

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST

by

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(ii)

#### DECLARATION

I declare that AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

PREFACE

This research is a result of the concern of the writer at the ever-rising spirals of violence that are shredding the fragile fabric of South African society. The provision of education has for long been at the vortex of the struggle. There is accordingly a need for research into the many innovatory education projects that have been mounted in recent years in an endeavour to create a just educational dispensation and thus contribute to a more peaceful social climate. The New Era Schools Trust (N.E.S.T.) system is one such initiative. The purpose of the present research is to subject it to academic scrutiny.

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## SUMMARY

The focus of this research is the New Era Schools Trust (N.E.S.T.) system of non-racial, multi-cultural schooling, with its first school Uthongathi as an exemplification of its unique approach.

In the theoretical component of the research, a thorough study is made of literature relating to multi-cultural education, with the issues of culture, race and socio-economic class explored as problematics of central concern to the South African context. Selected strategies are analysed, upon which the possible implementation of multi-cultural education in South Africa might be based. A chapter is included on the socio-political origins of N.E.S.T. Its birth and infancy are set against background events that have impinged on education in South Africa since World War II.

The empirical section of the research is focused on Uthongathi, as it evolved and developed during the period January 1987 to July 1989. Among the most important findings emanating from the research are the following:

1. ~~The~~ New Era Schools Trust was established primarily as a reaction to the historically evolved policy of apartheid, which the originators of the endeavour perceived to be unjust.
2. Central to the endeavour is the creation of school communities that are the antithesis of the present, largely ethnocentric, state educational structures. It is hoped to thereby create a vehicle to aid peaceful evolutionary change as an alternative to the violent and confrontational strategies widely current.

3. Uthongathi propounds (and is guided by) policies of non-racialism, multi-culturalism, and access for pupils of various socio-economic classes and both sexes.

4. Some tension is apparent between the policy of a "balance of races" and the school's egalitarian aims, although the racial balance itself appears to be remarkably effective in practice. An impressive level of social solidarity is evident amongst the pupils.

5. A broad, liberal education is offered. It is focussed on university entrance, and is enriched by a wide variety of extra-mural pursuits. Self-help and a comprehensive community service scheme operate.

6. Despite the absence at the present time of academic results gained through public examinations, upon which objective judgements can be based, it is clear that high academic standards are pursued. A comprehensive academic support programme has been mounted in the lower standards in order to assist those pupils who originate from educationally and economically deprived backgrounds. Bursary support is generous.

7. The N.E.S.T. schooling model appears to be malleable to suit regional needs. It appears to have relevance to future policy directions for state and private schooling alike. The costs and fee structures are, however, likely to limit the extent of extrapolation possible.

8. Tentative suggestions have been made for appropriate action. More accurate judgements on the adoption of N.E.S.T. schooling as a proposed model for South Africa will become possible as the system evolves further to incorporate the four schools initially planned.

(vii)

9. Recommendations have also been made for further research. There is a great need for selected facets of the N.E.S.T. schools to be researched in greater depth than has been possible in this exploratory study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1.	INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION	1
1.2.	NEED FOR THE STUDY	1
1.3.	PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	3
1.4.	STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM CENTRAL TO THE STUDY	3
1.5.	DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY	3
1.5.1.	The subject of the study	3
1.5.2.	The focus of the study	4
1.5.3.	The broad context	4
1.5.4.	An exploratory study	4
1.5.5.	Generalisations	5
1.6.	THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY	5
1.6.1.	The social-theoretical framework	5
1.6.2.	The functionalist tradition	6
1.6.3.	The Marxist perspective	7
1.6.4.	Interpretive approaches and the Weberian tradition	10



CHAPTER		PAGE
1.7.	METHODS USED IN THE STUDY	13
1.7.1.	Study of the literature	13
1.7.2.	The empirical study	13
1.8.	ORIENTATION IN THE THESIS	14
1.9.	CONCLUDING SUMMARY	15
2.	MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: SOME PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS AND STRATEGIES	17
2.1.	INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION	17
2.2.	SOME PERSPECTIVES ON CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY	18
2.3.	SELECTED, SIGNIFICANT PRINCIPLES ESPOUSED BY N.E.S.T.	25
2.3.1.	An open, liberal educational milieu	25
2.3.2.	Multi-cultural education as a central feature	27
2.3.3.	A multi-racial schooling population, with a policy of non-racism	27
2.3.4.	The accommodation of pupils from various socio-economic backgrounds	28
2.3.5.	The relevance of the above integral features of N.E.S.T. to the analysis that follows	28

CHAPTER		PAGE
2.4.	CULTURE : THE CONCEPT	30
2.4.1.	The centrality of the concept culture to multi-cultural education	30
2.4.2.	Some early views on culture	30
2.4.3.	The concept culture relevant to the present research	34
2.4.4.	The concept culture in the socio-political setting of South Africa	38
2.5.	MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION	42
2.5.1.	The concept in historical-philosophical perspective	42
2.5.2.	Some current views on multi-cultural education	45
2.5.3.		51
2.6.	SELECTED PROBLEMATICS OF MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING	57
2.6.1.	Inequalities in the transmission of culture through schooling	57
2.6.1.1.	The transmission of culture through schooling : a benign or problematic process ?	57
2.6.1.2.	The propagation of social structures : Bernstein	60
2.6.1.3.	The mechanistic propagation of cultural inequalities : Bourdieu	64
2.6.2.	Race and ethnicity as complicating factors	72
2.6.3.	Economic issues in the propagation of inequalities through schooling	80

