inputs required for the purpose should be identified expeditiously and included in the Tribal sub-Plans. In areas outside the purview of the tribal sub-Plans, suitable schemes for education of tribal children should be drawn up. The Committee trust that constraint of resources will not be allowed to come in the way of execution of such schemes.

CHAPTER III

REGIONAL COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

Audit Paragraph

3.1. The NCERT drew up (November 1976) a 5-year programme for training 2000 elementary school teacher educators each year in the regional colleges in courses consisting of theoretical training through correspondence lessons for 6 months followed by a contact programme for 15 days at the colleges, which were to provide the trainees free boarding and lodging. The correspondence lessons (100) were prepared, printed and supplied to the colleges (cost: Rs. 0.85 lakh); due to delay in the preparation of the lessons (the first lesson was prepared by November 1976 and the last in March 1978), the courses scheduled to start by 1st January, 1977 started 7 months later. Against a planned annual enrolment of 2000 trainees in the first course, the actual enrolment was 769 trainees of whom only 561 paid the prescribed enrolment fee (Rs. 25 each) and only 134 educators had completed the course so far (September 1979). The second course had not been started as the State Government did not depute trainees (October 1979). The NCERT stated (October 1979) that as most of the State Governments were not willing to bear the travel expenses of the trainees, the response to the course was poor.

3.2. In September 1976, the NCERT drew up another programme for training 12,000 secondary school teachers annually (from January 1977), in content, methodology and evaluation in subjects of the new 10-year school curriculum. The courses were to consist of correspondence lessons for 6 months followed by a contact programme of 15 days at the regional colleges and were expected to cost Rs. 22.20 lakhs per year. Out of 11,382 teachers, who had been enrolled for the first course, 3374 (30 per cent) completed the course. Net expenditure on the course was Rs. 2.50 lakhs (including Rs. 0.90 lakh on salaries of additional staff) at 3 regional colleges; the NCERT did not have the corresponding data for one college (Bhubaneswar) (January 1980). In August 1978, the NCERT decided that the correspondence lessons should be modified to conform to a new syllabus and made available to the States for their in-service training programmes and that the colleges were to continue the course only for teachers of those States which desired to avail of the programme; modification of the lessons had not been completed, nor had any further course been held at 2 colleges so far (November 1979).

3.3. A committee appointed by the NCERT had reported (January 1974) that equipment costing Rs. 7.42 lakhs and books costing Rs. 1.10 lakhs were lying surplus to requirements in the regional colleges. These facts had not been brought to the notice of the Executive Committee, nor had action been taken so far (October 1979) to dispose of the surplus equipment and books.

3.4. Having noticed that the enrolment to the one-year course in agriculture was very low, the review committee referred to in sub-paragraph 3 above expressed doubts about continuance of the courses (August 1968) and recommended that the course should be conducted at only one of the colleges and that too, only if there was adequate demand. The one-year courses at Mysore and Bhubaneshwar were thereupon wound up, but those at Ajmer and Bhopal (where against an intake capacity of 30 students, 20, 16 and 18 students had been enrolled in 1969-70, 1970-71 and 1971-72 respectively), the Executive Committee decided (March, 1973) that the course should be run only at Ajmer. Accordingly, admissions to the courses for the academic session 1973-74 were not made by the college at Bhopal; one college, however, restarted the course in 1974-75 without obtaining the approval of the Executive Committee. The number of students admitted since then had been only 19 (1974-75), 21 (1975-76), 16 (1976-77), 13 (1977-78) and 5 (1978-79). Even at Ajmer, the admission to the course had fallen from 42 students in 1975-76 to 8 in 1976-77, 14 in 1977-78 and 8 in 1978-79. A committee, which reviewed the courses at the colleges, reported in February, 1976 that at Bhopal "the course was running for a small number of students which makes it rather uneconomic". These comments would be equally applicable to the Regional College, Ajmer as well.

3.5. In 4 southern States from the academic session 1971-72 with the introduction of the 2-year pre-university course, a large number of higher secondary schools were converted into junior colleges and the master's degree was prescribed as the minimum educational qualification for teachers in these colleges. This resulted in paucity of qualified teachers in these institutions. For training science teachers to man the junior colleges, a 2-year full time post-graduate course leading to M.Sc.Ed. degree of Mysore university was started from the academic year 1974-75 by the regional college at Mysore. Two posts of professors, 3 posts of readers and 9 posts of lecturers in addition to 5 posts of ancillary staff were created for running the course. During the 4 years 1974-75 to 1977-78 total expenditure of Rs. 18.74 lakhs had been incurred on the course, in which 70 students had qualified. In the academic years 1974-75, 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 the number of students enrolled were 25, 36, 47 and 44 respectively against an intake capacity of 60 per year. Even in relation to the requirements of Karnataka alone, where 2500 additional

qualified teachers were estimated to be required during 1972—77 to man its junior colleges, the contribution which the college could make at this rate was negligible.

[Paragraph 32 (sub paras 5.1 to 5.5) of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil)].

Teacher Training Programme

(a) Training of Elementary School Teacher Educators

3.6. The Committee desired to know the basis on which it was planned to enrol 2000 trainees for the first course of elementary school teacher educators. The Ministry of Education have replied*:

“The number of teacher educators was estimated to be in the region of 10,000 in the whole country on the basis of the data available with the Council which conducted the second national survey of teacher education. In its second meeting held in March, 1975, the National Council for Teacher Education recommended that the academic staff of the elementary teacher training institutions should be offered an enrichment programme for the improvement of standards of elementary teacher education. It was also decided to cover all the staff of the elementary teacher training institutions over a period of five years and thus the estimate of 2000 teachers per year was arrived at.”

3.7. Asked to state whether State Governments and other concerned agencies were consulted before launching this training programme, the Ministry have stated:

“In his letter No. F. 13-7/79-DTE(CC) dated 20 December, 1976, to all the States, the Director NCERT gave the details of the proposed Correspondence-cum-contact course for elementary teacher educators and about the organisation of these courses in the Regional Colleges of Education. He had also requested the State Governments to meet the expenditure on travel of the candidates sponsored by them while the NCERT would be meeting the board and lodging expenditure for the Contact Programme. To reinforce this request, the Government of India in their letter No. F. 7-17/76-Sch. 5 dated 13 April, 1977 addressed to the Education Secretaries of all the State Governments, making a reference to the recommendation of

*Not vetted in Audit.

the National Council for Teacher Education which is concerned with the improvement of teacher training programmes in the country. The details of the scheme were furnished and the State Governments were requested to extend their co-operation by taking maximum advantage of the course."

3.8. The Committee enquired whether the failure of the programme was due to defective planning and execution. The Ministry have in a note* stated:

"The non-achievement of targets was not due to defective planning or execution but due to other extraneous factors such as lack of motivation of teachers, transfer of teachers of elementary teacher training institutions and lack of adequate resources with the State Governments to allow the teachers to continue the course. It may, however, be added that the Academic Committee of the National Council for Teacher Education, having reviewed the position of the first inservice course, further recommended the continuation of this course in view of the fact that the existing elementary teacher educators did not have adequate training in the methods and techniques of elementary teacher education. These materials are also being utilised in the Centres of Continuing Education set up by the NCERT in collaboration with the State Governments."

3.9. Asked to state whether the question of paying travel expenses to the trainees had been considered by Government, the Ministry have replied*:

"...no State Government had expressed its unwillingness to pay the travel expenses. The State Governments duly paid the travelling expenses of the participants who attended the Contact programme. Besides, it is not possible for Government of India to assume full responsibility for training of all teachers. The States have to play their role. It is useful to promote their involvement in such programmes."

3.10. The Committee enquired about the reason for the delay in the preparation of lessons. The Ministry have furnished the following note*:

"The lessons were developed using outside experts as well as staff of the NCERT. Some of the outside experts did not give the lessons in time and in some cases the quality of lessons given

*Not vetted in Audit.

by them was not upto the standards and they had to be re-assigned to other experts for preparation. As the manuscripts were developed, they were simultaneously sent to press for printing. There was delay in printing also because the presses got involved in election work. Also, there were power outs. All these contributed to the delay in the preparation and printing of lessons."

(b) Training of Secondary School Teachers

3.11. As regards programme for training 12,000 secondary school teachers annually, the Ministry of Education have stated in a note furnished to the Committee that 12,527 teachers were enrolled for the correspondence-cum-contact programme inclusive of enrolment of 1,128 in the year 1978-79 in the Regional College of Education, Bhubaneswar.

3.12. The Committee desired to know the number of teachers who had completed the training. The Ministry have replied:

"4259 teachers have completed the course. The course is being offered to those who had already been enrolled. Different methods to meet the specific situation in the respective College is being adopted."

3.13. The Committee enquired about the reasons for the shortfall in enrolment of teachers for the correspondence-cum-contact programme and the remedial measures taken in this regard. The Ministry have explained the position* thus:

"With the adoption of the 10 plus 2 pattern of Education and consequently the need for introducing upgraded curriculum, it was felt that a massive effort was required to be undertaken to improve the general and professional competence of teachers. Accordingly, the four Regional Colleges of Education were directed to undertake training of teachers through correspondence-cum-contact programme. The strategy visualised was that the total programmes should be completed in a period of five years. Before the implementation of this programme could take place in full swing, some rethinking took place at the national level on the very desirability of adopting the 10 plus 2 pattern. In the context of an uncertain position in regard to the educational structure that would ultimately be adopted, the enthusiasm of the States to spare the teachers in adequate number for these programmes tended to decline. The teachers in those States where 10 plus 2 pattern was not adopted lost the enthusiasm.

*Not vetted in Audit.

The course has not been offered after 1977. The National Council for Teacher Education has recommended the revival of the four year course in teacher preparation in the Regional Colleges of Education, which has been endorsed by the Internal Body of the NCERT. Director, NCERT, therefore, set up a Committee on 28 December, 1979 to assess the requirements of the State Governments and the type of the courses that are to be introduced in the Regional Colleges of Education keeping in view the potentialities of the Colleges. The report of the Committee has been received on 21-4-80 and a final view would be taken in the matter."

3.14. During evidence, the Committee pointed out that as against a target of 14,000 teachers to be trained under the two programmes during a period of 5 years, only 134 in one and 4259 in the other i.e. 4393 in all could be trained. Explaining the reasons for the poor response, the Education Secretary stated:

"It is correct that the target was a modest one in the national context, but later on we found that the physical facilities provided a constraint to the intake in this particular matter."

3.15. Asked whether this could not have been anticipated, he replied:

"From all that I have been able to judge is that the realistic feasibility in the very beginning under the enthusiasm for adoption of 10 plus 2 pattern was not fully kept in view."

Director, NCERT added:

"The programme had to be given up because enough teachers were not being sent by the States. There was lack of clarity in the country at that stage as to whether upgrading of the programme in Science and Maths which the NCERT recommended should be accepted or not. Should 10 plus 2 stage be accepted or not."

3.16. In reply to a further question if any alternative plans had been worked out, the Education Secretary stated:

"The alternative strategy of the Centres of Continuing Education in the States, where the involvement of the States is much more, was worked out. It is here that full purpose was not served from the viewpoint of the expenditure that we have incurred. The lessons which were prepared are now being

used in the centres for continuing education and have been made available by us to certain other State Institutes of Education....”

3.17. Asked to state whether any decision had been taken in regard to supply of correspondence lessons to State Governments for imparting training to secondary school teachers in content, methodology and evaluation in subjects of the new 10-year school curriculum, the Ministry have in a note* stated:

“A final view about the continuance of the correspondence-cum-contact programme for teachers is yet to be taken. Any decision in this regard would have to be based on long term strategies which will have to be adopted for the organisation of enrichment programmes for teachers in service. Supply of lessons for imparting training to secondary teachers in content, methodology and evaluation in subjects is not feasible and would have to be undertaken primarily by the State Governments. The NCERT would at best be able to supply model materials in certain subjects like Science, Social Sciences etc. NCERT would be examining all these issues in the context of the decision to be taken about continuance of the correspondence-cum-contact programme.”

(c) *Four-year integrated courses*

3.18 As regards the recommendation made by Dr. Nag Chaudhuri in his report for suspension of four-year courses in the regional college of education, the Director, NCERT, stated:

“This point was particularly examined by a subsequent committee of which Dr. Nag Chaudhuri was himself the Chairman. It decided to re-open the four year integrated course which he had himself in his report suggested earlier to be closed. There was another Committee headed by Prof. Mathur who suggested that no four year integrated course should be started in the Regional Colleges of Education. Subsequent to that there have been two or three other Committees including Prof. Kapur Committee....they made a recommendation as late as in 1966.... The position is practically the same as when the four-year integrated courses were originally recommended. I submit that in most countries of the world, teacher education is on the same lines except in USA.”

3.19. Asked about the reasons for continuing this course in Mysore and suspending it in other Colleges, the Secretary of the Ministry of Education replied:

*Not vetted in Audit.

"It was suspended from July, 1976 except in Mysore. This course is continuing in Mysore College. We wanted to have a massive in-service programme of teacher education for the new upgraded 10 plus 2 curriculum which was being implemented at that time."

3.20. Asked whether it was not a fact that there was some uncertainty with regard to the usefulness and the need for such a programme, the Education Secretary stated:

"I accept that the position is uncertain."

3.21. The Committee desired to know the reasons for poor response from teachers to the training programmes undertaken by the Regional Colleges of Education. The Secretary of the Ministry stated:

"...So far as the rapport with the State Governments is concerned...the involvement...has not been such as it was necessary for more effective functioning. That is why this is a bit of a continuing process..."

He added:

"...it was never the objective of the NCERT that we will take care of the entire teacher training programme. The idea was that we work out a programme of excellence and expertise and also help others and other training institutions of teachers to have their training programmes upgraded... The Regional Colleges of Education have a distinct role and unfortunately due to certain circumstances...there was something of a mechanical kind of consultation but the involvement in the programmes as much as was called for, was not there...our main focus now is that there should be more detailed and continued contacts and consultations with the State Governments as regards the programmes to be worked out and then phasing out etc. so that there is a response from the teacher."

3.22. Asked whether there were any other constraints in continuing the programme and whether some compulsion was required, the Education Secretary stated:

"...I take it that there will be a good response as far as the teachers are concerned, if we have a better publicity of the programmes and better consultation with the State Governments and the State Governments also getting in touch in a

more effective and continuing manner with the teachers' organisations also and also with the teachers individually and collectively. . . . I wonder very much whether compulsion as such will help. . . . that will not be the substitute for the teacher himself being convinced that he was to shoulder greater responsibilities in the national system of education and for that he has to upgrade himself. After all our regional colleges are trying to work out the curriculum and the programmes particularly from the view point of such emerging concern as national integration and also the problem of taking remedial measures for weaker sections like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and what sensitisation is necessary from that angle in the normal functioning of the College."

3.23. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry of Education have furnished the following note* stating reason for suspension of the four-year courses in the Regional Colleges of Education and the grounds on which it was restarted:

"Research for suspension—Originally, the four-year courses were introduced in the areas of Technology, Commerce, Science and English.

The Government of India appointed a Review Committee under Dr. B. D. Nag Choudhuri, Member, Planning Commission in 1968 to review the programmes and activities of the NCERT, the progress of the Regional Colleges of Education and evaluate the contribution that concurrent courses instituted in them had made towards improving teacher education in Science, Technology, Commerce and other fields. The Committee recommended that the four-year courses be discontinued.

In their resolution dated 4 August, 1969 the Government of India noted that admission to the four-year degree courses in Technology had already been discontinued and directed that admission to four-year degree courses in English and Commerce should be discontinued w.e.f. 1970-71, and that orders regarding the four-year courses in Science would be issued separately.

*Not vetted in Audit.

The continuation/discontinuation of the four-year courses was subsequently reviewed by two committees (1969-70) appointed by the Executive Committee of the NCERT. While the Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. B. D. Nag-Choudhuri considered the Science Courses; the other under the Chairmanship of Prof. M. V. Mathur concerned itself with the Language courses. The recommendations of the Committee were considered by the Government of India and *vide* their resolution dated 5 July, 1973 declared that the four-year degree course in English may be continued in the three RCEs and the four-year Science Course in all the four Colleges.

With the approval of the Government of India, the four-year-integrated courses were continued in the Colleges and the position in regard to their availability was as under in 1974-75:

1. Science: Available at all the Colleges.
2. English Course: Available at Bhubaneswar, Bhopal and Mysore.

In 1975 the NCERT prepared a curriculum framework for the ten-year school as a sequel to the Government's decision to adopt the 10 plus 2 pattern of school education. To improve the competencies of teachers in subject knowledge and methods of teaching, required for the implementation of the ten-year curriculum framework, it was decided in May 1976 to launch a massive in-service training programme by the correspondence-cum-contact method in the four RCEs. In view of the need for deploying faculty of the Colleges for this priority activity it was decided to suspend admissions to the four-year integrated courses except the four-year integrated course in Science at RCE, Mysore.

Grounds for re-starting

A significant development in the recent past has been the establishment of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) set up to advise the Government of India on matters relating to teacher education. The NCTE formulated a curriculum framework for teacher education in January, 1978, which among other things, recommended the introduction of the four-year integrated teacher education programme as an open experiment. At the annual meeting of the General Body of the NCERT which consists of the Education Ministers of the States as well as in the forum provided by the NCTE, a demand was voiced for the revival of the four-year integ-

rated teacher education programme in the Regional Colleges of Education. Independent assessment of the courses as indicated later, confirmed the four-year integrated pattern to be a more effective mode of teacher preparation.

In pursuance of the above recommendation, an internal committee of the Council was asked to assess the potential of each Regional College of Education from the point of view of satisfying teacher education needs of the States served by it. The Committee held detailed discussions with the State Government and Vice-Chancellors of Universities. In these discussions the State representatives have invariably indicated the need for pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes of the RCEs. This it was indicated would help in meeting the requirements of teacher which had emerged particularly in relation to the implementation of the vocationalisation of education at the plus 2 stage. Taking note of all these developments the Council has taken a decision to revive the four-year integrated programme of teacher preparation in the Regional Colleges of Education. These innovative courses are likely to serve as models for the States to develop their teacher education programmes on similar lines.

As for the introduction of teacher preparation courses for such vocational areas as Agriculture, Commerce and Technology, the Council is examining the question in depth. An analytical examination in this regard is particularly necessary in view of the experience gained in the States where vocationalisation of higher secondary education has been introduced on an experimental basis. The Council is examining teacher preparation for vocational areas primarily from two angles viz., whether there should be an under-graduate courses of four years duration as were available earlier or whether graduates could be offered two to two and a half years programme leading to a post-graduate degree."

3.24. The Committee desired to know whether the usefulness of the course had been evaluated. In reply, the Ministry have stated*:

"A comprehensive assessment of all the courses provided in Regional Colleges including the four-year courses was made by a Committee appointed by the Council in 1974 under the Chairmanship of Dr. J. N. Kapur, Ex-Vice-Chancellor of the

*Not vetted in Audit.

Meerut University and senior Prof. of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. The Committee assessed the quality of courses on the basis of the information collected from the ex-students of the RCEs and the Principals/Headmasters of high/higher secondary schools where teachers trained at the Regional Colleges were employed. The Committee also contacted, at the local level, distinguished educationists and administrators who were familiar with the programme and courses of the RCEs so as to get their impression about the kind and utility of work that the Colleges were doing. The Committee visited RCEs and interviewed a number of students at each College with a view to finding out their opinions about the programme of teaching. The Committee also had an opportunity to meet a few principals and Headmasters and also ex-students.

Assessment

Based on the information received through a questionnaire, interviews and discussions, the Committee made an assessment of various issues referred to it. The main conclusions reached by the Committee are indicated below:

1. The idea of instituting a four year integrated programme has been academically successful and should be extended to other Colleges of education.
2. Taking everything into consideration, the four year integrated course in Science has been successful to some extent in achieving the objectives for which they were introduced. These courses should be continued.
3. The Four year course in Social Science may be tried in one of the four Colleges.
4. The Four year course in English should be offered depending upon enrolment."

Training of Science and Maths. Teachers

3.25. Audit has pointed out that for training science teachers to man the junior colleges, a 2 year full time post graduate course leading to M.Sc. Ed. degree of Mysore University was started from the academic year 1974-75 by the Regional College at Mysore. In the academic years 1974-75,

1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 the number of students enrolled were 25, 36, 47 and 44 respectively against an intake capacity of 60 per year. Asked to state the objectives for starting the course at the Regional College, Mysore, the Ministry have stated:*

"It was observed that Science and Mathematics at the plus 2 level was being taught by teachers holding M.Sc. degree. The content of M.Sc. courses were geared towards basic research within adequate relevance to courses that teachers were expected to teach at the school level. There was, therefore, a need for designing a special programme for preparing teachers for the plus 2 level. In this connection, it is pertinent to state that the Education Commission 1964-66 envisaged the need for introducing students of the Masters degree in science subject to relevant pedagogical subjects so as to enable them to develop an effective orientation for more effective teaching. The M.Sc. Ed. courses of the Regional College of Education were developed with a view to preparing post graduate teachers, qualified both in content and pedagogy, for teaching classes XI and XII. The integration of the content with the methodology of teaching is an essential feature of these courses. This enables the prospective teacher to adopt relevant approaches to the teaching of particular content."