CHAPTER		PAGE
2.7.	A SUMMARY OF SOME ISSUES OF CULTURE, RACE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS FACING MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING IN SOUTH AFRICA, AS EXEMPLIFIED BY N.E.S.T.	88
2.7.1.	The approach of N.E.S.T. : an overview	88
2.7.2.	The issue of culture	89
2.7.3.	Racial issues	90
2.7.4.	Socio-economic class	91
2.7.5.	The pursuit of just educational instit- utions against a background complexity of divisive factors	91
2.8.	SELECTED STRATEGIES APPROPRIATE TO MULTI- CULTURAL SCHOOLING <i>imple mentation</i>	97
2.8.1.	The need for multi-factor paradigms and an integrated, holistic approach	97
2.8.2.	Accommodating the needs of diverse cultural communities	100
2.8.3.	School management and staffing	108
2.8.4.	The multi-cultural curriculum	110
2.8.5.	Approaches to teaching	123
2.8.6.	Educational support programmes	130
2.9.	CONCLUDING SUMMARY	140

CHAPTER		PAGE
3	A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ORIGINS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST.	142
3.1.	INTRODUCTION	142
3.2.	AN OVERVIEW OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SEPARATE EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA	142
3.2.1.	Bantu Education and other racially exclusive systems of education during the period 1948 to 1975	142
3.2.2.	The Soweto uprising of 1976 and the boycotts of 1980	151
3.3.	SOME INITIATIVES TOWARDS NON-RACIAL, MULTI- CULTURAL SCHOOLING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA	156
3.3.1.	Waterford-Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa	156
3.3.2.	Maru a Pula	158
3.3.3.	Woodmead	164
3.3.4.	Other private schools	167
3.4.	THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST	175
3.4.1.	The establishment of N.E.S.T.	175
3.4.2.	Reform, and the Human Sciences Research Council <u>Report on Education in the R.S.A.</u>	182
3.4.3.	Reform of the parliamentary system : further unrest in schooling	201
3.4.4.	Developing the infrastructure of N.E.S.T.	207
3.5.	UTHONGATHI, THE FIRST N.E.S.T. SCHOOL	223

CHAPTER		PAGE
3.6.	CONCLUDING SUMMARY	228
4.	AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST UTHONGATHI SCHOOL, AS AN EXAMPLE OF MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING	231
4.1.	INTRODUCTION	231
4.2.	METHODS USED IN THE EMPIRICAL STUDY	231
4.2.1.	Problems with the natural science mode of enquiry	231
4.2.2.	The illuminative approach	232
4.2.3.	The ethnographic tradition	234
4.2.4.	Verifying the information gathered	235
4.2.5.	Questionnaires	236
4.2.6.	An integrated picture	237
4.3.	PROGRESS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY AND COURSE OF THE RESEARCH	238
4.4.	FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	240
4.4.1.	Display of findings	240
4.4.2.	The Central Administration of N.E.S.T.	241
4.4.3.	The philosophy of N.E.S.T.	246
4.4.4.	Uthongathi School	257
4.4.4.1.	Physical facilities	257
4.4.4.2.	Finances	263
4.4.4.3.	The parent community	272
4.4.4.4.	Entrance policy	281
4.4.4.5.	The student community	285
4.4.4.6.	The Board of Uthongathi	290
4.4.4.7.	Senior management and staff	293

CHAPTER		PAGE
4.4.4.8.	The formal curriculum	301
4.4.4.9.	Selected, structured elements of the non- formal curriculum	311
4.4.4.10.	Forms of social control	315
4.4.4.11.	Social dynamics and the racial-cultural milieu	321
4.4.4.12.	Community service	331
4.4.4.13.	Approaches to teaching	336
4.4.4.14.	Academic support	347
4.5.	CONCLUDING SUMMARY	353
5.	DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	354
5.1.	INTRODUCTION	354
5.2.	THE ADMINISTRATION OF N.E.S.T.	354
5.2.1.	The Board of N.E.S.T.	354
5.2.2.	Devolution of authority, and the local autonomy of N.E.S.T. schools	355
5.3.	THE PHILOSOPHY OF N.E.S.T.	356
5.3.1.	Currents of thought in the philosophy	356
5.3.2.	Perceptions held by the main actors at Uthongathi	357
5.3.3.	Racial issues	357
5.3.4.	Multi-culturalism	359
5.3.5.	Economic factors and social responsibility	359
5.3.6.	Private schooling in a culturally plural society	360