3.26. Asked to what extent these objectives have been fulfilled, the Ministry have replied*:

"The objectives have been fulfilled. Among other things, this is indicated by the decision taken by the Central Board of Secondary Education. The Board has recognised these courses and issued formal orders to the effect that students passing out of the M.Sc. Ed. course in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics of the RCE, Mysore are allowed to teach in XI and XII classes of the Kendriya Vidyalayas and other schools affiliated to the Board"

3.27. As regards the low enrolment, the Ministry have stated:*

"The enrolment in the courses is regulated by the University to which the College is affiliated. The University of Mysore has approved an intake of 20 for each of the three M.Sc.Ed. courses. The shortfall in the first session was due to a number of reasons. It was a new course and not well understood by the people in the region; only a few people would risk the

*Not vetted in Audit.

adventure of joining an experimental course and so enrolments over the years have increased and indicate a distinct change in the right direction. The enrolment in 1979-80 and 1980-81 have increased to 54 and 58 respectively against the stipulated intake of 60. The numbers applying for each course have shown a substantial increase; because of the consideration for maintaining standards, the intake has been limited to 20. It is true that some students drop out after admission. This is partly because students, who initially join the M.Sc. Ed. courses, subsequently leave them on getting seats in other higher or professional courses. This usually takes place after the last date of admission stipulated by the University is over. No fresh admission can take place to fill the vacancies so created as the University does not allow this. This inevitably leads to some seats of the M.Sc. Ed. course remaining vacant."

3.28. The Committee enquired whether the State Education authorities were consulted in the matter, the Ministry have replied*:

"The State Education authorities were not consulted formally. However, the State Government are represented on the Management Committee of the Colleges which are apprised of the programmes of the Colleges."

3.29. The Committee enquired about the number of trained science teachers in the country vis-a-vis their requirements. In a note, the Ministry have stated:

"Information about the number trained science teachers is not available. The total number of trained teachers at various levels of education was as under on September, 30, 1978:

No. of Trained Teachers at various school stages.

Stage	Total No. of Teachers	No. of Teachers trained	Percentage of Trained Teachers
Primary	15,99,182	13,79,688	86.3
Middle	7,44,918	6,45,623	86.7
Secondary & Higher Secondary	5,96,237	5,12,717	87.5
	29,40,337	25,47,033	86.63

*Not vetted in Audit.

The Third All-India Education Survey has provided information about teachers teaching science at various stages of school education. As will be seen, many teachers teaching science have not studied enough science to teach the subject at a particular stage. For instance, at the primary stage nearly 1.55 lakh science teachers teaching science have not even studied the subject. Similarly, the number of such teachers (who have not studied science at all) at middle, high school and higher secondary stages is respectively 16,963, 1,841 and 1,297. Assuming matriculation as the minimum qualification for teaching science at the middle stage, 74,536 teachers teaching science had not studied science upto that stage. In the case of high and higher secondary stage, the number of teachers who had not studied science up to graduate and post-graduate stages was respectively 38,755 and 25,530.

The requirement of science teachers, as of all teachers can be determined by the State Education Departments in the light of their proposals to expand educational facilities, as well as those for the teaching of science, particularly because these requirements have to be determined subject-wise. The data provided by the survey is likely to be of assistance to them in projecting these requirements and taking appropriate measures to meet the demand. Although the NCERT would not be in a position to meet all the requirements of the States, it has undertaken programmes for upgrading the competence of science and other teachers whenever a request has been received from the States. It may be mentioned in this connection that the request of the Tamil Nadu Government to upgrade the content knowledge of about 2000 Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics teachers teaching at present class XI of the plus 2 stage is under consideration of the Regional College of Education, Mysore. This upgradation is needed to enable them to teach the XII class also."

3.30. During evidence, the Committee drew the attention of the representatives of the Ministry of Education to the requirement and availability of trained science teachers in the country. The Director, NCERT clarified:

"We have got data as to whether the teachers are trained or untrained. We have data on whether science teachers have the qualification for teaching science but we do not have the data in regard to both—whether qualified in the matter of science as well as teaching."

The Education Secretary added:

“So far as the position of teachers training is concerned, at the primary level we find that the percentage of trained teachers is 86.2 per cent, at the middle level it is 86.67, at the secondary level it is 87.50 per cent. But we do not have the figures separately so far as science teaching is concerned. The problem is in the various States there are also varying criteria according to which they should be considered both qualified in their content of science and also about the training technology. But it is a very big lacuna which we must make up.”

Surplus books and equipments

3.31. According to the audit paragraph, equipments costing Rs. 7.12 lakhs and books costing Rs. 1.10 lakhs were lying surplus to requirements in the Regional Colleges (January, 1974). The Committee enquired as to why the position regarding surplus equipments and books was not brought to the notice of the Executive Committee for their instructions about utilisation/disposal. The Ministry of Education have stated:

“Although the report of the Committee indicating the position of surplus equipments and books was not placed as a substantive item before the Executive Committee, utilisation of the Regional Colleges of Education including the equipments declared surplus due to closure of the four year integrated programmes in vocational areas has been a matter of review from time to time. In May, 1974, a Committee headed by Dr. J. N. Kapur had been appointed to look into the validity of four year courses as well as other allied issues in the Regional Colleges of Education. This Committee had recommended introduction of one year B.Ed. course to prepare work Experience teachers. The report of this Committee was placed before the Executive Committee in February, 1976. When considering this report, the Executive Committee directed that individual Visiting Teams may be appointed for each of the four Regional Colleges of Education to examine their existing facilities from the point of view of making efficient use of equipments for the conduct of training, where possible, for Work Experience teachers and Vocational teachers and in-service orientation programmes in connection with the 10 plus 2 plus 3 pattern of education. The reports of the Visiting Committees for the four Colleges were considered by the Executive Committee in May 1976 which directed starting of B.Ed. Diploma in Vocational Courses and plus 2 Vocational course for elementary teachers in Demonstration Schools.

It may be added that the programme, policies and action plan for the vocationalisation of education has been engaging the attention of the Council since 1975. As and when a long term view is taken the precise items of surplus equipments, if any could be arrived at, and equipments disposed of. With regard to books, the Colleges have reported that these are being utilised by students and staff for supplementary study.

It is further stated that the Director has set up a Committee to look into the starting of the new courses into the colleges with reference to the needs of the States. The Committee has also recommended introduction of technology courses in the Colleges. Therefore, the matter of disposal of the technology equipments further needs to be kept in abeyance for some time till a final decision is taken on the report, since the equipments are likely to be put into use if the courses are re-started."

(d) One year Course in agriculture

3.32. Audit had pointed out that in view of low enrolment to one year course in agriculture, the Review Committee (Nag Choudhuri Committee) in its report had expressed doubts in August, 1968 about continuance of the courses and recommended that the course should be conducted at only one of the colleges and that too, only if there was adequate demand. The Executive Committee decided in March, 1973 that the course should be run only at Ajmer. Accordingly, admissions to the courses for the academic session 1973-74 were not made by the College at Bhopal. The College, however, restarted the course in 1974-75 without obtaining the approval of the Executive Committee. The Committee desired to know who had sanctioned the restarting of the course at Bhopal. The Ministry of Education have explained the position as follows:

"The decision to restart the course of one year B.Ed. (Agr.) in the Regional College of Education, Bhopal was taken in the meeting of the Principals held in March, 1974 under the Chairmanship of Director, NCERT. It is understood that the following were responsible for taking this decision.

- (1) Enrolment in the course was gradually picking up and the faculty felt that about 30 students could be enrolled to the course from the region from the session 1974-75.

- (2) The Madhya Pradesh Government had decided to train more and more of its teachers in vocational and work experience programmes in Agriculture.
- (3) The enrolment figure available for the earlier year pertaining to Regional College of Education, Ajmer was not discouraging.
- (4) The introduction of the course in Regional College of Education, Bhopal has strengthened the in-service programme in vocational and work experience programme in Agriculture for the regions covered by the Regional College of Education Bhopal.
- (5) No additional financial implication was involved as the existing staff and physical facilities could be utilised for the pre-service programme without in any way effecting the in-service programme.
- (6) The introduction of the B.Ed. Agriculture Course in effect meant the offering of instruction in the content area of Agriculture to the students so enrolled as other pedagogical subjects were common to their alongwith the students of other B.Ed. Courses.

It may be added that the Kanpur Committee report of February, 1976 mentioned by the Audit in para 2 (which led to the discontinuation of the one-year B.Ed. Agriculture course in Regional College of Education, Bhopal) was placed before the Executive Committee in February, 1976. At this stage the Executive Committee decided that the utilisation of the resources of the College should be reviewed by a Visiting Committee. This was done in April, 1976 and the Committee for Regional College of Education, Bhopal recommended that B.Ed. Agriculture course should be continued for one year in Regional College of Education, Bhopal during which period the college should redesign the course to prepare teachers for vocational subjects for the plus 2 level. Accordingly, the B.E. (Agriculture) was continued in Bhopal upto 1978-79."

3.33. Explaining the reasons for re-starting the one year course in Agriculture at RCE, Bhopal, the Secretary, Ministry of Education stated in evidence:

"This was the assessment at that time, because in 1975-76, the Faculty reported that 23 students were admitted. Probably

this was a much-too-hasty decision. I agree that there should have been greater discretion exercised."

3.34. The Committee pointed out that the Agricultural Universities were being allotted funds for the purpose and there appeared to be no justification for the NCERT to add another objective to its activities. The Education Secretary replied:

"I will certainly have a re-look at this particular programme with an open mind. The only difference about the universities is that they did not take up the programme of teacher-training in agricultural education."

(e) Role of Regional Colleges.

3.35. During evidence, the Committee referred to the recommendation made by the Nag Choudhuri Committee in their Report to the effect that "it would contribute to economy and greater efficiency if the Regional Colleges of Education were deemed as the campuses of the NIE (National Institute of Education)..." and enquired about Government's decision in the matter. The Education Secretary stated:

"The question was discussed by the Education Minister with Dr. Nag Chaudhuri himself and it was agreed that while close coordination between Regional Colleges of Education and NIE at the Centre is important, it is neither practicable nor desirable to make regional colleges the campuses of the NIE."

3.36. Emphasising the need for decentralisation of action oriented programmes and extension activities, the Administrative Staff College have stated that the Regional Centres should build up expert competence and offer only such innovative academic programmes which would provide leadership to State level institutions and Universities in the region. The Regional Colleges should be developed as Regional Centres of Educational Research and Training and cater to regional needs and requirements.

3.37. The Sabanayagam Committee has also stressed that the Regional Colleges should play a major role in developing the elementary teacher training institutions which require upgradation for the purpose of universalisation of elementary education. Further, they should function as implementation arms of the NCERT extending into the field for the purpose of follow up and implementation of the recommendations of the National Council of Teacher Education.

3.38. The NCERT drew up two ambitious programmes in 1976 one for training of 2000 elementary school teacher educators over a five year period and the other for training of 12000 secondary school teachers

annually in content, methodology and evaluation in subjects of the new 10 year curriculum. The Committee, however, note that by September 1979 only 134 elementary school teacher educators had completed the course under the first programme. Out of 12,527 teachers enrolled for the second programme also known as the correspondence-cum-contact programme, 4259 teachers completed the course. The same has not been offered after 1977.

3.39. The Committee have been informed that the non-achievement of targets in the first case was not due to defective planning or execution but due to other extraneous factors such as lack of motivation of teachers and lack of adequate resources with the State Governments to allow the teachers to continue the course. The Committee find that preparation of lessons was also delayed for various reasons. So far as the second programme is concerned, the Committee were informed that even though the target was a modest one in the national context, it was found later on that "the physical facilities provided a constraint to the intake." The Education Secretary admitted in evidence that "that realistic feasibility in the very beginning under the enthusiasm for adoption of 10 plus 2 pattern was not fully kept in view." Before the programme could proceed in full swing, some rethinking took place at the national level on the very desirability of adopting the 10 plus 2 pattern. In the context of the uncertain situation, the enthusiasm of the States to spare teachers in adequate numbers also declined.

3.40 The above instances illustrate how even well thought out programme can flounder in the absence of a clear cut long range policy. The Committee consider that education is too vital and too sensitive an area to be subjected to frequent shifts of policy. A certain amount of continuity and a broad agreement over the basic formulations is therefore of paramount importance.

3.41. The Committee are of the view that the work of NCERT will continue to be hamstrung so long as long term strategies are not drawn up. This requires a strong political will which can withstand regional and/or linguistic pulls and pressures and function in a national framework. Total involvement of the States and proper mobilisation of available resources is equally necessary. The NCERT on its part must have a proper appreciation of the felt needs of the States and maintain close touch with educational authorities in the field for the success of its teacher training programmes and other activities.

3.42. The Committee find that a four-year integrated course was started in the Regional Colleges of Education with a view to work out a programme of excellence and expertise and thereby help the teacher training.

institutions in the States to have their training programmes upgraded. The underlying idea was to improve the quality of teachers by adopting the pattern of integrated courses of general and professional education. The Nag Chaudhuri Committee (1968) found that "the experiment of integrated courses is and always will be, too costly to be repeated. It can, therefore, only make a marginal contribution to the improvement of teacher education in India." That Committee, therefore suggested discontinuance of the course from the academic year 1969-70. Since then conflicting views have been expressed by different Committees including Dr. Nag Chaudhuri himself who later suggested reopening of the course. As of now, the course stands suspended from July 1976 in all colleges except in the RCE Mysore where the four year course in Science has been continuing.

3.43. The Committee have been given to understand that comprehensive assessment of all the courses provided in the Regional Colleges including the four year course was made in 1974 by the Kapur Committee which found that the course had been academically successful. Considering the views of the National Council for Teacher Education, the State Governments and Vice-Chancellors of Universities, the NCERT has recently decided to revive the four years integrated course in all the regional colleges.

3.44. The Committee consider that since the educational policy at the secondary level, particularly in the matter of vocationalisation of education at the +2 stage is still in a state of flux, the NCERT should proceed in the matter with caution. The Committee desire that the academic consideration in favour of the revival of the course should be carefully evaluated in the light of experience gained during the period the course was being offered by the Regional Colleges. The views of the State Governments and their felt needs should be fully taken into consideration.

3.45. The Committee note with surprise that information about the No. of trained science teachers i.e. those who are both qualified and trained, is not available with the Ministry of Education. The available statistics show that many teachers teaching science have not studied enough science to teach the subject at a particular stage. For instance, at the primary stage nearly 1.55 lakhs science teachers had not even studied the subject as per findings of the Third Educational Survey. The number of such teachers (who had not studied science at all) at middle, high school and higher secondary stages was 16,963, 1,841 and 1,297 respectively. The number of teachers teaching science at high and higher secondary stages, without themselves having studied science upto graduate and post-graduate stages, was as high as 38,755 and 25,538 respectively. It was stated in evidence that the problem in this regard was that:

there were varying criteria in the States according to which they should be considered qualified in the content of science and also in the training technology. It was admitted that "it was a big gap which must be made up."

3.46. The Committee consider that while there may be difference of views and approaches among the State Governments in the matter of medium of instruction or in the methods of teaching, there are certain areas which are so basic like teaching of science and mathematics on which there could hardly be any difference of opinion. As a national institution with national responsibilities, the NCERT must therefore, address itself to the essential task of raising the teaching standards in these subjects and developing the requisite competence among the teachers. For tackling this problem it is essential to gauge the dimensions of the problem and collect necessary data in the first instance. The Committee recommend that necessary steps should be initiated by the NCERT in this direction without delay. Based on an in-depth study, a uniform set of criteria to determine the level of competence needed for teaching science and mathematics at the elementary, secondary and higher secondary stages should be evolved for the guidance of the States.

3.47. In regard to the one year course in Agriculture, the Nag Chaudhuri Committee (1968) had suggested that it may be run at one or two places so long as there is a demand. It would, however, be preferable to transfer it to the Agricultural Universities or Colleges at any time that they were prepared to take over the responsibility.

3.48. The Committee find that despite the decision of the Executive Committee taken in March 1973 to continue the course at Ajmer only, the Regional College of Education, Bhopal after suspending the course for one year i.e. 1973-74, restarted the same in 1974-75 without obtaining the approval of the Executive Committee. The Education Secretary conceded in evidence that "probably this was a much-too-hasty decision. I agree that there should have been greater discretion exercised."

The Committee do not see any justification why the NCERT should take upon itself this responsibility and add yet another objective to its multifarious activities. The Committee consider that teacher training in agricultural education could be handled in a better manner by the Agricultural Universities themselves which have got the necessary facilities. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the work should be assigned to the agricultural universities as early as practicable.

3.49. The Committee find that equipment costing Rs. 7.42 lakhs and books costing Rs. 1.10 lakhs were lying surplus to requirements due to closure of the four year integrated course. It has been stated that the

question of disposal of the surplus equipment and books needs to be kept in abeyance pending a decision on the question of starting new courses in the colleges. The Committee would suggest that the question of handing over some of the surplus stocks to the State Institutes of Education may also be considered.

3.50. The Committee consider that in the context of the educational goals set out in the Sixth Plan, the expertise and resources of the Regional Colleges should be utilised for accelerating the process of universalisation of elementary education which would require constant monitoring and feedback to the central level. This is the key area where the Regional Colleges can and should play a crucial role. The Committee therefore recommend that the Ministry of Education should in conjunction with the NCERT and the National Council of Teacher Education, work out the operational details and the priorities without delay.

3.51. Considering the imperative need for taking effective steps to universalise elementary education as quickly as possible, the Committee must lay emphasis on the desirability of building up the four Regional Colleges of Education as comprehensive teacher training institutions so that they are in a position to provide the skills that are needed for upgrading the teaching levels in schools.

3.52. As their field of functioning encompasses not only elementary education but also high school and the higher secondary stages, the Committee are in agreement with the views of the Administrative Staff College that the Regional Colleges should be developed as Regional Centres of Education Research and Training so that they can effectively function as the implementing arms both of the NCERT and the National Council of Teacher Education.

CHAPTER IV
FINANCE, ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

Audit Paragraph

4.1 The NCERT is mainly financed by grants from Government. Its receipts and payments for the five years ended 1978-79 were as under :
(In lakhs of rupees)

	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79
<i>Receipts :</i>					
Opening balance	29.21	13.99	£56.97	26.46	37.14
Grants received from Government	430.57	480.99	497.13	505.34	564.39
Grants received for specific projects from Government and other agencies	20.57	37.48	43.51	64.77	56.74
Sale proceeds of books and journals	25.90	59.57	67.58	48.40	101.31
Miscellaneous receipts	18.34	47.76	50.83	82.95	72.13
Provident Fund and compulsory deposit accounts	21.68	47.51	85.62	45.82	58.01
Deposits, advances, suspense and remittances	127.89	176.33	224.56	299.64	303.42
Centre for Educational Technology	₹	₹	₹ 45.40	27.31	₹
TOTAL	674.16	863.63	1072.60	1100.69	1193.05

Payments

Pay and allowances	165.75	214.14	225.17	237.08	266.08
Other charges	35.80	49.73	53.92	60.10	68.55
Programmes and scholarships	158.40	175.04	242.61	202.85	278.90
Land, buildings, furniture, fittings, etc.	19.38	81.35	71.62	96.64	77.81
Expenditure out of specific grants	28.76	33.72	33.17	49.05	22.41
Miscellaneous expenditure	87.25	25.86	28.17	45.43	20.15
Provident fund and compulsory deposit accounts	27.40	43.95	75.87	69.31	51.96
Deposits, advances, suspense and remittances	136.79	184.06	270.88	278.65	322.33
Centre for Educational Technology	£	£	45.17	21.91	£
Refunds to Government and other agencies	0.04	1.01	0.56	2.81	10.19
Closing balance	13.99	54.77	26.46	37.14	74.55
Total	674.16	863.63	1072.60	1100.69	1193.05

£. Prior to 1976-77, the receipts and expenditure of the Centre for Educational Technology were kept outside the accounts of the NCERT; in 1976-77 and 1977-78 they were shown distinctly in the NCERT's accounts and in 1978-79 they were merged with the figures under the various heads of account.

4.2. The audit of the accounts of the NCERT is entrusted to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India under section 20(1) of the Comptroller and Auditor General's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971. The NCERT is also a substantially financed body in terms of section 14 of the said Act. Some points noticed as a result of test-check in audit are given in the succeeding paragraphs.

4.3. The annual estimates of expenditure were prepared and presented to the Finance Committee of the NCERT in abstract statements (separately for Plan and non-Plan) which indicated the figures of revised estimates for the current year and budget estimates for next year under 10 broad heads of expenditure along with a brief introductory note explaining variations between the different estimates. Detailed explanatory notes listing the new and continuing schemes with justification were, thus, not available to the Finance and Executive Committees, nor were such details furnished to Government which approved the budget proposals and released grants to the NCERT.

4.4. A considerable portion of Plan expenditure was incurred by the NCERT mainly in the month of March, such expenditure in March during 1974-75 to 1978-79 varied from 31 to 63 per cent of the total expenditure. Further, the advances paid for carrying out various Plan and non-plan programme were treated as final expenditure in accounts and advances amounting to Rs. 49.43 lakhs, which had been booked as final expenditure in 1978-79, were stated by the NCERT to be outstanding (October, 1979). The refunds of unutilised advances after the close of the year were treated as non-plan miscellaneous receipts, such refunds having amounted to Rs. 68.57 lakhs during 1974-75 to 1978-79.