CHAPTER		PAGE
5.4.	UTHONGATHI SCHOOL	361
5.4.1.	Physical facilities	361
5.4.1.1.	Initial building costs	361
5.4.1.2.	The possibilities of extrapolation	361
5.4.2.	Finances	362
5.4.2.1.	Bursaries	362
5.4.2.2.	The cost of maintaining a racial balance	363
5.4.2.3.	The costs of multi-cultural education	364
5.4.3.	The parent community	365
5.4.3.1.	Economic factors	365
5.4.3.2.	The perceptions of parents	367
5.4.3.3.	Parental participation in school affairs	368
5.4.4.	Entrance requirements	369
5.4.4.1.	The policy of affirmative action at entry	369
5.4.4.2.	The Raven Matrices	370
5.4.4.3.	Bridging programmes to counter elitism	372
5.4.5.	The student community	373
5.4.5.1.	An integrated school community	373
5.4.5.2.	A comparative study	374
5.4.6.	The Board of Uthongathi	376
5.4.6.1.	A spectrum of viewpoints	376
5.4.6.2.	Composition of the Board	377
5.4.7.	School staff	378
5.4.7.1.	A multi-racial, multi-cultural staff	378
5.4.7.2.	Staff development	380
5.4.7.3.	The staff-pupil ratio	380
5.4.8.	The formal curriculum	381
5.4.8.1.	An education of quality for all students	381
5.4.8.2.	Financial implications of a broad curriculum	382
5.4.8.3.	Curriculum development in a complex multi- cultural context	383

CHAPTER	PAGE	
5.4.8.4.	Streaming	384
5.4.9.	The non-formal curriculum : some structured components	385
5.4.9.1.	Cross-cultural experience	385
5.4.9.2.	Self-help	386
5.4.10.	Forms of social control	387
5.4.10.1	The Student Representative Council	387
5.4.10.2.	Discipline and the code of conduct	387
5.4.11.	Social dynamics among the pupils	388
5.4.11.1.	Perceptions of race	388
5.4.11.2.	Cliques, and home-school adjustments	390
5.4.12.	Community service	392
5.4.13.	Approaches to teaching	394
5.4.13.1.	A spectrum of approaches	394
5.4.13.2.	Pedagogy in the multi-cultural classrooms	394
5.4.13.3.	Professional development	396
5.4.14.	Academic support	396
5.4.14.1.	Academic support in the classroom	396
5.4.14.2.	Bridging programmes	398
5.4.14.3.	Learning skills	399
5.5.	A HOLISTIC VIEW OF UTHONGATHI	400
5.5.1.	Uthongathi School	400
5.5.2.	The regional setting for Uthongathi	405
5.6.	THE COURSE OF EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE	409
5.6.1.	Forces affecting the future of education in South Africa	409
5.6.2.	Some scenarios for education in the future : their relevance to N.E.S.T.	416



CHAPTER		PAGE
5.7.	PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE : A ROLE FOR N.E.S.T. SCHOOLS	420
5.7.1.	The South African setting	420
5.7.2.	Education in the process of reform, and a role for N.E.S.T. schools	422
5.8.	RECOMMENDATIONS	429
5.9.	CONCLUDING SUMMARY	440
	LIST OF APPENDICES	441
	APPENDIX A : A STATEMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF N.E.S.T.	442
	APPENDIX B : THE N.E.S.T. PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION AND SELECTION, PROCEEDING FROM THE DEED OF TRUST AND THE STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY	447
	APPENDIX C : STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE	449
	APPENDIX D : STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE	457
	APPENDIX E : PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE	466
	APPENDIX F : DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS INCOMES FOR 1988	475
	APPENDIX G : UTHONGATHI SCHOOL - SCHOOL NUMBERS AS AT 19/ 1/ 89	476
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	477

## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION.

## 1.1. INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION.

This exploratory study is centred on an investigation of the New Era Schools Trust (N.E.S.T.) system of multi-cultural schooling, with a view to describing its socio-political origins as well as exploring and analysing the structures and internal dynamics of its first school Uthongathi, as it evolved during the period January 1987 to July 1989.

## 1.2. NEED FOR THE STUDY.

In recent years South Africa has experienced an often violent, widespread repudiation of Bantu Education. Boycotts and protests have wracked black and coloured schools in particular. In certain regions education has been desultory and ineffectual (Bot & Schlemmer, 1986, pp. 2-10). Although school issues have become increasingly interwoven with wider economic and political concerns, the system of culturally and racially separate schooling has remained a central problem, with disastrous effects. The Human Sciences Research Council report The South African Society, published in 1985 (p.151) contends that the policy of separate development implemented during the past thirty-eight years in South Africa has tended to alienate communities. It has given rise to mistrust and suspicion; a state of affairs that the authors of the report consider to have been damaging to good human relations. The result has been a practical insulation, with members of one "group" not knowing how the members of another think, feel or experience reality. It has deeply affected education, despite the suggestion that there is a symbiotic relationship between

all the schooling systems within South Africa (Nasson, 1986, p.96).

There have been frequent calls for the adoption of an open, non-racial schooling system that would accommodate all apparently disparate groups in the country. One such call was made by Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations Mr John Kane-Berman in 1987, during an address to the Natal Teachers' Society in Pietermaritzburg. Further, many private church schools have for years accommodated a modest but expanding multi-culturalism that stands in opposition to legislated separation, while state control of the entry of black pupils to white private schools by permits and quotas has been gradually relaxed (Gaydon, 1987, p.36).