4.5. Estimates of receipts during 1975-76 to 1978-79 were far below the actual realisations which were 85,58,45 and 4 per cent respectively above the revised estimates in those years. The expenditure during 1975-76 to 1977-78 was in excess of the budgeted amounts and the NCERT utilised the surplus receipts to cover these excesses to the extent of Rs. 29.41 lakhs in 1975-76, Rs. 29.13 lakhs in 1976-77 and Rs. 15.34 lakhs in 1977-78.

4.6. There were substantial variations between actual expenditure on programmes and outlays provided in revised estimates for the units and departments of the NCERT. It was noticed in test-check in audit that no procedure had been prescribed for watching the progress of expenditure. While some departments (e.g. publications, workshop) repeatedly incurred expenditure on programmes in excess of allocations, others (e.g. school education, educational psychology, teaching aids) were unable to utilise the

funds provided. The savings and excesses were not reported to the Finance or Executive Committee, nor were the reasons for the savings placed on record nor the excesses regularised.

4.7. The NCERT stated (August 1979) that control registers were being maintained only for expenditure on programmes and purchase. The excesses during 1974-75 to 1978-79 over the final provisions under the head 'programmes', varying from 10 to 84 per cent and 21 to 47 per cent for non-Plan and Plan expenditure respectively and 'Other charges' varying from 4 to 19 per cent for non-Plan expenditure would indicate that the control exercised over these items was not quite effective.

4.8. Though the regulation of the NCERT stipulate that without prior approval of Government there should not be any diversion of funds from Plan to non-Plan expenditure or vice-versa, the statements accompanying the utilisation certificates submitted to Government disclosed unauthorised diversion of funds from non-Plan to Plan expenditure to the extent of Rs. 9.29 lakhs, Rs. 41.15 lakhs, Rs. 24.10 lakhs and Rs. 16.56 lakhs in 1973-74, 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 respectively. These diversions were not brought to the notice of the Finance Committee and Executive Committee, nor were these noticed by Government and necessary action taken.

[Paragraph 32 (sub paras 2.1—2.7) of Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil)].

4.9. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry of Education and Culture (Department of Education) have furnished the following note giving the composition and functions of the Finance Committee and Executive Committee of the National Council of Educational Research and Training:

“Finance Committee

Composition

In accordance with the rules of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the Finance Committee of the Council consists of five members. Financial Adviser of the Council who is appointed by the Government represents the Ministry of Finance on the Executive Committee of the Council and Director, NCERT are two ex-officio Members. Three other members are (a) one representative of the Ministry of Education viz. Joint Secretary incharge of School Education and (b) two members appointed by the Executive Committee.

Chairman of the Finance Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee from among the five members indicated above.

Functions:

The functions of the Finance Committee are:

- (i) to scrutinise the accounts and budget estimates of the Council and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee;
- (ii) to consider and make recommendations to the Executive Committee on proposals for new expenditure on account of major works and purchases which shall be referred to the Finance Committee for opinion before they are considered by the Executive Committee;
- (iii) to scrutinise reappropriation statements and audit notes and make recommendations thereon to the Executive Committee;
- (iv) to review the finances of the Council from time to time and have concurrent audit conducted whenever necessary; and
- (v) to give advice and more recommendations to the Executive Committee on any other financial questions affecting the affairs of the Council.

Executive Committee

Composition

In accordance with the Rules of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the Executive Committee consists of the following:

- (i) President of the Council who shall be the *ex-officio* President of the Executive Committee;
- (ii) (a) The Minister of State in the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare who shall be the *ex-officio* Vice-President of the Executive Committee;
- (b) A Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare nominated by the President of the Council;
- (c) Director of the Council;
- (iii) Chairman of the University Grants Commission, member *ex-officio*;

- (iv) Four Educationists with known interest in school education (two of whom shall be school teachers) nominated by the President of the Council;
- (v) Joint Director of the Council;
- (vi) Three members of the Faculty of the Council, of whom at least two shall be at the level of Professors and Heads of Departments, nominated by the President of the Council;
- (vii) One representative of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare; and
- (viii) One representative of the Ministry of Finance, who shall be the Financial Adviser of the Council.

Functions

Management of the affairs and funds of the Council to carry out the objectives of the Council as set forth in its Memorandum of Association is the function of the Executive Committee.

(a) Details of new and continuing Schemes

4.10. According to the audit paragraph, detailed explanatory notes listing the new and continuing schemes with justification were not made available to the Finance and Executive Committees, nor were such details furnished to Government which approved the budget proposals and released grants to the NCERT. The Committee desired to know the reasons for not placing the details of new and continuing schemes provided for in the budget estimates before these Committees. The Ministry of Education have explained the position as follows:

“Both the Programme Advisory Committee and the Finance Committee are only advisory/recommendatory bodies and as such all their recommendations including the annual budgets and approved programmes are submitted to the Executive Committee for ratification/approval.

No new scheme is taken up by the Council unless it has had the prior approval of the Executive Committee. Apart from this overriding consideration, the Council in practice had not been following any other rigid sets of procedures. While in some cases the schemes were got approved direct by the Executive Committee (e.g. Introduction of M.Sc.Ed, Life Science Course in RCE, Bhubaneswar) in other cases they had been referred

to the Executive Committee only after they were examined by Programme Advisory Committee e.g. establishment of Centre for Continuing Education). Yet in a few other cases though the proposals were first submitted to the Executive Committee the latter had desired that they be examined by the Finance Committee so far as their financial implications are concerned (e.g. setting up of Maulana Azad Centre for Advanced Studies).

Regarding continuing schemes, it may be mentioned that the annual programmes are placed before the Programme Advisory Committee and its minutes are placed before the Executive Committee. Provisions for continuing schemes is made in the budget estimates and placed before the Finance Committee whose minutes are placed before the Executive Committee."

4.11. The Committee enquired how Government approved the budget proposals in the absence of the scheme-wise details. The Ministry have stated:

"The Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Education and the Financial Adviser, Ministry of Education are members of Finance and Executive Committees of the Council. It may be added that the book of budgetary allocations contains data pertaining to the Budget Estimates as well as the Revised Estimates of the previous year and the budget provision for the current year and they had been regularly sent to the Ministry of Education."

4.12. The Financial Adviser, Ministry of Education stated in evidence:

"...the detailed manner in which the documentation should have been presented to the Finance Committee was not done. It would not immediately follow that the Finance Committee did not seek or get details on the basis of which they would like to modify or adopt certain proposals or schemes.

Now, the Finance Committee has itself taken note of that the present system has improved and more details are coming in. There is a distinct improvement in so far as the presentation of the matter is concerned."

(b) Rush of expenditure in March

4.13. A considerable portion of Plan expenditure was incurred by the NCERT mainly in the month of March; such expenditure in March during 1974-75 to 1978-79 varied from 31 to 63 per cent of the total

expenditure. The Committee desired to know whether the phenomenon of rush of expenditure in March had been analysed by the Ministry. The Ministry of Education have replied:

“The phenomenon of rush of expenditure in March had been analysed after March 1979 and all the Departments of the Council are constantly being advised to streamline their schedule of programme in such a way that they are conducted in a systematic manner throughout the year in order to avoid rush of expenditure in March.

However, there had also been certain major factors which had been responsible for the rush of expenditure in the month of March during the years 1975-76 to 1977-78 which were beyond the control of NCERT. The details of these factors are given below:

- (i) The paper required for the publication programme of the Council is usually received during March of every year since ships arrive from Norway only during this period. The details of expenditure incurred on purchases of paper during the preceding 3 years in the month of March are given below:

	(Rupees in Lakhs)
1975-76	. 18.30
1976-77	. 10.97
1977-78	7.23

- (ii) Further, up to 1977-78, the NCERT was incharge of conducting the Summer Institutes which were usually organised during May-June by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and funds for this purpose had to be released in advance to CBSE during March for funding the concerned Central Schools. The related figures are as follows:

	(Rs. in lakhs)
1975-76	. 13.83
1976-77	. 21.22
1977-78	. 17.00

- (iii) For construction activities, funds are usually deposited with the Central Public Works Department in March after

scrutinising all the estimates received from them up to that time:

	(Rs. in lakhs)
1975-76	27.62
1976-77	25.00
1977-78	49.45

4.14. The audit paragraph has pointed out that the estimates of receipts during 1975-76 to 1977-78 were far below the actual realisations. Asked about the reasons for under estimation of receipts during these three successive years, the Ministry of Education have replied:

“The major source of receipts of NCERT is from the sale of its textbooks. It is only this item which affects the entire estimate of receipts. As the details given below go to show there were certain unforeseeable factors which influenced the increase in the sale proceeds from the textbooks of the Council during 1975-76 and 1976-77. During the year in question the estimated receipts and actual receipts of Publication Department were as follows:

	Estimated Receipts (Rs. in lakhs)	Actual Receipts
1975-76	36.00	59.58
1976-77	45.00	68.58

The year-wise reasons are given below:

In 1975-76, the tremendous rise in receipts that was witnessed in sales was owing to the following two unusual factors:

- (i) For the first time 12 NCERT textbooks for Classes IX and X in compulsory subjects were prescribed by the CBSE. This factor was not known to the Finance Committee at the time when the Revised Estimates were formulated for 1975-76. Since these books were the sole prescribed books, their print orders were in the range of 35,000 to 50,000 for English and around 65,000 for Hindi version. This added substantially to the receipts.
- (ii) Secondly till April, 1975, NCERT had been distributing and selling its publications directly through a net-work of wholesale and retail agents who were fed from NCERT's headquarters at Delhi. From April, 1975 the Publications

Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting were made the National Distributor for NCERT's books for the Northern, Eastern and Western regions of the country. The net work of sales emporia of DPD gave a tremendous boost to the sale of Council's publications. Therefore, owing to these new practices sale for 1975-76 varied substantially from the estimates.

In 1976-77, the variation was due to a factor peculiar only to 1976-77. As against the estimated receipts of Rs. 45 lakhs the actual receipts realised were Rs. 68.58 lakhs. Out of this, Rs. 30.70 lakhs was on account of realisation from D.P.D. from their sale of NCERT Books during the 2nd half of previous financial year i.e. 1975-76. This factor started cancelling itself out in the subsequent years but it had the effect of upsetting the estimate of receipts of the Council during 1976-77.

In 1977-78, the variation between the 'estimated' receipts and 'actuals' was due to factors other than sale of textbooks. Some of the contributing reasons were realisation of arrears pertaining to the sale of science kits during the previous years and refund of an advance of Rs. 6 lakhs made by CBSE in March, 1978."

(c) *Refunds of un-utilised advances*

4.15. Audit had pointed out that the refunds of unutilised advances after the close of the year were treated as non-plan miscellaneous receipts, such refunds having amounted to Rs. 68.57 lakhs during 1974-75 to 1978-79. The Committee enquired as to why refunds of unutilised grants were not adjusted against fresh grants and specifically exhibited as such in the accounts. The Ministry have replied*:

"In respect of grants given to various institutions by NCERT under its scheme of assistance to Professional Educational Organisations, and in respect of Centres for Continuing Education, the unutilised grants are adjusted against fresh grants and shown as such in the subsidiary registers. However, in respect of grants given for a specific project, the unutilised balance is refunded to the Council only after the project is over. Refund in such cases is treated as receipt by the Council. This is in consonance with the Government of India

*Not vetted in Audit.

order 6 under Rule 149 of G.F.R., the extracts of which are given below:

“The refunds of grants-in-aid and interest thereon, where enforced, may be credited as miscellaneous receipts of the Department concerned.”

4.16. Asked to state how advances paid for carrying out various programmes were treated as final expenditure in accounts, the Ministry of Education have stated* as follows:

“Booking of programme advances to the final head directly had been adopted in accordance with the procedure in vogue in the Council since its inception. This is also in accordance with the well defined procedure accepted by the C.&A.G. in respect of the other similar organisations like the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. This is also in accordance with rule 22 of the Council Accounts Code, the relevant extract from which is reproduced below:

“If a recovery relating to overpayment of the current year be made by a short payment of an item chargeable to the some detailed head, no separate adjustment shall be necessary (but such recoveries) relating to overpayment of a previous year whatever the mode of recovery shall be... (adjusted) by credit to departmental receipt head concerned as receipts of the Department....

The adjustment of such advances is being watched by the Council by means of subsidiary sets of registers and these are also submitted to D.A.C.R. Audit Party for their scrutiny every year.”

4.17. The Committee enquired whether the surplus receipts were utilised to cover excess expenditure with the approval of Government, which approved the budget proposals. In reply, the Minister have stated:

“It is admitted that the excess expenditure incurred by the Council was made out of the surplus receipts to meet the compelling commitments of textbooks publication programmes of the Council. The excess expenditure was however shown in the utilisation certificate issued by the Council on the basis of audited statement.”

4.18. The Committee wanted to know whether prior approval of Government was taken before incurring excess expenditure. The Ministry

*Not vetted in Audit.

have replied:

“The utilisation of surplus receipts to meet the compelling commitments of programmes was not done with the prior approval of the Government. However, in the utilisation certificates issued by the NCERT and accepted by the Government, entry in this respect has been distinctly shown.”

4.19. Asked to state the reasons for not assessing realistically the anticipated expenditure at the time of framing the budget estimates, the Ministry of Education have stated*:

“The following were the major programmes for which surplus receipts were utilised during the years in question:

- (i) Purchase of paper and expenditure on printing;
- (ii) Production of Science Kits; and
- (iii) Organisation of Summer Institutes by Central Board of Secondary Education.

The programmes were of such nature, that the exact amount required to meet the commitments could not be anticipated at the time of preparation of budget estimate. For instance, the exact dates of arrival of shipments of paper from Norway could not be clearly foreseen. Similarly, the actual demand that was likely to be received for the Science Kits during the course of the next year could not be anticipated.”

(d) *Variations between estimates and actuals*

4.20. Audit had pointed out that there were substantial variations between actual expenditure on programmes and outlays provided in revised estimates for the units and departments of the NCERT. No procedure had been prescribed for watching the progress of expenditure. The savings and excesses were not reported to the Finance or Executive Committee nor were the reasons for the savings placed on record and the excesses got regularised. The Committee enquired about the reasons for not prescribing any procedure for watching the progress of expenditure. The Ministry of Education have replied:

“Control Registers for expenditure on programme and other charges are being maintained. The progress of expenditure is also gauged through them. But in special cases when the

*Not vetted in Audit.

need for implementing some priority programmes duly approved by the competent authority at a later stage of the year was felt and for which funds were needed in excess of budgetary allocations, these programmes were implemented by providing funds from savings elsewhere. These overall savings are gainfully utilised though reappropriation of funds from one head of account to another as ordered by the competent authority."

4.21. The Committee enquired whether the Council had taken any steps to avoid substantial variations at least between the revised estimates and the actual expenditure on programmes and outlays.

In reply, the Ministry have furnished the following note:

"It is admitted that under the various primary units of accounts the control of expenditure had not been very effective. In order to improve and revitalise the various control mechanism the Council has taken certain positive steps during the last two years. The foremost among these is a creation of Central Planning Coordination and Evaluation Unit in July 1979, that watches both the academic as well as the financial progress of the programmes simultaneously. Quarterly progress reports are received from the Departments regularly and these are analysed and where progress of expenditure is too slow or too fast remedial action is taken immediately."

4.22. Asked to state the reasons for not reporting savings and excesses to the Finance or Executive Committee and not getting the excesses regularised, the Ministry have replied:

"The final accounts of the Council as duly audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, are placed before the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee every year. So also the actuals for the preceding years are always made available to the Finance Committee when it considers the budget for the next year. Further, while seeking the grant for year the amount regarding the last year's unspent balance is reported to the Government which then takes appropriate action to authorise NCERT to utilise the same during the current year. Since both the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee as well as the Government are informed of the actual expenditure of the last year in the form of final accounts, the excess and savings that had been incurred by the Council may be considered as authorised."

(e) Diversion of funds from Plan to non-Plan expenditure

4.23. It has been stated in the audit paragraph that the statements accompanying the utilisation certificates submitted to Government disclosed unauthorised diversion of funds from non-Plan to Plan expenditure to the extent of Rs. 9.29 lakhs, Rs. 41.15 lakhs, Rs. 24.10 lakhs and Rs. 16.56 lakhs in 1973-74, 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 respectively. The Committee desired to know the action taken by Government in the matter. The Ministry have stated:

“There had been no diversion of funds after 1977-78 and expenditure is being scrupulously watched to prevent such an occurrence. As far as the diversion of funds by the Council from non-Plan to Plan during the years 1973-74 to 1977-78 is concerned it is stated that the Council’s utilisation certificates issued on the basis of audited statement of accounts were accepted by Government and by the AGCR and this has been deemed to have regularised the excess expenditure incurred by the NCERT under plan section without prior approval.”

4.24. During evidence, the Secretary, Ministry of Education, stated:

“So far as 1973-74 diversion of Rs. 9.29 lakhs is concerned, this was because at the instance of the Ministry, the Council had undertaken the Third All India Educational Survey for which separate funds were provided and they incurred an expenditure of Rs. 23.23 lakhs out of this non-Plan Grant which resulted in this diversion. It was brought to the notice of the Finance Committee in due course and it was actually after the discussion between the Ministry and the Director that it was done. That is the factual position. The diversion was for the purpose which we felt at that time was necessary.”

4.25. Asked to state whether the diversion of funds was reported to the Finance Committee and Executive Committee, the witness stated :

“I am afraid at that time—I must confess—it was not as such straightway reported.”

4.28. Asked how proper financial control could be maintained if the norms and rules could be by-passed in this manner, the Secretary of the Ministry replied :

“I quite agree with you. This was a *bona fide* mistake and later on, the budgetary procedures have been approved and instructions issued.”

He added:

“.....after 1977-78, we have certainly improved this. There has not been any instance of this type....the only thing that I can mention here is that the purpose for which this diversion took place did fall within the approved purposes....I would like to assure that this kind of a thing will not happen. With the procedures that are introduced after 1977, we hope that this kind of thing will not be there really. We have issued instructions also sometimes back to all our organisations in this regard not to divert funds from Plan to non-Plan.”

4.27. Some of the important irregularities/drawbacks in the maintenance of accounts by the NCERT over the five year period ending 1978-79 as pointed out in the audit paragraph, are as follows:

- (i) Detailed explanatory notes listing the new and continuing schemes with justification therefor, were not made available to the Finance and Executive Committees. The Central Government too approved the budget estimates and released grants on the basis of abstract estimates without going into the details;
- (ii) A considerable proportion of the expenditure was incurred in the month of March;
- (iii) The advances paid for carrying out various Plan and non-Plan programmes were treated as final expenditure in accounts;
- (iv) Refunds of unutilised advances after the close of the financial year were treated as non-Plan miscellaneous receipts;
- (v) Surplus receipts under one head of account were utilised to cover the excess expenditure under some other head of account;
- (vi) There were substantial variations between the actual expenditure on programmes and outlays provided in revised estimates for the units and Departments of the NCERT;
- (vii) No procedure had been prescribed for watching the programmes of expenditure;
- (viii) Substantial funds were diverted from non-Plan to plan expenditure in contravention of Government's instructions. Such diversions were neither brought to the notice of the Finance and Executive Committee nor were these noticed by Government itself.

4.28. The Ministry of Education have informed the Committee that no new scheme is taken up by the Council unless it has had the prior approval of the Executive Committee. "Apart from this over-riding consideration, the Council in practice had not been following any other rigid sets of procedures." The Ministry have admitted that "under the various primary units of accounts the control of expenditure had not been very effective". The phenomenon of rush of expenditure at the fag end of the year has since been analysed and all the Departments of the Council are constantly being advised to streamline their schedule of programme in such a way that they are conducted in a systematic manner throughout the year in order to avoid rush of expenditure in March.

4.29. It has been further stated that the excess expenditure incurred by the Council was met out of the surplus receipts to meet the compelling commitments of textbooks publication programmes of the Council and that prior approval of Government was not obtained.

4.30. The Committee find that funds to the tune of over Rs. 91 lakhs were diverted during the years 1973-74, 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 from non-plan to Plan expenditure. The Education Secretary informed the Committee that instructions had since been issued to prevent such unauthorised diversion of funds and that there had been no such instance after 1977-78.

4.31. The Financial Adviser, Ministry of Education who is also a Member of the Finance and Executive Committees of the Council assured the Committee that the various lacunae pointed out by Audit had been taken note of and necessary improvements effected in the presentation of details to the Finance Committee. An important step taken to remedy the situation is the creation of a Central Planning Coordination and Evaluation Unit in July 1979 to keep watch both over the academic and financial progress of the programmes simultaneously. Quarterly progress reports are also being received to keep a watch over expenditure.

4.32. While taking note of the assurances held out to them by the representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Committee trust that the prescribed financial procedures would be followed by the NCERT in letter and spirit so that irregularities of the nature pointed out by Audit are not repeated. To this end the internal audit system should be suitably strengthened.

CHAPTER V
GENERAL MATTERS

A—Library

Audit Paragraph

5.1. Physical verification of library books conducted in 1970 and 1973-74 revealed that over 14,000 books were missing. An enquiry officer appointed to look into the matter concluded (October 1974) that the earlier verification did not give a firm figure of loss of books. Finding that fresh accessioning of all books acquired by various departmental libraries upto 1967 and classification of all books purchased thereafter, was a pre-requisite for determining the actual loss of books, the Executive Committee decided (November, 1974) that library staff should be deployed to complete, within 10 months, classification of 15,000 books and re-accessioning of 60,000 books. The work had not been completed and, consequently, the actual loss of books had not been determined so far (December, 1979).

[Paragraph 32 (sub para 4) of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year-1978-79, Union Government (Civil)]

5.2. The Committee desired to know the reasons for the delay in completing the physical verification of books and determining the losses. In reply, the Ministry have furnished the following note :

“There had been a delay in stock verification, since arrears in respect of accessing and cataloguing of old books had to be cleared in the first place. In this connection it is to be mentioned that NIE Library had been the result of the merger of the libraries of 11 supporting offices mentioned below which were housed in different buildings in various part of Delhi :

1. Department of Teaching Aids Library
2. Department of Psychological Foundations Library
3. Council Secretariat Library.
4. National Institute of Basic Education Library
5. Central Bureau of textbook Research/Department of Curriculum Measurement and textbooks Library
6. Central Bureau of Education & Vocational Guidance Library
7. Department of Educational Administration Library

8. Department of Science Education Library
9. Department of Foundations of Education
10. National Institute of Education Library
11. Department of Secondary Education|Department of Field Services Library.

The individual libraries mentioned above had been following their own system of classification and it was only after the merger in 1967, that a systematic re-classification and re-accessioning could be started. In 1970 the first physical verification was undertaken and on the basis of this report in 1974 an inquiry was instituted into the working of library. The Inquiry Officer had estimated the loss of books as approximately 14,000 but had ordered for the completion of classification and accessioning of all the books and stated that only after this work is completed the actual loss could be arrived at. The work was recommended by the Inquiry Officer could be completed only in 1980.

The list of books found missing during the process of re-accessioning were prepared and were again checked with the collection. During this process some books which were earlier reported as missing have been traced and the final position has shown that only 9945 books are found missing, the value of which has been computed at Rs. 57,422.97 p.

The total holding in the NIE Library is of the order of 1.15 lakhs, and of these total number of priced books are around 81,943. The percentage of missing books when seen against the total holding is ver negligible and it is reiterated that this loss has occurred over a period of 20 years, *i.e.* between 1954 to 1974."

5.3. As regards the delay in completing the physical verification of books and determining the losses, the Secretary of the Ministry added during evidence :

"There used to be only an honorary Librarian, that is, one of the members of staff himself was appointed as in charge of the library rather than the responsibility being given to a professional librarian as it is now. Now, there has been a very substantial progress in accessioning. We have worked out a plan of action for stock verification of the books, shelf-wise. and the next few months—definitely by the end of May—it should be possible to

finish it; in the light of the comments made and the observations of the CAG and of the Public Accounts Committee we, have also worked out a proper system about accessioning of books, passing of the bills, etc. As regards the current position in the library, re-accessioning has been completed in respect of 53,478; the balance is 6,522 volumes. Then reclassification has been done of 11,000 and 4000 remain. As regards the losses, I would like to mention that the total holding with the library is of the order of 1.2 lakhs in terms of price and the books are around 81,000. . . . So we have now found that the loss is to the tune of about Rs. 57,426, but this is spread over 20 years. Sir, I am not saying this not from any point of justification. We have gone into the library building and checked the books."

5.4. The Committee find that as a result of observations made by Audit regarding physical verification of books in the NCERT library, substantial progress has been made in the accessioning of books and a plan of action has been drawn up for stock verification. The work is expected to be completed by end of May 1981. Now that a regular librarian has been appointed, it should be ensured that physical verification of books is done periodically as per Government regulations.

B. Department of Teaching Aids

Audit Paragraph

5.5. The review committee headed by Dr. Nag Choudhuri had observed in August, 1968 that the Department of Teaching Aids (DTA) suffered from several weakness and recommended that its main function should be to provide services to other departments. Accordingly in 1974-75, the DTA was designated as one of the service/production departments of National Institute of Education. The DTA has a Departmental Advisory Board which meets every year to formulate and plan its activities.

During the 5 years ending 31 March, 1979, budget provision for DTA's programme (Plan and non-Plan) amounted to Rs. 24.71 lakhs against which actual expenditure incurred was Rs. 12.84 lakhs (52 per cent). The expenditure on Plan programmes was proportionately less; against the provision of Rs. 7.55 lakhs, only Rs. 2.97 lakhs (39 per cent) were spent. During the same period expenditure other than on programmes (mainly pay and allowances and other charges) amounted to 50.90 lakhs.

5.6. The achievement in training, research and production activities, budgeted for completion during the 5 ears ending 31 March, 1979 were as under :

Type of programme	Number of approved programmes	Number completed.	Number dropped or not taken up	Number in progress.
Training courses	35	31	4	..
Research, studies	7	2	3	2
Films	25	4	17	4
Film strips, slides	48	7	15	26
Graphic aids	23	9	14	
Picture books	8	2	6	
Dubbing of films	4	3		1
Books/journal	2	1	1	..
TOTAL	152	59	60	33

Reasons for non-completion of programmes were generally not reported to the Departmental Advisory Board except in regard to films which were stated to be delayed because of shortage of staff and pre-occupation with other assignments.

5.7. Physical verification of technical stores done (May 1978) after a lapse of 10 years showed that 157 items costing Rs. 1.82 lakhs were un-serviceable or obsolete, 34 items costing Rs. 0.94 lakhs were either surplus or not utilised at all, 24 items costing Rs. 0.63 lakh were lying in defective condition and 82 items costing Rs. 0.37 lakh were not available. Government stated (January 1980) that a committee had been formed in September 1979 to analyse the physical verification report.

5.8. The film library, which was intended to cater to educational institutions, had an establishment (recurring annual expenditure: Rs. 0.98 lakh) of 12 persons in 1978-79 and a mobile cinema van. The library with 3245 members had 8035 films and 2804 films strips, which, on an average, were screened less than once a year. Out of 96 titles (films) purchased for Rs. 1.45 lakhs during the years 1973-74 to 1977-78, more than three-fourths had not been screened at all (October, 1979). The mobile Van was utilised for an average of only 7 shows a year from 1974-75 to 1976-77 and remained idle from February, 1977. Government stated (January, 1980) that

on account of high consumption of petrol, it was too uneconomical to utilise the van.

[Paragraph 32 (sub-para 6.1 to 6.4) of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil)]

(a) *Budgetary provisions and actual expenditure*

5.9. During the 5 years ending 31 March, 1979, budget provision for DTA's programme (Plan and Non-Plan) amounted to Rs. 24.71 lakhs against which expenditure incurred was Rs. 12.84 lakhs (52 per cent). The expenditure on Plan Programmes was proportionately less: against the provision of Rs. 7.55 lakhs, only Rs. 2.97 lakhs (39 per cent) were spent. The Committee desired to know the basis on which the budget provision was made and the reasons for shortfall in expenditure. The Ministry have stated*:

“During the years in question, the programmes of the Department were approved on the basis of the recommendations of the Departmental Advisory Board. The Advisory Board consisted of the staff of the Department, faculty of the other NIE Departments and experts in the field from outside NCERT. The recommendations of the Departmental Advisory Board were further considered by the Programme Advisory Committee which recommends programmes to the Executive Committee for approval. Thus the budget provision was made on the basis of the estimates given for the approved programmes.

Reasons for shortfall in expenditure—Shortfall in expenditure was mainly due to the inability of the Department to produce all the films that it had originally planned for. Among others, this was due to the following factors:

- (a) The same academic personnel in the Department was made responsible for both training and production programmes.
- (b) A separate film unit for production of films as recommended by the Departmental Advisory Board in 1976-77 could not be created because of the decision to effect CET—DTA merger.

*Vetted in Auditor.

- (c) The academic staff of Department had also to look after some priority tasks. These included:
- (i) physical verification of technical stores which had not been done for the last 10 years;
 - (ii) finalisation of recruitment rules for all the technical staff of the CET and DTA.

In conclusion it is stated that apart from the constraints indicated above, the plan to produce 25 films during the years 1974-75 to 1978-79 was plainly overambitious."

5.10. The Committee desired to know the reasons for not undertaking or not completing the approved activities on schedule and whether the Departmental Advisory Board had ever examined the reasons for non-completion of the approved programmes. The Ministry of Education have replied:

"As pointed out by Audit, the Department of Teaching Aids undertakes programme in many varied areas such as conducting of training course, research studies, film strip production, production of graphic aids, picture books, dubbing of films and bringing out books/journals. Of all these functions it is mainly in the area of production that there had been shortfall. On the other hand, the training programme had been on the increase from year to year from 4 programmes during 1974-75 to 13 in 1979-80. In other words, there was a positive stepping up of programme in the direction of training of personnel. Council's emphasis on this essential aspect resulted in shortfall in production programme. Further, it needs to be stated here that such kind of production of educational material is a highly creative process involving subject experts, Media persons and teachers to pool in their mind expertise towards creation of audio visual material. Since this culture amongst subjects experts and teachers has not grown in the country, the exercise of completing the target has fallen behind considerably. This is one of the reasons why the actual performance on ground could not match the physical and the financial target laid down by the planners.

- The shortcomings of D.T.A.'s production programme was noticed on 23-2-77 by the Department Advisory Board and the D.A.B. recommended on 23-2-1977 that D.T.A. should have additional staff for production. The Nag Choudhuri Review Committee had also pointed out, on 20-8-1968 the shortage of middle level technical staff in the Department. Action on this could not be taken up due to impending merger

of D.T.A. and C.E.T. and the evolving CET staffing pattern. Thus the production of educational software to a large extent had to be dropped.

However, other aspects of the Department's functions namely that of administration, services were strengthened and training/workshop increased 3 to 4 times."

5.11. During evidence, the Committee enquired about the reasons for not undertaking or not completing as many as 60 activities relating to training, reasearch and production activities budgeted for completing during the five years ending 31 March, 1979. The Secretary of the Ministry stated:

"It is quite true; but I think the staff was not sanctioned, particularly because of the possibility of, or desision relating to, merger. This climate of uncertainty was allowed to continue rather much too long."

5.12. Since as many as 60 programmes were either not taken up or dropped by the Department of Teaching Aids, the Committee wanted to know how the staff was utilised. The Secretary of the Ministry stated:

"So far as the D.T.A. is concerned, the deployment of staff is done according to the different disciplines, taking into consideration the mechanics of exchange from one discipline to another. But in general, as you have mentioned we have to get the proposals about staff and the Director discusses with me and some reorganisation is achieved keeping in view their academic ability and utilisation of senior level staff. I want also to mention one thing. The kind of observations made since yesterday here have provided—to me at least—lot of interest and some of the aspects that need to be looked into have come up. That was the reason why I did not agree to the re-organisation proposals which I have taken into account—Actually, various proposals have been made by internal committees or the groups plus of course the administration side. The Education Secretary's report was there and looking at it backwards, the Nag Chaudhuri report also we have to see whether what effect they had, in re-organisation. Then only we can go into this question of reorganisation of staff or deployment of staff. It is done only with a view to achieve greater long range coordination with the State Governments and the need for the deployment of staff. For this reason I have not gone into that exercise though some preliminary proposals are with me. But the

kind of exercise we want to do also forms part of the contribution of the internal structure and the programme for future. The point is well taken."

(b) *Physical verification of technical stores*

5.13. The Committee enquired as to why physical verification of technical stores was not conducted for 10 years prior to May, 1978. The Ministry of Education have furnished the following note:

"The value of technical stores available with the Department of Teaching Aids is approximately Rs. 21.24 lakhs. They represent numerous items received under U.S. Aid during the years 1961 to 1967. In view of the enormity of the work involved in conducting physical verification of such technical stores and in view of the fact that NCERT does not have any trained staff verifiers. Such physical verification had to be entrusted only the various academic staff of the Department. These staff had to undertake this work in addition to their normal activity of conducting academic programme which could not be postponed. These are some of the reasons as to why physical verification of the technical stores of D.T.A. could not be undertaken prior to 1978."

5.14. Asked to state the findings of the Committee which had been formed in September, 1979 to analyse the physical verification report and the action taken thereon. The Ministry have stated as follows:

"The Committee appointed in September, 1979 by NCERT have made the following recommendations for implementation:

- (1) Out of 157 items reported to be unserviceable/obsolete, 155 items have been recommended to be written off/disposed of and the remaining two items and certain components of four more items have been considered fit for re-use after minor repairs are carried out. Specific action to repair them is contemplated.
- (2) Out of 34 items pointed out in the Physical verification report unutilised/surplus, 9 items have been recommended as fit for re-use and specific proposal for this purpose are being drawn up. The balance items have been recommended to be written off/disposed of since they have become unserviceable/obsolete due to passage of time/or non-availability of spare parts in Indian markets.

- (3) Out of 24 items reported to be defective, 12 have been found by the above mentioned Technical Committee to be capable of being put to re-use after minor repairs, the remaining 12 items have been found to be unserviceable because of the fact that spare parts are not available since the models are of very old period. These have been recommended for disposal.
- (4) Out of 82 items which were reported in the Physical Verification Report are "not available in the Stores" for Physical verification, 14 items have been found to have been loaned to other departments/institutions. 2 items have been found to have been disposed of through Public auction in the year 1976 but the suitable entries had not been made in the relevant records, 11 items stand issued to the members of staff of the Department of Teaching Aids, 4 items have since been reported to stores. 43 items were accounted for but have been found unserviceable and have been recommended for writing off/disposed of. Thus the Technical Committee formed to take follow up action found that only 7 items valued originally at \$ 227—Rs. 1,078.25 were actually missing from the stores. It needs to be stated here these items are very old relating to early sixties and the relevant records are not traceable.

The above said recommendations have been accepted by the competent authority and further action for the implementation has already been initiated."

5.15. During evidence, the Secretary of the Ministry state:

"There has been a fair amount of delay in this. One of the reasons I find, while going through some of the records in connection with this, is this: physical verification could not be done earlier as the necessary technical expertise was not available. Mr. P. C. Mathur was appointed. He gave the report. Out of the 82 items which were reported in the stores, later on 14 items were found as having been loaned to the other Departments; two items have been found to be disposed of through public auction in 1976 itself but unfortunately entries had not been made; 11 items have been issued to the members of staff of the Department of Teaching Aids which is situated at a distant place; 43 items were accounted for, but actually most of these items are reported to be unserviceable. That is why, another committee, Tilk Raj Committee, was

appointed to go into this how far they are serviceable and all that. Orders on the basis of Mr. Tilak Raj report have also been issued. Taking into account some of the items which were accounted for subsequently, we find that seven items valued originally at about Rs. 1,078.25 were actually missing from the stores. The present position is that we have issued orders on the basis of Tilak Raj Committee's report."

(c) *Film Library*

5.16. The Committee enquired about the reasons for less screening of films/filmstrips of film Library. In reply, the Ministry* have stated:

"The functions of the film library had been affected due to the following reasons:

- (i) An up-to-date catalogue of the additions to the film library was not compiled and circulated to the members till 1980.
- (ii) Drive for fresh membership had not been made in the past.
- (iii) The membership of the film library decreased in 1978-79 because 269 temporary members had to be taken off the list.
- (iv) The syllabus of the school had increased considerably leading to increased pressure on students, teachers and the school administration to complete the prescribed courses in time. The schools found it difficult to find sufficient time from their busy calendar to screen films.

The films for the film library were in the past procured on the basis of the recommendations made by the Departmental Heads concerned who were members of the Review Committee. The educational films were purchased in the hope that they will be made use of by Members. In view of the past experience, the procedure for purchase of films has been improved. Before procurement of any film is allowed, the NCERT administration examines in detail the strategy to be followed to make the best possible use of the concerned film. As for screening of films, some steps have been taken which are likely to promote their use.

They include the following:

- (1) The catalogue of all films held by the Central Film library has since been sent to all the member institutions.

†Not voted in Audit.

- (2) An intensive drive to solicit new membership has been made during the last year by placing advertisements in all leading newspapers.
- (3) A symposium is being organised in March 1981 to bring together persons working in Regional and State Film Libraries to share experiences and evolve methods to popularise the use of education films."

5.17. The Audit has pointed out that the mobile van was utilised for an average of only 7 shows a year from 1974-75 to 1976-77 and remained idle from February 1977. The Committee desired to know whether the van which remained idle from 1977 had been disposed of. In reply, the Ministry have stated*.

"Since it gives an average of 2 Kms per litre the use of mobile van has decreased from the year when petrol prices increased. The gifting of the van to a Government organisation is being considered. In response to our correspondence with them, the Ministry of Health has expressed a desire to get the van inspected by its representative."

5.18. The Audit Paragraph has pointed out that out of 152 schemes drawn up by the Department of Teaching Aids in training, research and production activities for the five year period ending 31 March 1979, only 59 were completed, while 60 were dropped or not taken up at all and the remaining 33 were in progress. The actual expenditure on both Plan and non-plan programmes was only 52 per cent of the budgeted amount while in case of Plan programmes it was only 39 per cent. The shortfall was mainly in the area of production of films. It has been admitted that "the plan to produce 25 films during the years 1974-75 to 1978-79 was plainly over-ambitious." The Nag Chaudhuri Committee had pointed out as far back as in August 1968 that there was shortage of middle level technical staff in the Department. The Committee find that action to recruit the requisite staff could not be taken due to the impending merger of the Department of Teaching Aids and the Centre of Educational Technology. The production of educational software had consequently to be dropped to a large extent.

5.19. The Committee consider that failure of the Department of Teaching Aids to take up a large number of schemes is indicative of haphazard planning and inadequate preparation. The NCERT should have

*Not voted in Audit.

ensured that the Department was adequately equipped before sanctioning the schemes so that the funds placed at the disposal of the Department could be properly utilised.

5.20. The Committee consider that the climate of uncertainty which has been allowed to continue much too long, should now be removed and suitable reorganisation of the two Departments viz., the DTA and the CET brought about without further delay.

5.21. The Committee are constrained to observe that for want of trained verifiers, the work of periodical physical verification of stores on charge of the Department of Teaching Aids could not be done in a regular manner. Follow-up action on the physical verification completed in May 1978 after a lapse of 10 years was also delayed because another Committee had to be appointed to analyse the physical verification Report. The Committee consider that the NCERT should have taken timely steps to appoint trained staff for the purpose instead of wasting the energies of the academic staff of the Department. The Committee would like to be apprised of the remedial measures taken.

5.22. The Committee find that the film library which is intended to cater to educational institutions has hardly subserved the stated purpose because of lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Department. No catalogue of additions to the library was compiled and circulated till 1980 nor a drive for fresh membership made; on the other hand, its membership declined in 1978-79 because 269 temporary members had to be taken off the list. The Committee have been informed that the procedure for purchase of films has been improved which would indicate that not enough care was so far being bestowed to this very important work. The Committee cannot but express their unhappiness over such indifferent approach to a very important visual media of education. The Committee trust that necessary steps would now be taken to make the film library more popular among the student community.

5.23. Keeping in view the need to popularise the film library, the Committee consider that the question of disposing of the mobile van which has been idle since February 1977 needs reconsideration.

C. Centre for Educational Technology

Audit Paragraph

5.24. In 1972-73, Government started the educational technology project for making integrated use of mass media and educational technology at all levels of education; as part of the project,

the Centre for Educational Technology (CET) was set up under the NCERT in collaboration with an international organisation by an agreement which envisaged that CET would provide training programmes for a wide variety of personnel at Centre and State levels, produce materials to support educational uses of media and do research and experimental work. The NCERT constituted (September 1972) a managing committee under the chairmanship of its Director to manage the affairs of CET. In its first meeting (April, 1973), the managing committee decided that the long term and short term goals, appropriate strategies and suitable programmes for CET should be laid down; these had not however, been prescribed so far (October, 1979).

5.25. To make a study of the roles of CET and the Department of Teaching Aids (DTA) which were carrying out similar functions with consequent duplication of staff and equipment, the NCERT appointed (August 1975) a committee which suggested that DTA and CET should be merged. The NCERT, thereupon, decided (July 1977) that the merger should take place as early as possible, but postponed the actual merger till the construction of a building for CET. Pending their merger, CET and DTA were to plan their work jointly for proper utilisation of resources.

5.26. In 1972-73, Government sanctioned Rs. 5 lakhs to provide accommodation for installation and use of equipment to be supplied to the CET by the international organisation. Before obtaining the approval of its Executive Committee, the NCERT proposed to Government in July 1974 the construction of a separate building within its campus for both CET and DTA for which Government released Rs. 10 lakhs in March, 1976, though no detailed estimates had been prepared by then. The NCERT had asked a private architect to prepare in July 1974 a master plan and in February, 1975, a blue print for the building. So far (October, 1979) no agreement had been entered into with the architect, who had been paid Rs. 0.54 lakh "on account" and whose bill for Rs. 0.64 lakh was pending with the NCERT since January 1977. The CPWD with whom Rs. 10 lakhs were deposited in March 1976 for undertaking the construction work, was unwilling (October, 1977) to share responsibility for the work with a private architect. The work of construction had not commenced so far (October 1979) and, in the meantime, the CET had been accommodated in 2 rented private buildings since March, 1976 on a monthly rent of Rs. 0.08 lakh (aggregating to Rs. 2.81 lakhs till March, 1979). The private accommodation could provide only half of the assessed requirement of space (September 1978) to the CET and an expenditure of Rs. 2.17 lakhs had been incurred to set up a temporary sound studio in the private premises.