In some quarters the current endeavours of the state to equalise the separate educational systems provided for each race group are viewed with deep suspicion. The concept of separate-but-equal education has been harshly judged as a myth "unashamedly peddled by the bureaucrats" (Sebidi, 1986, p.50). There is an obvious need for the multi-cultural option in schooling to be researched on an empirical basis as part of an endeavour to move to a more socially just society in South Africa. A comprehensive study by Jarvis (1984) has shown the inadequate provision made for education in the Qadi Tribal Area near Durban, at a time when a diminishing white population is experiencing an under-utilisation of its exclusive facilities. Many black pupils presently experiencing inferior education in such areas as the Qadi might benefit markedly from exposure to the opportunities for multi-cultural education that the opening of under-utilised white facilities to all races could bring.

### 1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.

The purpose of this study is to illuminate problems and possibilities inherent in multi-cultural education, as exemplified by N.E.S.T., and to propose principles upon which further action can be based. It encompasses the topics listed below:

- (a) A survey of literature on multi-cultural education, with an emphasis on the context of formal secondary schooling.
- (b) A study of the origins, in socio-political context, of the N.E.S.T. system.
- (c) An appraisal, by intensive longitudinal study, of developments at Uthongathi, the N.E.S.T. school near Tongaat on the Natal North Coast, during its birth and infancy.

### 1.4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM CENTRAL TO THE STUDY.

Can open, non-racial, multi-cultural schooling, as exemplified by the N.E.S.T. system, make a potentially meaningful contribution to meeting the future educational needs of the youth of South Africa?

### 1.5. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY.

#### 1.5.1. The subject of the study.

The subject of the study is the New Era Schools Trust system of multi-cultural schooling. Founded in 1980 with headquarters in Johannesburg, the Trust has during the past decade worked towards the establishment of its first non-racial, multi-cultural school, Uthongathi (Zulu: "a place of

importance"). Its second school, named Phuthing (Sotho: "a place of meeting"), has been established north of Johannesburg. Both are secondary schools. Further schools are planned for Grahamstown and Cape Town.

#### 1.5.2. The focus of the study.

The focus of the study on problematics and possibilities of the N.E.S.T. system implies the devotion of particular attention to significant, unique or contentious aspects at the micro level. These are illuminated and highlighted as appropriate, and are set against background descriptions to provide a meaningful context.

#### 1.5.3. The broad context.

The N.E.S.T. system is conceived as evolving within the current dynamic socio-political context of South Africa. Recognition is thus given to the pervasive influence of such intrusive issues as the cultural, racial and economic. N.E.S.T. is seen to be evolving and developing. It is adapting to internal and external tensions in its endeavours to translate the principles embraced within its constitution into effective practice.

#### 1.5.4. An exploratory study.

The exploratory nature of the research implies that it is an initial investigation intended as a preliminary to further research. The intention is to explore, analyse and describe the N.E.S.T. system of schooling, with Uthongathi as a prime focus, in order to open to further debate its broad implications and significance for the future schooling of young persons in South Africa, while also providing directions for further research.

#### 1.5.5. Generalisations.

The empirical section of the research, although involving visits to a number of multi-cultural schools in Southern Africa, is focused strongly on Uthongathi. The analysis of the possibilities and problematics of a single school, although illuminated more clearly by the experience of others that are multi-cultural, has placed a limit on the scope of generalisations ventured by the present writer. It has, nevertheless, yielded a rich crop of recommendations for further research, a feature that is consistent with the exploratory nature of the study.

### 1.6 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY.

#### 1.6.1. The social-theoretical framework.

The fundamental aim of N.E.S.T. <sup>new type school trust</sup> is to establish schools whose social structure will be the antithesis of the present apartheid society in South Africa. Such schools are intended to serve as models for schooling in the post-apartheid era that the founders of the Trust recognise as inevitable. Since schools comprise miniature societies with a relationship to the wider society, the present research is grounded largely in the terrain of Sociology of Education.

In order to develop a conceptual framework for the research, the present writer has utilised the three dominant sociological approaches to education surveyed by Blackledge & Hunt (1985, p.1). The approaches are:

- (i) The functionalist tradition,
- (ii) the Marxist perspective, and
- (iii) the interpretive approach.

### 1.6.2. The functionalist tradition.

With origins in the work of Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), the functionalist tradition holds to a notion of society that views it as a reality in its own right, a sui generis with an existence of its own independent of the individuals that comprise it. Society is viewed as an organism whose homeostasis is maintained by institutions such as education that serve an "organic" function. Education meets the needs of society rather than the individual, by socialising individuals into the values of society and into appropriate roles.

Blackledge & Hunt (*ibid.*, pp.98;316) are critical of the functionalist approach, deploring the manner in which powerful elites and dominant groups can propagate a "false consciousness" to legitimize their own position and privileges. Functionalism lends credence to a "reification" of society as an entity that has its own wants and desires, while people are thought of as devoid of creativity, free will or the power to influence society. The functionalist view tends to mitigate against change. The stress resulting from change is seen to be dysfunctional for the social system:

"Thus it implicitly defines any existing social structure as proper and any threat to it as improper. And if the subject of study is an organisation or social system which is for some economic or political reason controversial, the functionalist runs the risk of having his work serve as a buttress for the status quo " (Mc Gee, 1975, p.250).