5.27. According to the programme, the CET needed 27 technical posts of film editors, cameramen, etc. from the first year of operation; no technical staff was appointed till the fifth year i.e. 1977-78 and only 6 out of the 49 technical posts sanctioned in June 1978 had been filled in so far (September 1979). Out of equipment worth Rs. 12.59 lakhs received in 1975 and 1976 by the CET from an international organisation, equipment worth Rs. 1.93 lakhs was commissioned after a delay of 2 to 3 years while equipment worth Rs. 5 lakhs was commissioned after a delay of more than 3 years. The delays in utilisation of equipment were due to inadequate space, shortage of technical staff and inadequate electric power supply. Government stated (January 1980) that the delay in filling up the sanctioned posts had been due to the lengthy processes involved in finalising recruitment rules and selection procedures.

[Paragraph 32 (sub paras 7.1 to 7.4) of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil)].

(a) *Goals and strategies*

5.28. According to audit paragraph, the programmes, goals, etc. for Centre for Educational Technology were not prescribed till December, 1978 although the need for laying them down was indicated by Managing Committee in April, 1973. Explaining the position, the Ministry have stated*:

“It is true that the Managing Committee in its first meeting (April 1973) decided that long term and short term goals, appropriate strategies and suitable programmes for the Centre for Educational Technology should be laid down; but the Committee also clarified that this should not mean that no programme should be started till the deliberations of the working group (to be constituted for this purpose) become available. It stated that the programmes listed in the draft project agreement for which the support of Government of India was already there and support of UNDP was accepted, could begin immediately.

After running the programme for sometime and gaining some insight as to what can and can not work in the area of the Educational Technology in this country, a National Seminar was held at Mysore from 14th to 16th June 1976 and a paper defining the tasks and goals emerged out of the deliberations

*Not vetted in Audit.

of this seminar. To give a shape to the programmes which would emerge out of this theoretical back up, the Chairman who has already authorised to constitute the working group by the Managing Committee for this purpose set up a Committee. This Committee met on 1-4-77, 23-7-77 and 28-9-77. Subsequently, as the Ministry of Education itself was setting up a larger working group on Educational Technology, the work of this Committee came to an end and the goals as laid down by the working group of the Ministry of Education were adopted by the C.E.T."

(b) Merger of DTA and C.E.T

5.29. Referring to the decision taken by the NCERT in July 1979 to merge the Department of Teaching Aids and the Centre of Educational Technology since their functions were similar, the Committee enquired about the reasons for delay in effecting the merger. The Ministry of Education have stated :

"The merger of Centre for Educational Technology and D.T.A. was decided upon by the Executive Committee in 1977 but the actual merger was postponed by the Executive Committee themselves till the construction of a technical building which can house both the departments of C.E.T. and D.T.A."

5.30. During evidence, the Education Secretary stated :

"It is true that it was decided that the two Departments should be merged though there is a slight distinction between the functioning of the two Departments. There were certain difficulties in this merger and it is taking sometime. One is about personnel problem but it is not completely insurmountable and we hope it will be possible to do it...the main handicap...is the building. The architect who was selected by the then Director was on some rational ground and it was felt that an architect who had successfully completed the work in AIR should be entrusted with this work. It is quite true that it would have been better if the initial coordination with the CPWD had been established from the very beginning. The CPWD who agreed to this architectural structure seemed to have booked out later. Decision was thereupon taken that AIR people should construct the building. There was some delay in the re-constitution of the Building and Works Committee. We have to discuss it with Works and Housing Ministry, I&B Ministry and so on."

5.31. In reply to a further question, the witness informed the Committee that it would take nearly three to four years to complete the building.

5.32. In a subsequent note, the Ministry have informed the Committee as follows :

“Though it was decided in consultation with the CPWD that an agreement may be executed by the Council with M/s. Raj Rewal & Kuldip Singh, the private architects, (indicating therein, the different stages of the job and the amount to be paid to them on the completion of each stage) and the draft agreement was sent to the CPWD for vetting as far back as in March, 1977, the CPWD failed to respond despite repeated reminders. However, subsequently the CPWD intimated their difficulty in dealing with M/s. Raj Rewal the private architects sometime in July, 1978. Status-quo continues till date. In view of this NCERT has now proposed that the Council may entrust the construction of the building to the Building Agency of All India Radio which has gathered enough experience in the field and hence would be in a better position than CPWD to construct the building.

The Chief Engineer of the All India Radio was consequently requested by the Principal, CET with prior approval of the Council to intimate their willingness to undertake this work as well as the terms and conditions thereof. In response to this the All India Radio intimated on 3rd November 1979 that they would be in a position to undertake the said work subject to broad condition as outlined by them. Thereafter the Council sent a proposal to A.E.A. (Works) for advice. The proposal contained the history of the case, the circumstances that compelled the NCERT to submit the proposal for entrusting the work to the building agency of AIR and all other relevant information.

The A.F.A. (Works) however, advised that since the engagement of private architect attracted notice of the audit, the matter may be taken to the Building and Works Committee whenever reconstituted.

Now that a new Building and Works Committee has been constituted, the matter of C.E.T/D.T.A. building is being placed before this Committee alongwith details of the complete case right from initiation to the present stage for consideration and a decision regards building agency. Status of private-architect and any other directions.”

5.33. Asked to state the steps taken to prevent duplication of staff and equipment till the merger was completed, the Ministry have furnished the following note :

“A number of steps have been taken to ensure that there is a full utilisation of the staff and equipments of these two departments and that duplication of efforts is avoided. The foremost among these is the setting up of a coordination committee in area of Educational Technology to decide the programmes to be taken up by both the Department of C.E.T. and D.T.A. Further, to the extent possible distinction and demarcation of the area of operation of CET and DTA has taken place in that CET deals with distant learning systems like Radio, T.V. and Films, while D.T.A. is concentrating on direct learning systems like charts, slides and tapes and such other low cost teaching aids.”

5.34. As per audit paragraph, Government released Rs. 10 lakhs in March, 1976 to provide accommodation for installation and use of equipment to be supplied to the CET though no detailed estimates had been prepared by them. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry of Education have furnished the following note explaining the points raised by Audit:

“Government approved the release of Rs. 10 lakhs to CPWD prior to the preparation of estimates since it was anticipated by them that actual submission of the estimates by CPWD would be done very shortly and they did not want the amount provided in the budget for this costly building to lapse.

The then Director NCERT had desired that the best architect should be found for the preparation of blue print etc., of the proposed technical building. The CET, therefore, selected M/s. Raj Rewal and Kuldip Singh who had won the first prize in the competition organised by the A.I.R. This was approved by the Managing Committee of the CET. While asking the private architect to undertake the assignment, the Council had made it very clear to them that the fees would be based on the scale of Institute of Architects and accepted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The payment of the bills for Rs. 0.64 lakhs has not yet been made because, firstly the agreement has not yet been signed and secondly because the architects are yet to complete the jobs to which these fees pertain. The CPWD has not yet vetted the draft agreement sent to them as far back as in March, 1977.

“The blue print etc. prepared by M/s. Raj Rewal and Kuldip Singh have been got revalidated by the Delhi Development Authority.

AIR which was approached to undertake the construction of the CET building has agreed to start the work on the basis of these drawings. These drawings can, therefore, be utilised by AIR for the construction of the CET/DTA building. That being so, the funds spent so far cannot be considered to have been wasted."

Appointment of Technical Staff

5.35. According to the audit paragraph, the CET needed 27 technical posts of film editors, cameraman etc. from the first year of operation. No technical staff was however, appointed till the fifth year, i.e. 1977-78 and only 6 out of the 49 technical posts sanctioned in June 1978, had been filled in till September, 1979. The Committee desired to be apprised of the reasons for not filling in the sanctioned posts. The Ministry have intimated:

The following calendar of events gives a broad view of the time taken by the Council to take various steps to provide the necessary staff to C.E.T.

- (i) Date of creation of posts of CET-29.6.1978
- (ii) Date of framing of Draft Rules for Recruitment by the Committee constituted for the purpose - 14.8.1978
- (iii) Date of approval of the same by the establishment Committee - 18.9.1978.
- (iv) Date of ratification by the Executive Committee - 23.12.1978.
- (v) Date of notification - 11.1.1979
- (vi) Date of promulgation - 14.2.1979
- (vii) Advertisement sent to - 11.6.1979 DAVP

The Council advertised 21 categories of positions involving 48 posts out of which selection has already been made in respect of most of the posts. Most of the other posts are those which were advertised but the selection committee did not find suitable candidates for them. These posts are now being re-advertised to attract suitable candidates."

5.36. The Committee desired to know whether Government had examined if the work of the Centre of Educational Technology had suffered due to non-appointment or delayed appointment of technical staff. In reply the Ministry have stated:

"Government has not yet made any study of the issue of the effect of non-appointment or delayed appointment of technical staff on the programmes of C.E.T.

However, the Finance Committee of the Council in which the Government is represented has been seized of this problem and have suggested ways and means to fill up the vacancies with short-term appointees pending the finalisation of regular recruitments in order to ensure that the programmes of C.E.T. do not suffer for want of staff."

5.37. The setting up of the Centre for Educational Technology (CET) in 1972-73 for making integrated use of mass media and educational technology at all levels of education represents yet another instance of high thinking but inadequate follow up action to translate an idea into reality. The long and short term goals, appropriate strategies and suitable programmes which were required to be laid down at the time of setting up of the Centre continued to be the subject of academic discussion in Committees and seminars till the Education Ministry itself set up a working group on Educational Technology whose recommendations have now been adopted by the CET.

5.38. A Committee set up by the NCERT in August, 1975 to make a study of the roles of the CET and the Department of Teaching Aids (DTA) recommended merger of the two organisation in view of the similarity of their functions with consequent duplication of staff and equipment. The Committee find that even though, the NCERT decided in July, 1977 to merge the two organisations, the proposal has been shelved till construction of a building to house them is completed. As the CPWD to whom the work was first entrusted and with whom Rs. 10 lakhs were deposited in March 1976 were unwilling to deal with the private architects, it is now proposed to entrust the work to the Chief Engineer, All India Radio. The Committee consider that matters have been allowed to drift for too long and it is time that necessary plans are finalised expeditiously in consultation with the Ministry of Works and Housing and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting so that the merger of the two Departments can be effected and the various programmes can be taken up in an integrated manner.

5.39. The Committee find that a proposal for recruitment of technical staff for the CET was mooted in June, 1978. While most of the posts have since been filled up, recruitment to some of them has been delayed for want of suitable candidates. The Committee would like to emphasise that the staff already available with the two Departments viz. the CET and the DTA should be fully utilised and over-lapping of functions avoided. A critical evaluation of the programmes undertaken by them should be made with a view to ensuring that activities which have failed to make any impact are not proceeded with and necessary adjustments are made in the deployment of staff.

D. Third All India Educational Survey

Audit paragraph

5.40. In June 1969, Government decided that the third educational survey of the country (as on 31st March, 1972) should be taken up by the NCERT to ensure that the results were available in 1972-73 for the preparation of the Fifth Five Year Plan; a provision of Rs. 10 lakhs was made for the purpose in the NCERT's budget for 1972-73, but the NCERT did not take up the work during that year. In April, 1973, Government decided that the survey should be carried out with the cooperation of the State Governments as a central scheme. In June 1973, the NCERT was made responsible for survey of school education and it was decided that basic statistics required for the 5th plan should be collected by 31st March, 1974 and the entire survey completed by 28th February, 1975.

5.41. Against an allocation (January, 1974) of Rs. 50 lakhs for the job, the NCERT had (September, 1979) incurred an expenditure of Rs. 69.96 lakhs (including Rs. 53 lakhs paid to survey officers of State Governments) and in addition an expenditure of Rs. 30.69 lakhs had been incurred by the Registrar General of India (up to December, 1977) on the computer processing of data.

5.42. Though the Ministry had desired (June, 1973) that separate reports should be published on each important theme of the survey, it was only in March, 1976 that it was decided that on the subject of school education 11 statistical reports, 7 thematic studies and 6 in-depth studies would be prepared. By October 1979, only 3 reports had been published while 8 other reports were stated to be in various stages of printing.

5.43. In July 1977, Government recognised that the data on school education collected in the third survey (at a cost of Rs. 1.01 crores) had become too old for effective use in planning and that for formulation of the Sixth Five Year Plan, it was necessary to undertake the fourth educational survey. The States were, therefore, asked (November, 1977) to set up survey units with central assistance and the conduct of the survey had been entrusted to the NCERT, to which an amount of Rs. 59.4 lakhs had been released for the purpose so far (September, 1979). The primary objectives for which expenditure (Rs. 1.01 crores) was incurred on the third survey had thus, not been achieved. Government stated (January, 1980) that the data collected in the third survey had been used by various agencies including the Seventh Finance Commission and that it would be used in future also by various agencies.

[Paragraph 32 (Sub para 8) of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79. Union Government (Civil)]

5.44. The Committee wanted to know as to why the NCERT did not take up the work of the Third Educational survey in 1972-73 although Rs. 10 lakhs were provided in the budget. The Ministry of Education have replied :

“The Ministry of Education had proposed in the draft 1972-73 Plan to carry out the Third Educational Survey in 1972-73. This Survey was proposed to be carried out on the lines of 1st and 2nd Surveys. The Planning Commission was however, of the view that there was no need to carry out a survey all over the country. It was however, suggested by the Planning Commission that a carefully thought out programme could be drawn up for preparing district plans. It was further recommended by the Planning Commission that the grants for this purpose could be given to the State Governments for organising training programmes for preparing district plans. On this there was difference of opinion in the Ministry of Education and Planning Commission. The matter was discussed and it was agreed to carry out the Third Educational Survey. This took sometime. The Ministry of Education had also to consult the State Governments in regard to the items to be included in the survey and State Government level officers had to be trained for carrying out the survey. The survey, therefore, could not be carried out in 1972-73.

The findings of the survey were helpful to the State Governments, Planning Commission and the Ministry of Education in the preparation of the 1978—83 and 1980—85 plans.”

5.45. During evidence, the Secretary of the Ministry stated:

“I would just like to mention that so far as the Third Survey was concerned, there was some difference between the Ministry and the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission at one stage felt that probably ritualistically it was not necessary to go into surveys. Then the Educational Adviser had further discussions and it was felt that it was not the normal repetition of the earlier exercise but it will be a very comprehensive kind of an exercise and this exercise will be complementary to what, I said, would be done by the Institute of Applied Manpower Research and also the National Institute of Educational Planning and certain surveys which the UGC also was undertaking. This will be a very detailed survey altogether and I can give the details of how it differs. Then the Planning

Commission agreed and that is why we lost some time. That is why I mentioned this was started in October, 1973 and it took some time. Once the decision was taken, the entire gamut of activities started between April, 1973 and December, 1973. They included the setting up of the Advisory Committee and the constitution of the Sub-Committees as part of the survey and so on."

5.46. The Committee desired to know whether expenditure incurred on the survey was commensurate with the utilisation of the data collected during the survey. The Ministry have explained the position thus:

"Any realistic planning can be undertaken on the basis of the accurate assessment of the position. In education particularly one has to know thereat which have educational facilities and the areas where institutions will have to be located. It is with these data that one makes an estimate of the resources required and develop rational criteria for the production of educational facilities. The first two All India Educational Surveys had been confined to school education, and in particular to reorganised primary, middle and secondary schools. It was in the Third Survey that for the first time all aspects of education were conveyed on a census basis. The areas covered included higher education, technical and vocational education not leading to a degree, educational administration and inspection and school education. In the area of school education alone, information on pre-primary education, education at primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary stages for both recognised and un-recognised schools, information about every teacher in all types of schools, other schools like Sanskrit Pathasalas, Maktabas, Bible Schools, hostel facilities for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes, teacher educators at elementary and secondary level, institutions for the physically handicapped such as deaf, mute and dumb, blind and orthopaedically handicapped, colleges and institutions of physical education were canvassed. These data have been processed and reports on individual aspects as suggested by the National Advisory Committee for the Third All India Educational Survey have been brought out. The data so collected provided information which allowed the formulation of suitable approaches and programmes for planned, educational development.

Looking at the variety of information that was collected through this survey on a census basis covering nearly 9.65 lakhs habitations in the country as a whole the expenditure incurred

is not unreasonable. Such comprehensive and all inclusive surveys cannot be undertaken time and again. Moreover, a major portion of the funds utilised for the surveys was released to the States for undertaking this survey."

5.47. In a further note, the Ministry have stated:

"All India Educational Surveys conducted so far have provided a lot of useful information on the habitations without schooling facility with them or within reasonable distance. Also these surveys have provided data on the educational institutions, teachers, students, school buildings and equipment. The detailed information collected in these surveys on educational institutions is not available from any other source. In this way the survey data fill a significant gap in the information system for education.

On certain items on which information is collected annually by the Ministry of Education such as class-wise enrolment of students, the survey has helped in checking the reliability of the available information. In some cases, where significant discrepancy was found between the enrolment figures of the survey and the annual educational census, actual verification shows that the survey data help in complementing the information collected in the annual educational census and also provide more reliable information. However, in future such surveys have to be planned taking into consideration the specific data needed at a particular given time. Experience of the previous surveys will certainly help in deciding the items of information to be covered on a complete enumeration basis and the items put on a sample basis. Also the experience gained will prove useful in planning and organisation of similar surveys in future. Most of all these periodical surveys have driven home the point that the States and the Districts should have trained survey staff on continuous basis as they would form the essential linkage to the National Information Centre being planned by NCERT. Such a machinery can help in providing the required data to the Educational Planners readily and without any time lag at any point of time."

5.48. The Committee drew the attention of the Ministry to the following observations made by the Director, NCERT during the inter-depart-

mental meeting on the fourth All India Educational Survey held on 21 July, 1977 in the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare:

“Dr. Mitra was of the opinion that the methods and machinery followed in the case of Third Educational Survey were not conducted to the attainment of the desired results, rather they posed hindrance resulting in confusion. The state authorities did not take the responsibility of the figures collected and submitted by them to the NCERT and only depended upon the NCERT for the final figures. The method proved to be costly. Hence less expensive and surer methods should be adopted in the case of any future survey.”

5.49. Commenting on the above, the Ministry have stated:

“During the Third Survey as many as 26 schedules covering not only the areas of school education but also the allied areas of school education (as mentioned in para earlier) were canvassed. For this purpose both manual tabulation as well as computerisation of the data had been adopted. On account of this, the cost had increased considerably and the time taken was also more. Keeping those points in view in the Fourth Survey only 2 schedules were canvassed. In this case only manual processing was resorted to. Consequently the cost of computerisation to the tune of about Rs. 30.5 lakhs has been reduced in the Fourth Survey. However, the method of conducting this survey remained the same as also the machinery deployed both at the central as well as the State level.

Thus, it can be seen that definite improvement in planning, designing and processing of the schedules in relation to the specific objectives was made in the Fourth Survey as compared to the Third Survey.”

5.50. According to audit paragraph, the Ministry of Education had desired in June 1973 that separate reports of the Third All India Educational Survey should be published on each important theme of the survey and it was only in March, 1976 that it was decided that on the subject of school education 11 statistical reports, 7 thematic studies and 6 in-depth studies would be prepared. By October 1979, only 3 reports had been published. During evidence, the Committee enquired if the work of compilation of

the data gathered during the course of the survey and publication of Reports had been completed. The Education Secretary stated:

“After the publication of the Statistical Reports as well as the theme oriented reports, a few are still to come. One or two will be available. I think a few of the statistical reports will be got next month. So far as the theme oriented reports are concerned, there is some change in the secondary Education. So, these will have to be re-done. As far as primary teachers education is concerned, the report will be available next month. The language and media of instruction will also be available in time. . . . This month quite a number of them have been published.”

5.51. In a further note, the Ministry have stated.

“It was only after the data had become available that a view could be taken as to the number and types of reports that could be brought out on the basis of the information that the Third Educational Survey had thrown up. The entire data called for had become available only in 1976. On March 17, 1976 the sub-committee decided that apart from 11 statistical reports, 7 theme oriented studies would be brought out on the basis of the data which had been collected by canvassing 27 schedules. Out of the 11 statistical reports which were planned to be brought out the data indicated that the information was not good enough in respect of two items viz. School Finance and Examination Results as to be presented in the form of reports. Thus, instead of 11 statistical reports, it was decided to publish only 9 reports. However, in a subsequent discussion, it was decided to make two reports in respect of hostel facilities for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes instead of combining them into one as planned earlier. Out of 18 statistical and theme oriented reports, 8 reports have been printed, 7 report being printed and 2 reports are to be printed.”

5.52. The Third Educational Survey conducted by NCERT at the instance of Government was intended to make available the basic statistics for preparation of the Fifth Plan. Although a decision in this regard was taken as early in June 1969 so as to ensure that the results were available. In 1972-73 there was delay in starting the work due to difference of opinion between the Ministry of Education and the Planning Commission regarding the usefulness of the survey. The work could be started only in October, 1973 and was completed by the end of February, 1975 at a total cost of Rs. 101.69 lakhs.

5.53. The Committee find that in their enthusiasm to carry out a comprehensive and "all inclusive survey, as many as 27 schedules were prescribed requiring voluminous data to be collected and processed. Thus a project which had already been delayed for want of clear perception of the requirements was further delayed. By the time the data became available, it was already outdated. The Committee find that even the question of finalising the number and types of reports that would need to be brought out was postponed till the results became available. The Committee see no reason why this matter could not have been finalised at the time of drawing up the schedule. It is still more surprising that even though the survey work had been completed in February, 1975, decision regarding the number of reports and thematic studies was taken only in March, 1976. The Committee consider that the authorities concerned were remiss in not planning the survey work properly. This is regrettable.