Mc Gee continues by pointing out that there are political overtones to the issues, and argues that the radical and

humanist camps have a valid theoretical point when they allege that functionalism is not capable of handling the problem of social change. Since functionalists hold to a theory that serves to explain how social structures work to maintain stability, they have no means for dealing with the process of change, other than to describe it as mal-functional.

### 1.6.3. The Marxist perspective.

Marxism is described by Mc Gee (*ibid.*, p.303) as a conflict theory. The conflict theorist, he asserts, sees society as the embodiment of shifting and competing interests. Education is viewed as part of the contested terrain. According to Musgrove (1979, p.76), Marxist historians and sociologists interpret mass schooling as an act of cultural aggression perpetrated by the capitalist bourgeoisie on a massive scale. Despite differences, according to Blackledge & Hunt (1985, p.317), the Marxist position is in some ways similar to that of the functionalists. Both are macro in focus, both view education as contributing to the maintenance of the existing social order. Marxists, however, perceive a sinister and insidious role for education in allocating people to roles in the hierarchical divisions of labour, while legitimizing inequalities by disseminating the ideology of meritocracy and equal opportunity. The view is blatantly deterministic, while the empirical data put forward by Marxists in support of their contentions is often fragile. To accommodate these criticisms, recent Marxist authors have suggested the emergence of counter-school cultures that show evidence of relative autonomy. Blackledge & Hunt are wary of the new approach:

"The idea of relative autonomy is vague and imprecise,



and it is difficult to see what is distinctively Marxist about an approach which emphasises both the independence and dependence of education in relation to economic forces" (ibid.)

Musgrove also joins the fray, in a attack on the Marxist analysis:

"The evidence presented in this chapter", he writes, "suggests that 'mass schooling' since the early nineteenth century has enormously strengthened the competitive position of the working class; it has not made them servile but has made an initial contribution to their 'respectability', morale, and sense of order and control over their own lives and destinies. It was not forced on them; it was largely a response to their own felt needs and demands" (1979,p.87).

Other critiques of Marxism are found in the work, inter alia, of Conway (1987), Gamble (1981) and, in the South African context, Simkins (1986). In South Africa the Marxist ideology has come under vigorous attack from a variety of sources. Responding to Robert Morrell's Marxist critique of his book South Africa in the 1980's, Clem Sunter, supported by analyses from A.D. Robinson and J.M. Phelps, launched a critique of the relevance of Marxist theory to South Africa today (Mentor, Vol.69, No.2; Vol.69, No.3; Vol.70, No.1; Vol.71, No.1). They criticised weaknesses in Marxian analysis, the poor economic and human rights records of many Marxist states and the economic determinism that tends to rely on class labels while eschewing such forces as nationalism and ethnicity. In his reply in Mentor (Vol.71, No.1 of 1989), Morrell concedes that Sunter's response is cogent and well argued, but in his rejoinder draws attention to those who are socio-economically disadvantaged in South Africa. He writes:

"Morrell is hoping that a socialist programme is implemented which will seriously address the appalling levels of poverty and unemployment in the country (which the removal of apartheid will not correct) and which will lead to a more balanced distribution of wealth in the country" (*ibid.*, p.11).

Morrell has of course touched on a central issue. Sensitive to the profound problem of poverty in South Africa, Morrell's rejoinder finds muted support in the work of Simkins (1986, p.10). Simkins believes that:

"No fair-minded person could say there is nothing of value in Marx; on the contrary there is interesting sustained argument as well as suggestive fragments in his work".

Following their own berating of Marx's vision of communism, Blackledge & Hunt point to alternative approaches to solving the pervasive problem of poverty:

"All this should not be taken to mean, of course, that someone who rejects the Marxist conception of the good society and human nature must, therefore, be satisfied with the existing state of affairs. Marxists would often have us believe that this is so. In reality, however, the liberal and non-Marxist socialist traditions of thought display a constant concern for greater economic and social justice, the reduction and elimination of poverty, the maintenance and extension of individual and democratic freedoms in the face of encroachments by state bureaucracy, etc., without being encumbered with the disabling notion of an earthly paradise just around the corner" (1985, p.132).

#### 1.6.4. Interpretive approaches and the Weberian tradition.

Musgrove (1979, pp. 14-27) categorises the functionalist and Marxist perspectives as "hard" views of the social order. The social order is, in these perspectives, viewed from outside as a hard, thing-like creature. More recent approaches in which individuals try to make sense of the world by creating a network of personal meanings are seen as "soft" approaches. Whereas the hard approaches are deterministic, Musgrove views the soft views as vulnerable to a "slide into solipsism". Criteria for truth and falsehood become socially constructed and subjectivism is taken to the point of absurdity as people pour meaning on the world rather than acknowledge meaning or truth outside themselves:

"This was rampant relativism", he writes, "and today it pervades and rots the fabric of education" (*ibid.*, pp. 26-7).

Yet Musgrove concedes that:

"There is much more looseness of fit, a far greater indeterminacy, between education and the social order than is generally conceded in sociological studies. There is actually scope for human intelligence to change things in this way or that. And there is considerable - perhaps growing - autonomy within the system itself" (*ibid.*, p. 28).

Sarup (1979, p. 22) considers new directions in the Sociology of Education to be reactions to the empiricist methodology and positivism of earlier approaches. The cognitive dominance of the categories of the expert resulted in a rejection of imposed meanings and an acceptance of the

interpretive view of social science. Some of the strands in the new approach, such as phenomenology, have however been carried to extremes. The relativism inherent in phenomenological approaches tends to destroy objective bases for making choices. It can become nihilistic (ibid., p.93). While conceding that some interpretive approaches are open to criticism, Blackledge & Hunt (1985, p.318) consider the micro-interpretive in general to display certain advantages. The approach, they remind us, attempts to investigate the actors' definitions of a situation, their aims and assumptions:

"The micro interpretive approach thus celebrates human creativity and freedom, and the criticism that is most frequently made of it is that it fails to take sufficient account of the fact that action is constrained by the situation in which it takes place" (ibid.).

It is essential, these authors proclaim, that sociologists should examine constraints that impinge on the actors, so that their consequences and impact can be gauged. It is particularly those authors who follow the ideas of Max Weber, suggest Blackledge & Hunt, who recognise the need to examine how groups interact in order to construct, maintain or change the education system. They describe the Weberian perspective as follows:

"The Weberian perspective is that form of interpretive sociology which is concerned with both micro and macro social processes. It seeks to interpret the behaviour of individual human beings, to understand the subjective meaning of their actions. But it also attempts to locate individual conduct in its social context. All action takes place within a social and

economic structure which, to some extent, limits what the individual can do. This structure is, of course, the result of past action. It has been constructed by innumerable men and women throughout history. Nevertheless, for each individual it forms an 'objective reality' that has to be reckoned with. Furthermore, the social system of which we are a part shapes our ideas, beliefs and values as well as controlling our actions. Our conception of the world and of ourselves is influenced by it. In turn, we may, as an individual, come to modify society's institutions; certainly, large numbers of individuals acting together in co-operation, competition and conflict will have such an effect" (*ibid.*, p.335).

It is clear to the present writer that the functionalist and Marxist approaches, despite acknowledged strengths, both carry a suffocating cloak of determinism, while extreme forms of the interpretive approach are vulnerable to the creation of cloud-cuckoo-worlds of bracketed and personal meanings that become turned inwards on the self. The Weberian approach offers a nice balance between the extremes and appears to accord best with complex social realities. It is obvious that the study of a system of schooling such as the N.E.S.T. endeavour would be without valid context if not viewed in a macro perspective. Schooling, as the content of Chapter Three will show, is inextricably enmeshed and embedded in the concerns of the wider society.

Convinced that the evolving South African socio-political environment is affording increasing scope for the mounting of determined non-racial initiatives in education, the writer has relied extensively on the interpretive rationale, while nevertheless acknowledging the power of functionalist social pressures that tend to redirect such initiatives

towards the status quo. The Marxist perspective has been used at appropriate points in the study in order to further challenge functionalist assumptions. Marxist and functionalist approaches also provide a counterpoise to the interpretive rationale. They function as correctives to any possible drift towards solipsism that might become manifest if the interpretive rationale were to lapse into radical subjectivity. The approach is thus eclectic.

## 1.7. METHODS USED IN THE STUDY.

### 1.7.1. Study of the literature.

In view of the need to render the empirical findings meaningful, and to explore the topic theoretically, an intensive study was undertaken of literature related to:

- (a) multi-cultural education, discussed in Chapter Two,
- (b) the socio-political origins of N.E.S.T., comprising Chapter Three.

Original documents were studied where relevant, and the veracity of the theoretical study was enhanced by means of visits to many individuals as well as multi-cultural schools in Swaziland, Botswana, and South Africa. In such schools, interviews were held with headmasters, staff and pupils where feasible, and the schools were observed in action. Such direct contact with persons intimately connected with the origins of N.E.S.T., as well as the frequent experience of a variety of multi-cultural schools, rendered the theoretical component of the research more meaningful and relevant.

### 1.7.2. The empirical study.

The focus of the empirical study is on the N.E.S.T. school Uthongathi near Tongaat. The purpose is to highlight,

expose and describe the problematics (and possibilities for extrapolation) of the school. In view of the complex milieu and infinity of variables present, the "natural scientific" mode of enquiry was regarded as largely inappropriate, being too inflexible as well as typically narrow in focus. The writer therefore worked within the ethnographic tradition of research, using the illuminative approach (Parlett & Hamilton, 1976; 1977) in order to focus on significant issues. Methods used extensively included the following:

- (a) documentary study,
- (b) observation and participation,
- (c) individual and group interviews,
- (d) questionnaires.

Although methods were carefully chosen to relate to the particular issues under consideration, the researcher remained open to fortuitous remarks and unplanned experiences. The rationale behind the methods utilised, as well as the course of the research, are described in greater detail in Chapter Four.

#### 1.8. ORIENTATION IN THE THESIS.

Chapter 1. The introductory chapter is designed to orientate the reader.