5.54. The Committee find to their dismay that even the printing and publication of statistical reports and thematic studies has been proceeded with in a lackadaisical manner. As in March, 1981, out of 17 statistical and theme oriented reports, 8 had been printed, 7 others were reported to be under print while the remaining two were yet to be printed.

5.56. In this connection, the Committee note that observations of the that occurred at various stages in course of carrying out the Third Educational Survey, in processing the data and publishing the Reports thereon. The Committee require that the matter be investigated thoroughly with a view to ascertaining the reasons for such delays and taking necessary remedial measures for the future. The Committee would like to be apprised of the outcome of the enquiry.

5.56. In this connection, the Committee note that observations of the Director, NCERT, made during the course of an inter-departmental meeting on the 4th All India Educational Survey held on 21 July 1977, to the effect that "the methods and machinery followed in the case of the Third Educational Survey were not conducive to the attainment of the desired results, rather they posed hindrance resulting in confusion. The State authorities did not take the responsibility for the figures collected and submitted by them to the NCERT and only depended upon the NCERT for the final figures. The method proved to be "costly".

It has been claimed that a definite improvement in planning designing and processing the of the schedules in relation to the specific objectives was made in the fourth survey.

5.57. Although the machinery for collecting the data in the field has necessarily to be provided by the States, the Committee consider that the field officers of the NCERT and the Regional Colleges should be actively involved in such surveys. The States no doubt realise the immense use to which the data collected in these surveys can be put in the planning process. Checking on the veracity and authenticity of the data is therefore as much in their own interest as in that of the Central Government.

E. Supply of science kits

Audit paragraph

5.58. In 1976, the UNICEF placed an order for the supply of 9018 primary science kits during 1976-77 with the NCERT at the quoted rate of Rs. 210 (including forwarding charges) per kit. The NCERT also accepted (1976-77) orders from 5 State Governments for supplying 1623 science kits at the same rate. A scrutiny in audit of the records of the NCERT, however, revealed that the price of Rs. 210 per kit for supply to the UNICEF had been erroneously worked out, the total price per kit worked out to Rs. 223.39. The incorrect price fixation resulted in a loss of Rs. 1.42 lakhs on the supply of 9018 kits to UNICEF and 1623 kits to the States.

[Paragraph 32 (Sub-para 9) of the Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil)]

5.59. The Committee desired to know whether the NCERT produced science kits on its own or on demand and how the cost of production of the kits was worked out. The Secretary of the Ministry stated:

“As regards the question of kits, the effort of the NCERT was to see how the teaching of science in schools could be upgraded. That was the rationale behind the preparation of the kits. The first big order which the NCERT got was from the UNESCO. Frankly speaking, this also provided a fair amount of experience to the people in the workshop in mass production of these kits.

There is the question about loss. There was something wrong in the costing that we had initially done. We have got the details now—not at this time, but slightly earlier. It has been computed by the Audit that each kit should cost Rs. 223.39. From the costing which was done subsequently, postage, salary of the staff engaged in accounts, the entire office expenditure, had been added. We feel that Rs. 16.77 ought to be deducted

before we compute as to what is the amount of loss. At that point of time it was our costing which was wrong. It is a fact that this loss was shown. But my submission is that this is only a notional loss in a sense because of our own costing. The second thing is that the benefit of this did not go to anybody else because these kits were distributed free to some of the schools in the Backward States by the UNICEF. So, far as we are concerned, they gave us a fair amount of experience in preparing these kits. Now we are getting demand even from outside and even from some of the States . . . from Bihar etc., and even from outside the country. Our effort is to popularise these kits. One of the recent orders was for about 10,000 kits from Bihar.”

5.60. According to the Ministry, the loss of Rs. 1.42 lakhs on production of science kits mentioned in the Audit paragraphs was ‘a national loss’ because the kits were distributed free by UNICEF to schools in certain educationally backward States. The Committee, however, find that the costing method adopted by the NCERT was also faulty and the total price per kit would actually be Rs. 206.62 as against Rs. 223.39 worked out earlier.

F. Delays in printing of textbooks

5.61. During evidence, the Committee referred to the reply to S.Q. No. 720 given by the Minister of Education in Lok Sabha on 27 July, 1980 that Government had received various types of complaints regarding corruption, non-use of books, administrative deficiencies, malpractices etc. and enquired about the action taken by Government on those complaints. The Secretary, Ministry of Education stated:

“Various complaints had been received at different times and the same are being looked into. As regards text-books I would like to mention that there has been particularly the difficulty of paper because we get the paper from Norway through STC. Now, we have built up the buffer stock. As regards printing presses we have got with us full details, It is true we have been using private presses but then I would like to mention that Government presses were contacted and they expressed their inability to undertake such a big load. Secondly, Sir, the Government presses wanted higher schedule of rates than the one we got from the private presses. Then the Government presses expressed their inability to use paper in sheet form. They wanted the paper to be in roll form.”

5.62. The Committee pointed out that several mistakes had been noticed in the textbooks printed by the NCERT and desired to know how these had occurred and what remedial measures were being taken in this regard. The Director, NCERT stated:

“We are sorry for certain errors which have crept in, in some of these textbooks. These errors will be corrected very soon, some of these errors crop up at proof stage; some of them crop up at the manuscript stage. We had to undertake a large number of publication work for the new curriculum of 10 plus 2 stage. I would submit in all fairness that various distinguished authors have done their best in the preparation of these textbooks. Sometimes certain mistakes have crept in and these are now being rectified. There is the team of evaluation experts who are going into it. Experts at the State level will also be associated. These will be scrutinised by another committee. Then this will be accepted. It is up to the States to take action.”

5.63. The Committee required about the reasons for delay in printing of textbooks prescribed for students of secondary schools. In reply, the Ministry of Education have stated:

“During the years 1975 to 1980 a number of factors contributed to the delay in the bulk availability of the textbooks prepared and produced by the NCERT. With the experience which has been gained, a number of remedial measures have been adopted and it is expected that these will help in making available all textbooks much before the commencement of the academic session. The paragraphs that follow discuss some of the factors which have caused delay and the remedial steps which have been taken.

The urgent need to prepare and produce textbooks required for the new and upgraded curriculum, developed by the Council for the 10+2 pattern required compressing the text-books production programme into a three-year span viz. 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80. This led to extraordinary pressure on the limited resources of the Departments particularly the Department of Publication. Even during 1975-76 new textbooks on physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, history and geography were prepared and produced as forerunners to the formal changeover to the 10+2 pattern commencing in 1977-78

Till 1980-81, textbooks were prescribed by the Central Board of Secondary Education and the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

on a year-to-year basis. This meant that the entire range of textbooks and workbooks, for Classes I—XII had to be re-printed each year—the total number of titles to be supplied each year being in the neighbourhood of 150—200. In spite of all this, the Council brought out all the titles required for the year 1978-79 academic session by 31 July, 1978.

Late arrival of the Norwegian printing paper for textbooks and cover printing was an important factor in 1979 and even more so in 1980. Although the paper was expected to arrive between September—December 1979, it actually arrived in April, 1980. Consequently the printing of a large number of textbooks was delayed.

From February, 1980 onwards there was drastic power shedding. This, along with the late arrival of paper led to the upsetting of the printing schedules, so that a number of books became available in the market in August, 1980 instead of June-July 1980. However the number of such titles was small, six titles compared to the total number of 175 titles.

In July, 1979 there was a total book binders strike all over Delhi, the effects of which lasted a full month. In some printing presses which were printing our textbooks, work suffered because of labour strike.

Remedial measures

In spite of the difficulties encountered, every effort has been made to make most of the textbooks available to sale outlets before the onset of the academic session. Most of the titles—90 out of 124 in 1978-79, 170 out of 176 in 1979-80 and 161 out of 186—were either already in stock or made available by July of the year. Most of the remaining titles became available by August of the year.

With a view to making textbooks available well ahead of the onset of the academic session NCERT has launched its textbook printing programme much earlier than it has been able to do in the last few years. The printing of textbooks for 1981-82 for Classes I—VIII was commenced at the end of November, 1980 and supplies of all textbooks for Classes I—VIII are scheduled to be received from the presses by 30 April, 1981.

The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has decided to prescribe the NCERT textbooks which are currently available for three academic sessions. NCERT is, therefore, in a position to print

textbooks for Classes I—XIII for two sessions at a stretch. While the requirement for 1981-82 will be received by the end of April, 1981, that for 1982-83 will be received during July—December, 1981. This will ensure that for 1982 academic session textbooks for Classes I—VIII will begin to be distributed by January, 1982.

The Central Board of Secondary Education has prescribed the current textbooks for Classes X & XII for three academic sessions and textbooks for Classes IX and XI for two academic sessions. In view of the load both on the Publication Department and the printing presses—because of the decision to print textbooks for Classes I—VIII for two years—it has been decided to print textbooks for Classes X—XII for one year only, with sufficient margin being given to the supply exceeding the demand estimated in the Council.

In view of the difficulties experienced during 1979 and 1980 as a result of the delays in the arrival of Norwegian paper, the Council has built a buffer stock of paper so as to ensure that the printing programme for the session 1981-82 is not adversely effected by short supply of paper. Further, the Norwegian paper consignments for 1980 have already arrived and further buffer stocks are being built-up for the next session.”

5.64. The Committee enquired whether the NCERT had taken any steps to increase the sale of their textbooks and improve their acceptability. The Director, NCERT stated:

“You have raised a question which is very difficult to answer. The textbooks which have been prepared by NCERT, have been done by eminent persons and by some distinguished scientists and social scientists. We have no doubt that they will compare very favourably with any textbooks anywhere in the world. But they don't sell in the States because every State has an autonomous Board of Secondary Education. That Board recommends its own syllabus, which is different from the syllabus of the CBSE. Moreover, at every level, Education is controversial, e.g. in curriculum, textbooks and teaching methods. For example, with regard to science, integrated science at the middle school level is not accepted in some States. Scientists are themselves divided, whether it should be integrated science or general science. So, some States would

depend on their subject-matter experts. They are the advisers to the State authorities. They say: "We will not accept NCERT textbooks." There are textbook corporations and other vested interests. Our effort is to involve such people in the Conference of Boards of Secondary Education which takes place annually, and to place across this idea, viz.: "Have a look at your books, and our books. And if you feel that our books are slightly better than yours, why not accept them with slight modifications, if necessary?" We have always said that they are most welcome to modify our books to suit their needs. Even that does not take place, because of local factors."

5.65. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry of Education have furnished the following note indicating the value of titles which remained unsold during 1975-76 to 1979-80:

"As long as books are not de-prescribed, the balance stock held by the Council is sold during the next school session. In this connection, it is relevant to point out that while fixing the print order for various prescribed textbooks an addition of 15 to 25 per cent is invariably made to the anticipated level of consumption in order to avoid any possible shortage and also to provide for the demand of textbooks by institutions opened during that academic session.

It is only in respect of the titles which have been de-prescribed that the question of disposal of the surplus stock arises. For instance during 1975-76 to 1978-79; as many as 51 titles (out of 300 titles) became surplus due to their withdrawal by the Central Board of Secondary Education from its prescribed list and also because of the need to prepare new textbooks for the 10+2 curriculum. The value of these titles was Rs. 19.98 lakhs. In regard to these titles the Executive Committee decided that surplus stocks of textbooks lying with the Council should be distributed to the Centres for Continuing Education and other educational institutions through the agency of all India Primary Teachers' Federation. The balance stock of 20,20,264 books as on 31-3-1980 contains books which are currently in use in schools and would have been sold for the 1980-81 academic session. Only 32,000 books out of them are surplus in the sense of not being prescribed."

5.66. Asked if any text-book had been withdrawn by the NCERT due to printing mistakes during the last years, the Ministry have replied:

“No textbooks has been withdrawn during the last five years owing to printing errors, and no loss has been incurred because of withdrawal of textbooks owing to printing errors.”

5.67 Delays in the availability of text books prepared and produced by the NCERT has been the subject of much public criticism during the last few years. It has been stated that delays during the years 1975 to 1980 were due to extra-ordinary pressure on the limited resources of the Departments concerned on account of the urgent need to prepare and produce textbooks required for the new and upgraded curriculum which required compressing of the text-book production programme into a three year span 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80. It was also stated that delays in receipt of paper from Norway also affected the production programme during 1970 and even more so in 1980. It should have been realised that non-availability of textbooks in time would under-mine and affect the whole educational system. The kingpin of any educational system is the availability of teachers and textbooks. All other facilities are ancillary to the presence of a teacher and the availability of a textbooks. Hence, if textbooks are not available or are not of the requisite standard and quality, the entire educational system would be weakened and the purpose of imparting knowledge defeated. It is in this context that one should give most serious consideration to this major task of preparing standard and relevant textbooks and that too at reasonable price and at proper time. It is unfortunate that the NCERT did not make proper arrangements to gear up the machinery for ensuring the timely availability of the textbooks. The Committee strongly recommend that NCERT should give high priority to this task.

5.68 The Committee note that till 1980-81 both the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and the Central Board of Secondary Education were prescribing the books on a year to year basis which meant reprinting of each title every year. However, they have now decided to prescribe the current text books for three academic sessions. During 1975-76 to 1978-79 as many as 51 titles are stated to have become surplus due to their withdrawal by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The value of these titles is Rs. 19.98 lakhs.

5.69. As both these institutions are under the direct control of the Central Government, the Committee consider it unfortunate that such a situation was allowed to continue for years together causing waste of precious resources and unnecessary hardship to students.

5.70. It was stated in evidence that the text books prepared by the NCERT compare very favourably "with any textbooks anywhere in the world. But they do'nt sell in the States because every State has an autonomous Board of Secondary Education. There are textbook Corporations and other vested interests. It is common knowledge that there has been a mushroom growth in recent years of private agencies publishing cheap and sub-standard books all over the country. In fact, this has become a profit making business for some people/organisations and is having a detrimental effect on the educational system. This mercenary approach in text book production and commercialisation of interest in matters educational remain serious impediments to the growth of a healthy and purposeful educational system. This drift must be immediately checked by all concerned. The Committee consider that the NCERT should intensify its efforts to bring out quality textbooks. It is also necessary to involve the educational authorities in the States in a systematic and coordinated manner so that the books prepared by the NCERT get wider recognition and acceptability in all States of the Union.

G. National Talent Search Schemes

5.71. During evidence, the Committee enquired about the justification for entrusting the National Talent Search Scheme to NCERT. The Education Secretary stated:

"It is felt that they have the expertise in identifying the talent and the areas for which these scholarships should be given. That is why this work was given to them. It was felt that it would be reinforcing their own effort and their own academic expertise so far as identification of the talent and working out even the criteria is concerned."

5.72. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry of Education have furnished the following note regarding the objectives and

achievements of the National Science Talent Search Scheme:

“The National Science Talent Search Scheme was stated in 1964. It was at that stage confined to basic sciences only. From 1977 onwards the scheme has been extended to cover social sciences and studies in engineering and medicine.

The objective of the scheme under the National Science Talent Search Scheme was to identify and nurture talented Students in sciences and give them financial assistance towards the best possible education so that they may develop and serve the discipline by doing research work in basic sciences. Almost 48 per cent of the candidates could not avail of the scholarship right at the beginning when the scheme was confined to basic sciences (because they preferred to go in for engineering and medicine). Even in case of basic science there was considerable drop even after the students had taken the scholarship.

A Review Committee considered this question in 1976 and suggested that apart from basic sciences scholarships should be awarded to talented students opting for social sciences. It was also recommended that students in engineering and medicine be also brought within the purview of the scheme. The main objective for expanding the scope of the scheme was to ensure that the Council should identify and support talent in overall national interest, irrespective of the fact whether students study basic sciences, social sciences, medicine, engineering or agriculture. The objectives of the revised scheme are therefore to identify and nurture talent in social sciences and sciences.

Another modification that has been effected in the scheme is to identify talent at an early stage i.e. class X so that it may be supported at the +2 Stage as well. These modifications have resulted in an almost cent percent retention in the education system of the scholars who have been selected under this scheme.

The effectiveness of the scheme has been evaluated and the findings are encouraging as most of the States have indicated that the scheme has produced a positive effect and led to the improvement of science education.”

5.73. Asked to state the percentage of such students who were awarded scholarship but did not continue their study after graduation, the Ministry have stated:

“A study was conducted in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation of the Council to find out the reasons for students drop-out for the period 1967 to 1976. The reasons as identified below in the study are given below along-with the percentage of dropouts:

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
(i) Nothing Communicated (probably they went in for Engineering or Medicine)	59%
ii) Gave up basic sciences	34%
(iii) Went abroad	3%
(iv) Could not secure 1st class	6%
(v) Gave up Studies	1%
(vi) Poor progress	3%
(vii) Ill health/death	1%
(viii) Took up some job	1%
(ix) Other minor or unstated reasons	2%

With the extension of the scheme so as to cover social sciences, engineering, medicine and agriculture no students' drop-out is revealed. The retention rate is now almost cent-percent.”

5.74. A study conducted by the Department of Measurement and Evaluation of the NCERT into the causes of drop outs among National Science Talent Search Awardees during the period 1967—76 found the drop out rate to be 'alarming'. It also revealed that only a fraction of talented scholars have reached the level of Ph.D. It was in fact at the initial stage itself that most of the talent got lost because of the stipulation that the student must offer basic sciences. Of those who actually availed of the scholarship, almost 70 per cent dropped out at the BSc. stage because of the awardee not getting first class.

5.75. The Committee observe that as a result of the review of Science Talent Search scheme, belated though it was, the scope of the scheme has been extended so as to cover, besides basic sciences,

such other branches of knowledge as social sciences, engineering, medicine and agriculture. The retention rate is consequently stated to have improved to almost cent per cent. While welcoming this step, the Committee would like the NCERT to secure the assistance and guidance of other educational organisations/individuals in conducting this programme and in evaluation the results. The Committee further suggest that the NCERT should keep liaison with the National Committee on Science and Technology in so far as science subjects are concerned so that the best talent could be attracted to areas where it may be most needed.

The Committee recommend that an evaluation of the extended scheme may be under-taken periodically, so as to ascertain the impact of the programme and how it could be made more effective.

CHAPTER VI

REVIEW OF THE WORK AND PROGRESS OF THE NCERT

Audit Paragraph

6.1. In accordance with the provisions of the NCERT's Memorandum of Association, the functioning of the NCERT was last reviewed in 1968 by a committee appointed by Government. Some of the committee's recommendations were accepted by Government, while others were referred (August 1969) to the Executive Committee for examination and decision; the later directed (November 1969) the Director to consider those items which were not implemented. The NCERT stated (July 1979) that the contents of the report as well as decisions of Government had been kept in view in deciding the policies and programmes of the Council. Although the NCERT's expenditure had increased and its activities had expanded since 1968, Government had not undertaken any fresh appraisal of its working so far (October 1979).

[Paragraph 32 (3) of Advance Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1978-79, Union Government (Civil)]

6.2. The Committee desired to know the reasons why Government did not review the activities of the NCERT since 1968 as required by clause 6 of the Council's Memorandum of Association. The Ministry of Education have replied:

"Clause 6 of Memorandum of Association of NCERT reads as below:

The Government of India may appoint one or more persons to review the work and progress of the Council and to hold enquiries into the affairs thereof and to report thereon in such manner as the Government of India may stipulate; and upon receipt of any such report, the Government of India may take such action and issue such directions as it may consider necessary in respect of any of the matters dealt with in the report and Council shall be bound to comply with such directions.

In addition, the Government of India may at any time issue directives to the Council on important matters of policy and programmes."

Thus, it may be seen that there is no limit of periodicity laid down in the Council's Memorandum of Association for ordering the review by the Government.

However, after 1968 there had been certain periodical reviews over the working of NCERT, though they were not ordered by the Government under clause 6 of the Memorandum of the Association.

In 1974 an Internal Study Group was set up by the Council in pursuance of the recommendations of the Executive Committee to make an in-depth study of the Council's work and on suggestions which had been made by the members of Parliament and others about the functions of the Council. Based upon the recommendations of this Study Group the Council was reorganised.

In 1977, on a suggestion made by the Ministry of Education, the Council consulted Administrative Staff College of India for developing an optimal organisational structure which would improve the efficiency of the various Departments particularly with a view to meeting the new challenges and educational priority laid by the Government.

The recommendations of this study team were considered by the Executive Committee of the Council in 1978. In pursuance of the decisions of the Executive Committee the Council has already undertaken substantial reorganisation of its work. Among others, the steps that have been taken include: development of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms, establishment of Coordinating Committee with a view to avoiding duplication of programme effort and constitution of advisory committees on curriculum and Elementary and Secondary Education for advising the Council on programme priorities.

The then Education Secretary (Shri P. Sabanayagam) undertook a review of the programmes of the Council on a department to department basis. This review generally appreciated the directions in which the Council was moving and the work that the various Departments had done. It indicated some changes in the organisational structure and suggested that efforts should be made to translate into practice the findings of the Council's research and development work and for disseminating information about the work that

the Council was doing, so that States and State level institutions could take benefit of the available expertise.

The Education Secretary also inter-alia stated that no further review of the working of the Council was considered necessary at this stage."

6.3. During evidence, the Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture (Deptt. of Education) stated:

"The NCERT will be celebrating its 20 years of existence. The colleges have been set up subsequently. During this period there have been a number of reviews of various kinds but before I bring some of these things to your notice, I want to mention, that NCERT is a very unique kind of institution. There is no single institution of a similar kind anywhere either in the developed or in the developing world. It has an omnibus character of its own and it has to function in a federal system where much of the work is to be done in the States. The overall policy is decided at the Centre but the States have a fair amount of flexibility. The other thing I would like to mention is that there is a little bit of historical background in the setting up of this organisation and that is why there have been quite a few problems in this respect. Those problems have not enabled this institution to acquire a distinct identity of its own. So many organisations were set up at different times with different purposes—sometimes just as a part of the Ministry and so on—and after some time they were all merged, and always there have been some compelling circumstances which prompted the merger of those organisations. I would also like to point out that that was the reason that for quite sometime, though the NCERT was set up, we did not have a full time Principal. We had a Principal in the beginning but he was actually the Joint Secretary from the Ministry, and then we did not have the Joint Director for sometime. This is the background to the setting up of the NCERT. But so far as the basic objectives of the NCERT and the review of its activities is concerned, the Nag Chaudhary report in 1968-69 gave a new direction to the working, the purposes and the functioning of this institution. This was the first major review and it is included in Clause 6 of the Memo-

randum of Association. In that sense it was a formal review that was ordered. But in 1974 there was an internal study group set up by the Council itself. That was set up because of certain suggestions made by the PAC. In 1977, the Council appointed the Administrative Staff College of India as consultants. Later on, there was also another review by the Education Secretary himself. This was done sometime in 1979. He submitted a fairly detailed report. Only three or four departments of the unit were left out by him. He adopted a detailed procedure asking for a lot of information in advance and then questioning the staff. He went area-wise. Besides that, there have been a number of specific area reviews."

6.4 He added:

"In clause 6, there is no periodicity as such. The question of review can be from three angles—passage of time, expenditure and extension of the activities of the organisation. Taking all these into account, there have been continuing reviews. The PAC's Report on NCERT was another review... So far as its activities are concerned, our focus has been on the area of work. A large number of Committees have gone into it."

6.5. The Committee pointed out that as per the General Financial Rules, in the case of substantially aided institution of this type where the expenditure incurred amounts to Rs. 11 crores per year, a review of the performance of the institution should be undertaken after every three or five years. The Committee enquired about the reasons for not conducting a review of the functioning of the NCERT as per the General Financial Rules. The Secretary of the Ministry stated:

"I think even the Annual Plan discussions provide the Government a fair amount of indepth review of the functioning of this institution, whether it is the programme or the expenditure. Probably I am not very clear, but I think this particular achievement-cum-performance report in regard to non-recurring grants need not be obtained in the case of the Board for Secondary Education. In the case of recurring grants, submission of reports should be insisted upon. But in all other cases, specially in the case of statutory bodies or institutions sponsored by the Government, such reports need not be insisted upon, provided such bodies and institutions present formal annual reports, embodying an account of their general perfor-

mance in that year. I personally feel that perhaps NCERT falls in this category. So far as this institution is concerned, it is quite true that it is still a developing kind of institution because of the change of Government policy and programmes."

6.6. Asked whether in view of the fast changing situation in the field of education and also considering the fact that the NCERT had been in existence for 20 years, a review from all the three aspects mentioned by the witness himself was now called for, the Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture stated:

"....You have made a very valid comment, whenever Government gives a grant, such a probe is necessary. What I am submitting is that this institution is in such a stage of flux, because of the changing policies of the Government, and so the institution has not always been in a position to do its best.....A certain amount of continuity and stability is needed... At the same time it has also to respond to the policy changes of the Government. Sometimes the pressure becomes such that the implementation of the original or continuing work gets a set back. I fully agree that there is need for a probe."

....So far as performance is concerned, effort has been made from time to time that specific claims on the charter are fulfilled. Education reviews by Committees or Commissions frequently are like planting a tree and uprooting it the second day to see how far it has grown. My submission is so far as NCERT is concerned, more time and greater attention in respect of each area of its activity should be given. Instead of bigger probe from outside if the same time is spent in ensuring what remains to be done or seeing whether the implementation is inadequate, probably much greater results will be available....."

6.7. The witness further deposed:

"....My only submission is that from what I see of the various Committees, the functional programme committees, the specific purpose Committees and the Consultancy Report of the Administrative Staff College as well as Dr. Nag Chaudhuri Committee; if we have another Committee at the moment, we will be losing, if not more, at least two years. Here, I would only suggest, as a professional ad-

ministrator that the overall view of what has been done and what has not been done is to be taken into account..

...it is time that the Chairman of the NCERT who is the Education Minister and the Education Ministry themselves should see what can be done....So far as the earlier Report (Sabanayagam Report) is concerned.... it does point out what particular things are being done and what ought to be done.. it does indicate to us certain lines on which we should go so that two things can happen; firstly that there is a distinct identity of this institution which somehow or other, for a number of reasons, is in a fragmented kind of condition and secondly that there is a perspective in the light of the situation that was pointed out of which the Ministry is aware and the Planning Commission is also aware and that there is a task force studying the situation.

6.8. Sharing the concern of the Committee that for many reasons the NCERT had not been allowed to function effectively, the Education Secretary, stated:

"I would like to assure...that the NCERT's working and its activities will certainly be exposed to a very critical scrutiny."

6.9 The Committee referred to the recommendation made by the Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad in its report on NCERT that there was need for a clear definition of the Council's long term purposes in conformity with the objectives already spelt out and enquired about the action taken by Government thereon. The Secretary, Ministry of Education stated:

"I would like to submit that the Executive Council requested at that time Mr. Mathur, Dr. Satish Chandra and the Joint Secretary of the Ministry along with Dr. Mitra to examine this particular question. The Executive Council came to a conclusion that the objectives of the Council shall be to assist and advise the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in the implementation of its policies and major programmes in the field of education, particularly, school education. This is in their minutes dated January 2, 1979. It was felt that so far as long-term goals of the Council are concerned, they are implicit in the functions as visualised or as mentioned in the Memorandum of Association. It was felt that the priorities ought to be

the overall national goals in the educational development and they were defined in the Fifth Plan and now in the Sixth Plan. There were 7 or 8 points. This was the first one that they mentioned. The other one was, the emerging social and economic concerns of the nation, the national integration and so on. It was felt that in these areas, the focus of the NCERT should be there."

6.10. The witness added:

"...I can appreciate the fact that in micro terms we should spell out our operational objectives. We will try to do that. The Executive Committee also appreciated some of these suggestions."

6.11. The Committee observe that a comprehensive review of the performance of the NCERT was made in 1968 by the Nag Chaudhuri Committee. In 1974 an Internal Study Group was set up to make an in-depth study of the Council's work. In 1977 the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad was entrusted with task of suggesting means and methods of developing an optimal organisational structure of the NCERT which would improve the efficiency of its various Departments particularly with a view to meeting the new challenges and educational priorities laid down by the Government.

6.12. The Planning Commission in its meeting held on 24 November, 1978 while considering the annual Plan proposals of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, suggested that "the structure and programme of the NCERT will be critically reviewed by an independent Committee with a view to high-lighting the role which NCERT should play in providing necessary academic and technical support to make school education functional and purposive."

6.13. The Committee learnt that in 1979 the then Education Secretary (Shri Sabanayagam) undertook a review of the Council's programme on a department to department basis after which he indicated some changes in the organisational structure of the NCERT. In view of the review carried out by the then Education Secretary and the earlier review done by the Administrative Staff College of India; it was felt by the Government that further review by another Committee as suggested by the Planning Commission would not be necessary.

6.14. During the course of evidence before the Committee, it was pointed out that the NCERT has to function in a federal system where much of the work falling within the jurisdiction of the NCERT has to be done in the States. It was conceded by the Secretary,

Ministry of Education while tendering his evidence before Committee that due to the changing policies in the educational field, the Council has not always been in a position to do its best so much so that the problems encountered by it "had not enabled this institution to acquire a distinct identity of its own", and that it was "in a fragmented kind of condition."

6.15. The Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad had in their report pointed out among other things that there was need for a clear definition of the Council's long term purposes in conformity with the objectives already spelt out. They observed that the Departments were organised along academic streams, service functions and on the basis of narrow specialisation units. This was a severe constraint in articulating the multi-disciplinary research in pursuing developmental functions and in helping the extension services which were carried out by the various Departments of the NCERT. Therefore it was difficult to sustain and consolidate problem solving expertise.

6.16. The Committee have earlier in this Report drawn attention to some of the constraints and inhibiting factors that impede the proper functioning of the NCERT as a catalytic agent in the field of education. And this, despite the fact over the years, its working has been subjected to a series of reviews. The Committee find that a number of important recommendations made in the reports have still not reached the important and critical stage of implementation. The Committee, therefore, suggest that a Task Force consisting of the representatives of the Ministry, the NCERT and some eminent educationists, should be set up expeditiously to consider within a stipulated period of time the urgent problem of restructuring of the NCERT to restore to it the dynamic, creative and nationally useful role of effectively helping the educational system of our federal democratic republic. Naturally, such a Task Force would draw guidance and help from the several valid recommendations and suggestions made in the Reports of the various committees referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

6.17. Since Education is now a concurrent subject, the Committee consider that the Ministry of Education at the Centre and the NCERT will have to play an even more active role in the process of building a purposeful and stable educational system. The NCERT, as a major educational resource base and a repository of national educational talent must address itself to some of the major challenges facing the country in its march towards building an enlightened society. Urgent attention should be given both by the Ministry of Education and the NCERT to such critical matters like

accelerating the programme for removal of illiteracy throughout the country, improving the standards of school education at the three levels—primary, secondary and higher secondary, providing necessary incentives to children of poor families and better attention to backward areas. Towards that end, greater emphasis would need to be given to the problems of curricula and examination reform, vocationalisation of education, promotion of research and innovations in educational techniques and skills.

6.18. For any such programme to be successful it would be both necessary and desirable to obtain the active cooperation and involvement of all the State Governments. This indeed is the logic of recognising Education as a concurrent subject. Both the Centre and the States have equal stakes and equal obligations, in the flowering of our educational system.

6.19. It has been pointed out that although NCERT has developed a high degree of competence in matters concerning school education, its voice is merely heard by the States, yet its advice is not always followed, since it enjoys no statutory authority. While suggestions are made that NCERT should either be declared as an institution of national importance or given a statutory authority, but the Committee feel that even with its present autonomous status, the NCERT can function effectively provided its role is adequately recognised and respected by the Governments both in the Centre and in the States.

6.20. The Committee believe that the NCERT can also serve as a useful and effective instrument for national integration in the unfolding of our democratic federal polity. The Committee would therefore suggest that the question of revamping its organisational structure should be examined by Government in all its aspects.

6.21. The Committee observe from the Memorandum of Association of the NCERT that the Minister of Education is the ex officio President of the Council as well as of the Executive Committee of the Council. The Minister of State in the Ministry of Education is the Vice-President of the Executive Committee. This places the burden of overseeing the functioning of the NCERT on the Union Minister of Education/Minister of State in the Ministry of Education. The Committee consider that this arrangement is not conducive to the autonomous role assigned to the NCERT. On the one hand this arrangement needlessly puts avoidable strain on Union Minister of Education and Minister of State, and on the other

does not in actual practice help the NCERT in pursuing its programme of work. It would be too much to expect from the Minister of Education or the Minister of State in the Ministry of Education that they would be able to devote the attention required of the President and Vice-President in the proper functioning of the Council. The Committee consider that it would be preferable to have an eminent educationist to head the Council as in the case of the University Grants Commission, as this would be in tune with the autonomous character and role of the NCERT.

6.22. The Committee desire that the suggestions made in the above paragraphs may be examined with utmost care and seriousness so that necessary changes in the constitution of the NCERT may be brought about as expeditiously as possible in order to help it play its assigned major national role.'

NEW DELHI;

April 26, 1981

Vaisakha 6. 1903 (S).

CHANDRAJIT YADAV,

Chairman,

Public Accounts Committee.

APPENDIX

Conclusions/Recommendations

Sl. No.	Para No.of the Report	Ministry/Deptt. Concerned	Conclusions/Recommendations
1	2	3	4
1	2.35	Education and Culture (Deptt. of Education)	<p>Elementary education and adult literacy are the two legs on which the educational system of the country must necessarily stand. Unless these two legs are strong, the country would not be able to move forward. With a view to achieving the goal of universalisation of elementary education and adult literacy, top priority is therefore stated to have been accorded in the Sixth Plan to these two vital sectors. The Committee were informed that the target is to achieve 95 per cent enrolment in the primary classes by the end of the Sixth Plan and 100 per cent by the end of the Seventh Plan. As of today, there are 50 million children in the age group 6—14 outside the school. While the Plan seeks to bring them all into the school, a study conducted by the Planning Commission has shown that in many States the enrolment ratio is not going up because</p>

there is a limit after which the curve does not grow and that it might take 10 to 20 years to achieve cent per cent enrolment. If past performance and the trends of population growth are taken into consideration, there will still be 20 out of 100 children who will not be going to school in the year 2000 A.D. It is obvious from the above trends and the allotment of funds mentioned in the next para that the projections made in the Sixth Plan are over-ambitious.

Education and
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The Committee understand that even in the matter of provision of funds, the outlay on elementary education has been progressively coming down. Starting from 58 per cent of the total outlay on education in the first Plan, it came down to 35 per cent in the Second Plan, 34 per cent in the Third Plan, 23 per cent in the Inter-Plan years ending 1968-69, 30 per cent in Fourth Plan and 32 per cent in the Fifth Plan. Out of a total outlay on education of the order of Rs. 2524 crores proposed in the Sixth Plan as against Rs. 3500 crores asked for by the Ministry of Education, the outlay on primary education has been kept at Rs. 905 crores and on adult education at Rs. 128 crores. The Committee find that the Working Group had proposed an outlay of Rs. 1700 crores and Rs. 230 crores respectively in these two sectors. Thus the entire cut of about Rs. 1000 crores effected in the educational plan has been at the cost of these two vital sectors on which the educational system is supposed to stand.

Article 45 of the Constitution enjoins upon the State to endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. Even as the Constitutional directive for universalisation of primary education remains a distant goal, the Committee consider that all attempts to build up a new nation will fail unless a massive effort is made right now to remove illiteracy. Some unconventional methods and bold steps on mass scale will have to be thought of to tackle this gignatic problem with vision and courage. It is here that the Ministry of Education, the NCERT and other educational organisations in the country should be called upon to devote their attention to the utmost.

The Committee suggest that the services of the unemployed youth should be obtained to tackle the problem of illiteracy. The youth who volunteer to work in this field should be given a modest remuneration and also some priority in the matter of obtaining a regular job. Efforts should also be intensified to secure the help of voluntary agencies to supplement the efforts of the Government.

The Committee also suggest that in order to encourage children of poor parents to attend the school, they should be provided some incentives in the form of stipends so as to compensate to some extent for the loss of earnings to their parents. For this purpose, objective criteria based on the socio-economic condition and income level of the parents should be laid down.

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6	2.40	Ministry of Education and Culture (Deptt. of Education)	<p>The NCERT which has so far been devoting much of its attention to the improvement of secondary education is now stated to have developed competence in the field of elementary education curriculum and preparation of instructional materials. The Committee consider that there is need for optimisation of effort particularly in the matter of training of elementary school teachers where some re-orientation of attitudes is required. The Committee feel that the teachers have to be trained to identify community needs relevant to the area of operation. Particular attention will need to be paid to the nine States which have been identified as backward States and which are stated to be responsible for depressing the all India literacy level. The Committee consider that the NCERT must be equipped so as to be in a position to provide guidelines to the States in the matter of preparation of curricula, training of elementary school educators, monitoring of standards, etc.</p>
7	2.41	Do.	<p>While planning for mass education, the NCERT should also work out an optimum teacher student ratio taking into account the pressing requirements both at the elementary and the secondary stages so that proper guidance could be prepared for the benefit of the education authorities in the States.</p>
8	2.42	Do.	<p>Increasing attention will also have to be paid to the requirements of accommodation for schools, playgrounds, laboratory faci-</p>

lities etc. The Committee consider that the Central Government must take initiative in these matters and carry out a comprehensive study of the requirements during the next 20 years and the measures that would need to be taken to meet the same. The Committee further consider that the question of provision of low cost school buildings made of locally available materials must be considered seriously.

So far as the post elementary stage is concerned, the Committee have been informed that "vocationalisation of education has been the objective for quite sometime but its concretisation has somehow been quite ambivalent at different times." A centrally sponsored scheme for vocationalisation of higher secondary education was launched towards the end of February, 1977 but discontinued from 1 April, 1979 in pursuance of a decision of the National Development Council to transfer a number of centrally sponsored schemes, including the vocationalisation of higher secondary education to the State sector.

Although the 10 plus 2 plus 3 structure was endorsed by the Education Ministers Conference held in July, 1978, there is even now widespread uncertainty and doubts continue to be expressed by responsible sections of the public opinion and those in authority regarding the soundness of the 10 plus 2 plus 3 structure.

The Committee understand that the NCERT have a Tribal Education Unit to study the problem of education of tribal children. A Committee of experts advises the NCERT on the kinds of studies required to be undertaken in this field. A few studies have already been carried out by the NCERT in some of the tribal areas of

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Orissa, Madhya Pradesh etc. The Committee would like to emphasise the imperative need to study comprehensively the special problems of education of tribal children. The Minister of Education|NCERT must, therefore, proceed in this matter in a systematic way in close coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the State Government.

The Committee find that the estimated population of scheduled tribe children in the age group 6—11 is nearly 63.30 lakhs of whom nearly 43.09 lakhs i. e. 68 per cent are enrolled. The No. of Ashram schools in various States/Union Territories is stated to be 1,413 with 1.32 lakhs inmates.

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The Committee observe that the Working Group on development of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes and weaker sections of society set up by the Planning Commission in connection with the formulation of the Sixth Plan (1980—85) has expressed the view that education should become the key section in the Tribal Development Programme. The Committee desire that the inputs required for the purpose should be identified expeditiously and included in the Tribal sub-Plans. In areas outside the purview of the tribal sub-Plans, suitable schemes for education of tribal children should be drawn up. The Committee trust that constraint of resources will not be allowed to come in the way of execution of such schemes.

The NCERT drew up two ambitious programmes in 1976 one for training of 2000 elementary school teacher educators over a five year

period and the other for training of 12000 secondary school teachers annually in content, methodology and evaluation in subjects of the new 10 year curriculum. The Committee, however, note that by September 1979 only 134 elementary school teacher educators had completed the course under the first programme. Out of 12,527 teachers enrolled for the second programme also known as the correspondence-cum-contact programme, 4259 teachers completed the course. The same has not been offered after 1977.

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The Committee have been informed that the non-achievement of targets in the first case was not due to defective planning or execution but due to other extraneous factors such as lack of motivation of teachers and lack of adequate resources with the State Governments to allow the teachers to continue the course. The Committee find that preparation of lessons was also delayed for various reasons. So far as the second programme is concerned, the Committee were informed that even though the target was a modest one in the national context, it was found later on that "the physical facilities provided a constraint to the intake." The Education Secretary admitted in evidence that "the realistic feasibility in the very beginning under the enthusiasm for adoption of 10+2 pattern was not fully kept in view." Before the programme could proceed in full swing, some rethinking took place at the national level on the very desirability of adopting the 10+2 pattern. In the context of the uncertain situation, the enthusiasm of the States to spare teachers in adequate numbers also declined.

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The above instances illustrate how even well thought out programme can founder in the absence of a clear cut long range policy.

The Committee consider that education is too vital and too sensitive an area to be subjected to frequent shifts of policy. A certain amount of continuity and a broad agreement over the basic formulations is therefore of paramount importance.

The Committee are of the view that the work of NCERT will continue to be hamstrung so long as long term strategies are not drawn up. This requires a strong political will which can withstand regional and/or linguistic pulls and pressures and function in a national framework. Total involvement of the States and proper mobilisation of available resources is equally necessary. The NCERT on its part must have a proper appreciation of the felt needs of the States and maintain close touch with educational authorities in the field for the success of its teacher training programmes and other activities.

The Committee find that a four-year integrated course was started in the Regional Colleges of Education with a view to work out a programme of excellence and expertise and there-by help the teacher training institutions in the States to have their training programmes upgraded. The underlying idea was to improve the quality of teachers by adopting the pattern of integrated courses of general and professional education. The Nag Chaudhuri Committee (1968) found that "the experiment of integrated courses is and

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always will be, too costly to be repeated. It can, therefore, only make a marginal contribution to the improvement of teacher education in India". That Committee, therefore suggested discontinuance of the course from the academic year 1969-70. Since then conflicting views have been expressed by different Committees including Dr. Nag Chaudhuri himself who later suggested reopening of the course. As of now, the course stands suspended from July 1976 in all colleges except in the RCE Mysore where the four year course in Science has been continuing.

The Committee have been given to understand that a comprehensive assessment of all the courses provided in the Regional Colleges including the four year course was made in 1974 by the Kapur Committee which found that the course had been academically successful. Considering the views of the National Council for Teacher Education, the State Governments and Vice-Chancellors of Universities, the NCERT has recently decided to revive the four years integrated course in all the regional colleges.