Chapter 2. The focus of this chapter is on a study of the literature pertinent to the dynamics underlying multi-cultural education. Included are statements and brief analyses of major principles embodied in the N.E.S.T. philosophy; also an appraisal of the concept multi-cultural education, an analysis of selected problematics inherent in such education, and a survey of the literature on strategies commonly implemented in an endeavour to render it effective.

Chapter 3. The purpose of the chapter is to present an analysis of the socio-political origins of the N.E.S.T. system of multi-cultural schooling. The material pertaining directly to N.E.S.T. is embedded in a context of wider socio-political events. These deal in the main with the development of separate educational systems in South Africa since World War II. The origins of N.E.S.T. from within the white private school system are examined, and there is a gradual focus on events surrounding the founding of N.E.S.T. as well as the establishment of the Uthongathi school.

Chapter 4. The planning and implementation of the empirical research at Uthongathi is described early in this chapter and the methods used are analysed in some detail. The programme of visits to other non-racial schools is outlined. The stages during which the illuminative, ethnographic research was undertaken at Uthongathi are described in detail and the findings from the research are presented under appropriate headings.

Chapter 5. The final chapter is focused on an analysis of findings obtained from the study of literature and the Uthongathi study. The implications of the findings are discussed and tentative conclusions drawn. There is an analysis of problems and possibilities inherent in multi-cultural education, as exemplified by the N.E.S.T. system. Principles are tentatively proposed, upon which further action can be based, and recommendations are made for further research. The possible role of N.E.S.T. schooling as a model for South Africa is considered.

#### 1.9 CONCLUDING SUMMARY.

The first chapter has served to clarify the need for the research, has defined its purpose and has stated the central



problem to the solving of which it is devoted. The scope of the research has been delimited and the relevant terms used in the study explained. Methods used in the gathering and processing of information have been outlined, while a further section of this introductory orientation comprises a summary of each chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

## MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: SOME PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS AND STRATEGIES.

## 2.1. INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION.

The chapter opens with a brief appraisal of the prospects for social change in South Africa and the possible role of education in enhancing peaceful change. The discussion thus provides a setting within which the N.E.S.T. endeavour can be understood. The chapter proceeds with the highlighting of selected statements of principle drawn from current N.E.S.T. policy documents. These statements reveal central tenets of the N.E.S.T. philosophy, which is characterised inter alia by the pursuit of non-discriminatory practices in schooling (Appendix A). Aiming to avoid discriminatory policies and bent on providing a model of non-racial, multi-cultural schooling that might act as a catalyst to changes in the provision of education in South Africa, the Trust offers private schooling of a high standard. The pupil population in Trust schools is comprised of many races and a diversity of economic class backgrounds. In such schooling the cultural heritages of all pupils are to be harnessed "through the fullest use of indigenous literature, art, music and folklore, thus promoting an ethos of a post-apartheid South Africa" (ibid.). Further, there is to be "a fair representation of the community's racial mix", while "the school is established for the mutual benefit of all members" (N.E.S.T., Sept., 1987). In practice, the first N.E.S.T. school, Uthongathi, accommodates Zulus, Indians (Hindus and Moslems), coloureds and white South Africans. In order to facilitate an understanding of the system, therefore, the present chapter accords a central place to the concept multi-cultural education, which provides a

unifying theme. Multi-cultural education and the contentious concept culture are analysed. Attention then shifts to selected, problematic factors underlying systems of formal schooling, including issues relating to pupils' cultural heritage, race and socio-economic class. The threads of argument are drawn together and woven into a more integrated pattern. The complexity of multi-cultural schooling in South Africa is highlighted and suggestions are made for a general approach to such schooling. The chapter concludes with an appraisal of strategies widely used overseas in order to raise the quality of education offered in culturally plural schooling environments. A warning is sounded about their appropriate use in the Republic.

## 2.2. SOME PERSPECTIVES ON CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY.

As explained in Chapter One, South African society can be described and analysed in terms of functionalist or Marxist perspectives. Functionalists tend to be consensus-thinkers, viewing society as an entity whose solidarity is ensured by the integrated co-operation of its constituent parts. Marxists tend rather to think in terms of conflict. In their view, Western capitalist society is comprised of classes of people struggling for material gain. Functionalists and Marxists thus have radically different perspectives on change and tend to gravitate to opposed poles of the political spectrum. Indeed, writing of the sociological setting of South Africa, Christie (1986, pp.19-23) characterises consensus-thinkers on society in terms of two groupings: conservatives and moderates. Conservatives, she points out, do not generally favour social changes, while moderates tend to support reformist changes that are neither drastic nor disruptive. Both groups have a consensus view of society and both want to retain the basic structure of the present society. They are thus essentially

functionalist. Opposed to their views, Christie points out, are the conflict thinkers who argue that schools are places in which racial and class differences are perpetuated. In South Africa, they assert, schools tend to keep the different Population Registration groups separate and help to keep the society unequally divided between managers and owners on the one hand, and workers on the other. These conflict thinkers, she declares, believe that society cannot be changed by improvements in education alone. Changes in education must be accompanied by broader societal changes.