The Committee consider that since the educational policy at the secondary level, particularly in the matter of vocationalisation of education at the +2 stage is still in a state of flux, the NCERT should proceed in the matter with caution. The Committee desire that the academic considerations in favour of the revival of the course should be carefully evaluated in the light of experience gained during the period the course was being offered by the Regional Colleges. The views of the State Governments and their felt needs should be fully taken into consideration.

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Education and Culture
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3-45 The Committee note with surprise that information about the number of trained science teachers i.e. those who are both qualified and trained, is not available with the Ministry of Education. The available statistics show that many teachers teaching science have not studied enough science to teach the subject at a particular stage. For instance, at the primary stage nearly 1.55 lakhs science teachers had not even studied the subject as per findings of the Third Educational Survey. The number of such teachers (who had not studied science at all) at middle, high, school and higher secondary stages was 16,063; 1,841 and 1,297 respectively. The number of teachers teaching science at high and higher secondary stages, without themselves having studied science upto graduate and post-graduate stages, was as high as 38,755 and 25,538 respectively. It was stated in evidence that the problem in this regard was that there were varying criteria in the States according to which they should be considered qualified in the content of science and also in the training technology. It was admitted that "it was a big gap which must be made up".

3-46 Do. The Committee consider that while there may be difference of views and approaches among the State Governments in the matter of medium of instruction or in the methods of teaching, there are certain areas which are so basic like teaching of science and mathematics on which there could hardly be any difference of opinion. As a national institution with national responsibilities, the NCERT

that teacher training in agricultural education could be handled in a better manner by the Agricultural Universities themselves which have got the necessary facilities. The Committee therefore recommend that the work should be assigned to the agricultural universities as early as practicable.

25 3 49 Education and Culture
(Deptt. of Education)

The Committee find that equipment costing Rs. 7.42 lakhs and books costing Rs. 1.10 lakhs were lying surplus to requirements due to closure of the four year integrated course. It has been stated that the question of disposal of the surplus equipment and books needs to be kept in abeyance pending a decision on the question of starting new courses in the colleges. The Committee would suggest that the question of handing over some of the surplus stocks to the State Institutes of Education may also be considered.

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The Committee consider that in the context of the educational goals set out in the Sixth Plan, the expertise and resources of the Regional Colleges should be utilised for accelerating the process of universalisation of elementary education which would require constant monitoring and feedback to the central level. This is the key area where the Regional Colleges can and should play a crucial role. The Committee therefore recommend that the Ministry of Education should in conjunction with the NCERT and the National Council of Teacher Education, work out the operational details and the priorities without delay.

Considering the imperative need for taking effective steps to universalise elementary education as quickly as possible the Committee must lay emphasis on the desirability of building up the four Regional Colleges of Education as comprehensive teacher training institutions so that they are in position to provide the skills that are needed for upgrading the teaching levels in schools.

As their field of functioning encompasses not only elementary education but also high school and the higher secondary stages, the Committee are in agreement with the views of the Administrative Staff College that the Regional Colleges should be developed as Regional Centres of Educational Research and Training so that they can effectively function as the implementing arms both of the NCERT and the National Council of Teacher Education.

Some of the important irregularities/drawbacks in the maintenance of accounts by the NCERT over the five years period ending 1978-79 as pointed out in the audit paragraph, are as follows:

- (i) Detailed explanatory notes listing the new and continuing schemes with justification therefor, were not made available to the Finance and Executive Committees. The Central Government too approved the budget estimates and released grants on the basis of abstract estimates without going into the details;
- (ii) A considerable proportion of the expenditure was incurred in the month of March;

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(iii) The advances paid for carrying out various Plan and non-Plan programmes were treated as final expenditure in accounts;

(iv) Refunds of unutilised advances after the close of the financial year were treated as non-Plan miscellaneous receipts;

(v) Surplus receipts under one head of account were utilised to cover the excess expenditure under some other head of account;

(vi) There were substantial variations between the actual expenditure on programmes and outlays provided in revised estimates for the Units and Department of the NCERT;

(vii) No procedure had been prescribed for watching the programmes of expenditure;

(viii) Substantial funds were diverted from non-Plan to Plan expenditure in contravention of Government's instructions. Such diversions were neither brought to the notice of the Finance and Executive Committee nor were these noticed by Government itself.

The Ministry of Education have informed the Committee that no new scheme is taken up by the Council unless it has had the prior approval of the Executive Committee. "Apart from this overriding

consideration, the Council in practice had not been following any other rigid sets of procedures." The Ministry have admitted that "under the various primary units of accounts the control of expenditure had not been very effective". The phenomenon of rush of expenditure at the fag end of the year has since been analysed and all the Departments of the Council are constantly being advised to streamline their schedule of programme in such a way that they are conducted in a systematic manner throughout the year in order to avoid rush of expenditure in March.

It has been further stated that the excess expenditure incurred by the Council was met out of the surplus receipts to meet the compelling commitments of textbooks publication programmes of the Council and that prior approval of Government was not obtained.

The Committee find that funds to the tune of over Rs. 91 lakhs were diverted during the years 1973-74, 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 from non-plan to Plan expenditure. The Education Secretary assured the Committee that instructions had since been issued to prevent such unauthorised diversion of funds and that there had been no such instance after 1977-78.

The Financial Adviser, Ministry of Education who is also a Member of the Finance and Executive Committees of the Council assured the Committee that the various lacunae pointed out by Audit had been taken note of and necessary improvements effected in the presentation of details to the Finance Committee. As important step taken to remedy the situation is the creation of a Central Planning

Coordination and Evaluation Unit in July 1979 to keep watch both over the academic and financial progress of the programmes simultaneously. Quarterly progress reports are also being received to keep a watch over expenditure.

While taking note of the assurances held out to them by the representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Committee trust that the prescribed financial procedures would be followed by the NCERT in letter and spirit so that irregularities of the nature pointed out by Audit are not repeated. To this end the internal audit system should be suitably strengthened.

The Committee find that as a result of observations made by Audit regarding physical verification of books in the NCERT library, substantial progress has been made in the accessioning of books and a plan of action has been drawn up for stock verification. The work is expected to be completed by end of May 1981. Now that a regular librarian has been appointed, it should be ensured that physical verification of books is done periodically as per Government regulations.

The Audit Paragraph has pointed out that out of 152 schemes drawn up by the Department of Teaching Aids in training, research and production activities for the five year period ending 31 March 1979, only 59 were completed, while 60 were dropped or not taken up at all and the remaining 33 were in progress. The actual expen-

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diture on both Plan and non-plan programmes was only 52 per cent of the budgeted amount while in case of Plan programmes it was only 39 per cent. The shortfall was mainly in the area of production of films. It has been admitted that "the plan to produce 25 films during the years 1974-75 to 1978-79 was plainly over-ambitious." The Nag Chaudhuri Committee had pointed out as far back as in August 1968 that there was shortage of middle level technical staff in the Department. The Committee find that action to recruit the requisite staff could not be taken due to the impending merger of the Department of Teaching Aids and the Centre of Educational Technology. The production of educational software had consequently to be dropped to a large extent.

The Committee consider that failure of the Department of Teaching Aids to take up a large number of schemes is indicative of haphazard planning and inadequate preparation. The NCERT should have ensured that the Department was adequately equipped before sanctioning the schemes so that the funds placed at the disposal of the Department could be properly utilised.

The Committee consider that the climate of uncertainty which has been allowed to continue much too long, should now be removed and suitable reorganisation of the two Departments viz., the DTA and the CET brought about without further delay.

The Committee are constrained to observe that for want of trained verifiers, the work of periodical physical verification of stores on charge of the Department of Teaching Aids could not be done

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in a regular manner. Follow up action on the physical verification completed in May 1978 after a lapse of 10 years was also delayed because another Committee had to be appointed to analyse the physical verification Report. The Committee consider that the NCERT should have taken timely steps to appoint trained staff for the purpose instead of wasting the energies of the academic staff of the Department. The Committee would like to be apprised of the remedial measures taken.

40 5.22. Education and Culture (Dept. of Education)

The Committee find that the film library which is intended to cater to educational institutions has hardly subserved the stated purpose because of lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Department. No catalogue of additions to the library was compiled and circulated till 1980 nor a drive for fresh membership made; on the other hand, its membership declined in 1978-79 because 269 temporary members had to be taken off the list. The Committee have been informed that the procedure for purchase of films has been improved which would indicate that not enough care was so far being bestowed to this very important work. The Committee cannot but express their unhappiness over such indifferent approach to a very important visual media of education. The Committee trust that necessary steps would now be taken to make the film library more popular among the student community.

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Keeping in view the need to popularise the film library, the Committee consider that the question of disposing of the mobile van which has been idle since February 1977 needs reconsideration.

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The setting up of the Centre for Educational Technology (CET) in 1972-73 for making integrated use of mass media and educational technology at all levels of education represents yet another instance of high thinking but inadequate follow up action to translate an idea into reality. The long and short term goals, appropriate strategies and suitable programmes which were required to be laid down at the time of setting up of the Centre continued to be the subject of academic discussion in Committees and seminars till the Education Ministry itself set up a Working Group on Educational Technology whose recommendations have now been adopted by the CET.

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A Committee set up by the NCERT in August, 1975 to make a study of the roles of the CET and the Department of Teaching Aids (DTA) recommended merger of the two organisations in view of the similarity of their functions with consequent duplication of staff and equipment. The Committee find that even though, the NCERT decided in July 1977 to merge the two organisations, the proposal has been shelved till construction of a building to house them is completed. As the CPWD to whom the work was first entrusted and with whom Rs. 10 lakhs were deposited in March 1976 were unwilling to deal with the private architects, it is now proposed to entrust the work to the Chief Engineer, All India Radio. The Committee consider that matters have been allowed to drift for too long and it is time that necessary plans are finalised expeditiously in consultation with the Ministry of Works and Housing and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting so that the merger of the two

Departments can be affected and the various programmes can be taken up in an integrated manner.

The Committee find that a proposal for recruitment of technical staff for the CET was mooted in June, 1978. While most of the posts have since been filled up, recruitment to some of them has been delayed for want of suitable candidates. The Committee would like to emphasise that the staff already available with the two Departments viz. the CET and the DTA should be fully utilised and overlapping of functions avoided. A critical evaluation of the programmes undertaken by them should be made with a view to ensuring that activities which have failed to make any impact are not proceeded with and necessary adjustments are made in the deployment of staff.

The Third Educational Survey conducted by NCERT at the instance of Government was intended to make available the basic statistic for preparation of the Fifth Plan. Although a decision in this regard was taken as early in June 1969 so as to ensure that the results were available in 1972-73 there was delay in starting the work due to difference of opinion between the Ministry of Education and the Planning Commission regarding the usefulness of the survey. The work could be started only in October 1973 and was completed by end of February, 1975 at a total cost of Rs. 101.69 lakhs.

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The Committee find that in their enthusiasm to carry out a "comprehensive" and "all inclusive" survey, as many as 27 schedules were prescribed requiring voluminous data to be collected and processed. Thus a project which had already been delayed for want of clear perception of the requirements, was further delayed. By the time the data became available, it was already outdated. The Committee find that even the question of finalising the number and types of reports that would need to be brought out was postponed till the results became available. The Committee see no reason why this matter could not have been finalised at the time of drawing up the schedules. It is still more surprising that even though the survey work had been completed in February, 1975, decision regarding the number of reports and thematic studies was taken only in March, 1976. The Committee consider that the authorities concerned were remiss in not planning the survey work properly. This is regrettable.

The Committee find to their dismay that even the printing and publication of statistical reports and thematic studies, has been proceeded within a lackadaisical manner. As in March, 1981, out of 17 statistical and theme oriented reports, 8 had been printed, 7 others were reported to be under print while the remaining two were yet to be printed.

The Committee take a serious view of the inordinate delays that occurred at various stages in the course of carrying out the Third Educational Survey, in processing the data and publishing the Reports thereon. The Committee require that the matter be inves-

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igated thoroughly with a view to ascertaining the reasons for such delays and taking necessary remedial measures for the future. The Committee would like to be apprised of the outcome of the enquiry.

49 5-56 Education and Culture
(Deptt. of Education)

In this connection, the Committee note that observations of the Director, NCERT made during the course of an inter-departmental meeting on the 4th All India Educational Survey held on 21 July, 1977, to the effect that "the methods and machinery followed in the case of the Third Educational Survey were not conducive to the attainment of the desired results, rather they posed hindrance resulting in confusion. The State authorities did not take the responsibility for the figures collected and submitted by them to the NCERT and only depended upon the NCERT for the final figures. The method proved to be "costly".

It has been claimed that a definite improvement in planning, designing and processing of the schedules in relation to the specific objectives was made in the fourth survey.

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Although the machinery for collecting the data in the field has necessarily to be provided by the States, the Committee consider that the field officers of the NCERT and the Regional Colleges should be actively involved in such surveys. The States no doubt realise the immense use to which the data collected in these surveys can be put in the planning process. Checking on the veracity and au-

thenticity of the data is therefore as much in their own interest as in that of the Central Government.

According to the Ministry, the loss of Rs. 1.42 lakhs on production of science kits mentioned in the Audit paragraph was 'a notional loss' because the kits were distributed free by UNICEF to schools in certain educationally backward States. The Committee, however, find that the costing method adopted by the NCERT was also faulty and the total price per kit would actually be Rs. 206.62 as against Rs. 223.39 worked out earlier.

Delays in the availability of text books prepared and produced by the NCERT has been the subject of much public criticism during the last few years. It has been stated that delays during the years 1975 to 1980 were due to extra-ordinary pressure on the limited resources of the Departments concerned on account of the urgent need to prepare and produce textbooks required for the new and upgraded curriculum which required compressing of the textbook production programme into a three year span 1977-78. 1978-79 and 1979-80. It was also stated that delays in receipt of paper from Norway also affected the production programme during 1979 and even more so in 1980. It should have been realised that non-availability of textbooks in time would under-mine and affect the whole educational system. The kinking of any educational system is the availability of teachers and textbooks. All other facilities are ancillary to the presence of a teacher and the availability of a textbook. Hence, if textbooks are not available or are not of the re-

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quisite standard and quality, the entire educational system would be weakened and the purpose of imparting knowledge defeated. It is in this context that one should give most serious consideration to this major task of preparing standard and relevant textbooks and that too at reasonable price and at proper time. It is unfortunate that the NCERT did not make proper arrangements to gear up the machinery for ensuring the timely availability of the textbooks. The Committee strongly recommend that NCERT should give high priority to this task.

53 5.68 Ministry of Education
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(Deptt. of Education)

The Committee note that till 1980-81 both the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and the Central Board of Secondary Education were prescribing the books on a year to year basis which meant reprinting of each title every year. However, they have now decided to prescribe the current text books for three academic sessions. During 1975-76 to 1978-79, as many as 51 titles are stated to have become surplus due to their withdrawal by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The value of these titles is Rs. 19.98 lakhs.

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As both these institutions are under the direct control of the Central Government, the Committee consider it unfortunate that such a situation was allowed to continue for years together causing waste of precious resources and unnecessary hardship to students.

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It was stated in evidence that the text books prepared by the NCERT compare very favourably "with any textbooks anywhere in the world. But they don't sell in the States because every State has an autonomous Board of Secondary Education. There are textbook Corporations and other vested interests. It is common knowledge that there has been a mushroom growth in recent years of private agencies publishing cheap and sub-standard books all over the country. In fact, this has become a profit making business for some people/organisations and is having a detrimental effect on the educational system. This mercenary approach in text book production and commercialisation of interest in matters educational remain serious impediments to the growth of a healthy and purposeful educational system. This drift must be immediately checked by all concerned. The Committee consider that the NCERT should intensify its efforts to bring out quality textbooks.

It is also necessary to involve the educational authorities in the States in a systematic and coordinated manner so that the books prepared by the NCERT get wider recognition and acceptability in all States of the Union.

Do.

A study conducted by the Department of Measurement and Evaluation of the NCERT into the causes of drop outs among National Science Talent Search awardees during the period 1967—76 found the drop out rate to the 'alarming'. It also revealed that only a fraction of talented scholars have reached the level of Ph.D. It was in fact

The Committee observe that a comprehensive review of the performance of the NCERT was made in 1968 by the Nag Chaudhuri Committee. In 1974 an Internal Study Group was set up to make an in-depth study of the Council's work. In 1977 the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad was entrusted with task of suggesting means and methods of developing an optimal organisational structure of the NCERT which would improve the efficiency of its various Departments particularly with a view to meeting the new challenges and educational priorities laid down by the Government.

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The Planning Commission in its meeting held on 24 November, 1978 while considering the annual Plan proposals of the then Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, suggested that "the structure and programme of the NCERT will be critically reviewed by an independent Committee with a view to high-lighting the role which NCERT should play in providing necessary academic and technical support to make school education functional and purposive."

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The Committee learnt that in 1979 the then Education Secretary (Shri Sabanayagam) undertook a review of the Council's programme on a department to department basis after which he indicated some changes in the organisational structure of the NCERT. In view of the review carried out by the then Education Secretary and the earlier review done by the Administrative Staff College of India; it was felt by the Government that further review by another Committee as suggested by the Planning Commission would not be

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During the course of evidence before the Committee, it was pointed out that the NCERT has to function in a federal system where much of the work falling within the jurisdiction of the NCERT has to be done in the States. It was conceded by the Secretary, Ministry of Education while tendering his evidence before Committee that due to the changing policies in the educational field, the Council has not always been in a position to do its best so much so that the problems encountered by it "had not enabled this institution to acquire a distinct identity of its own", and that it was "in a fragmented kind of condition."

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The Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad had in their report pointed out among other things that there was need for a clear definition of the Council's long term purposes in conformity with the objectives already spelt out. They observed that the Departments were organised along academic streams, service functions and on the basis of narrow specialisation units. This was a severe constraint in articulating the multi-disciplinary research in pursuing developmental functions and in helping the extension services which were carried out by the various Departments of the NCERT. Therefore it was difficult to sustain and consolidate problem solving

The Committee have earlier in this Report drawn attention to some of the constraints and inhibiting factors that impede the proper functioning of the NCERT as a catalytic agent in the field of education. And this, despite the fact over the years, its working has been subjected to a series of reviews. The Committee find that a number of important recommendations made in the reports have still not reached the important and critical stage of implementation. The Committee, therefore, suggest that a Task Force consisting of the representatives of the Ministry, the NCERT and some eminent educationists, should be set up expeditiously to consider within a stipulated period of time the urgent problem of restricting of the NCERT to restore to it the dynamic, creative and nationally useful role of effectively helping the educational system of our federal democratic republic. Naturally, such a Task Force would draw guidance and help from the several valid recommendations and suggestions made in the Reports of the various committees referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

Since Education is now a concurrent subject, the Committee consider that the Ministry of Education at the Centre and the NCERT will have to play an even more active role in the process of building a purposeful and stable educational system. The NCERT, as a major educational resource base and a repository of national educational talent must address itself to some of the major challenges facing the country in its march towards building an enlightened society. Urgent attention should be given both by the Ministry of Education and the NCERT to such critical matters like

accelerating the programme for removal of illiteracy throughout the country, improving the standards of school education at the three levels—primary, secondary and higher secondary, providing necessary incentives to children of poor families and better attention to backward areas. Towards that end, greater emphasis would need to be given to the problems of curricula and examination reform, vocationalisation of education, promotion of research and innovations in educational techniques and skills.

For any such programme to be successful it would be both necessary and desirable to obtain the active cooperation and involvement of all the State Governments. This indeed is the logic of recognising Education as a concurrent subject. Both the Centre and the States have equal stakes and equal obligations, in the flowering of our educational system.

It has been pointed out that although NCERT has developed a high degree of competence in matters concerning school education, its voice is merely heard by the States, yet its advice is not always followed, since it enjoys no statutory authority. While suggestions are made that NCERT should either be declared as an institution of national importance or given a statutory authority, but the Committee feel that even with its present autonomous status, the NCERT can function effectively provided its role is adequately recognised and respected by the governments both in the Centre and in the States.

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67 6.20 -do- The Committee believe that the NCERT can also serve as a useful and effective instrument for national integration in the unfolding of our democratic federal polity. The Committee would therefore suggest that the question of revamping its organisational structure should be examined by Government in all its aspects.

68 6.21 -do- The Committee observe from the Memorandum of Association of the NCERT that the Minister of Education is the *ex-Officio* President of the Council as well as of the Executive Committee of the Council. The Minister of State in the Ministry of Education is the Vice-President of the Executive Committee. This places the burden of overseeing the functioning of the NCERT on the Union Minister of Education/Minister of State in the Ministry of Education. The Committee consider that this arrangement is not conducive to the autonomous role assigned to the NCERT. On the one hand this arrangement needlessly puts avoidable strain on Union Minister of Education and Minister of State, and on the other does not in actual practice help the NCERT in pursuing its programme of work. It would be too much to expect from the Minister of Education or the Minister of State in the Ministry of Education that they would be able to devote the attention required of the President and Vice-President in the proper functioning of the Council. The Committee consider that it would be preferable to have an eminent-educationist to head the Council as in the case of the University Grants Commission, as this would be in tune with the autonomous character and role of the NCERT.

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The Committee desire that the suggestions made in the above paragraphs may be examined with utmost care and seriousness so that necessary changes in the constitution of the NCERT may be brought about as expeditiously as possible in order to help it play its assigned major national role.