*Chardeville article*

Writing of the prospect for change in South Africa, Schlemmer (1983, p.269) tends to confirm Christie's classification of viewpoints. He considers the radical or critical school of thought in sociology to hold to a view of change as fundamentally a consequence of conflict or pressure. It incorporates the Marxist perspective. The structural-functional school of thought, on the other hand, believes change to be facilitated by internal adjustments and adaptations in the institutional systems of society. Schlemmer points out that there is very little agreement between the schools. Polarised views are common. He argues that a synthesis is possible. In assessing the prospects for change in South Africa, consensus and conflict views should both be borne in mind.

Schlemmer's synthesised theoretical approach appears to be sound. He does not attempt to explain change in South Africa as a process neatly coincident with a single theoretical perspective. A study of Contending ideologies in South Africa (Leatt et al., 1986) shows the complex matrix of ideological perspectives that prevail in South Africa at the present time. ~~Some of the ideologies are essentially conservative, others are conflictual.~~ Change is likely to come about as a result of an interaction of many actors who

are bearers of a variety of perspectives.<sup>1</sup> The complexity is clearly acknowledged by Schlemmer. A synthesised approach is congruent with the eclectic sociological approach outlined in Chapter One.

Many paradigms of change are current. Schutte (1988, pp.2-3) relies heavily on the work of Smelser and Marx in order to explain their influential theories of change, as they apply to South African society. Smelser's equilibrium model is part of the functionalist tradition. Society is seen as a number of functionally related sub-systems that endure over time, but are amenable to modification or adjustment. Schutte explains:

"Change in a particular sub-system results in a chain reaction of adjustments to restore the equilibrium in that sub-system and eventually in the larger system. It is a continuous, largely self-correcting process aimed at maintaining the equilibrium of the system" (*ibid.*).

Karl Marx, by contrast to Smelser, is introduced as "a leading exponent of the conflict approach". Marx's revolutionary approach is described by Schutte. Society becomes polarised, with a developing communal consciousness in each pole leading to a breaking-point followed by revolution. Schutte discerns in the work of both Smelser and Marx, a process of conditioning that develops through progressive stages, implying a gradual heightening of the stimuli for change. Schutte (*ibid.*, p.7). concludes that violence is likely if the society develops a low tolerance threshold to change, leading to a violent reaction contrary to the direction of change. He points out that the "accelerated process of change" in South Africa renders it vulnerable to social insecurity and conflict, yet concedes

that further drastic changes are needed. Negative stereotypes must be challenged. The problem, to Schutte's mind, is basically one of tolerance for change:

"In order to put the necessary initiatives for peaceful change into operation in the time at the country's disposal, purposeful and persistent efforts must be made to heighten the tolerance threshold for change in all relevant spheres" (*ibid.*, p.9).

Whereas Schutte lays emphasis on the cognitive climate for reform, Marais (1988, p.11) points to a more open and conciliatory form of negotiation by the protagonists as a solution. Marais points to the incredibly complex task of accommodating diverse ethnic groups in one country and gives glimpses of the worldwide loss of life that has been traceable to ethnic conflict since World War II. Africa has been deeply affected, with the loss of an estimated three million lives since 1960. Marais puts forward a model showing current and past reform endeavours and the spiral of violence that has accompanied them. He refers to the model as the reform-violence helix (*ibid.* pp.18-24). In essence it shows that, because reform was not seen as a sharing of responsibility, it enjoyed little legitimacy and the spiral of violence erupted further at each stage of reform. The model reveals rising frustrations and violence accompanied by more suppression and reform, with an increasing loss of the government's flexibility to manoeuvre. Diminishing options have fanned the flames of violence. The key, according to Marais, lies in substantial participation by all protagonists in the process of reform (*ibid.*, p.29).

Is it possible, therefore, that the development of an open, non-racial system of education might create a more pliable cognitive disposition for reform, affording a greater degree

of participation in institutions than previously? Maylam (1988,p.97) tends to be sceptical of the liberal hope that the reform of racist attitudes will present a solution. He points to the radical argument that whites will not have a change of heart while their interests are served by apartheid. Reform is seen by radicals to be an attempt to conceal fundamental economic inequalities "beneath a mask of multiracialism". Maylam is himself pessimistic of the chances of success via reform. There has been no softening of attitudes, while notions of reform fall far short of what is required. Nor, he argues, is the revolutionary scenario a likely outcome either. Maylam's prognosis is gloomy:

"Thus it looks as though the impasse will continue in the short-term. As long as it continues the quality of life for all South Africans will continue to deteriorate" (ibid.,p.99).

Other writers are pessimistic about education as a vehicle for changing society. Swift (1977,p.16) believes radical or innovatory functions of education to be difficult to reconcile with its traditional role in the transmission of culture. Schools, he points out, are subject to powerful social pressures. In a highly stratified society, for example, a school would not be readily able to promote egalitarian values.

"Only when egalitarianism is accepted as part of the dominant value system of a society is it likely either to influence the organisation of education or to be part of the moral and social training given by the school" (ibid.,).

Writing specifically of the situation in South Africa, Theo. Hanf (1980,pp.233-4) also reflects pessimism. He pointed

out in 1980, at the height of reformist optimism, the extent to which enforced inequality had been entrenched between segments of the South African population. These "segments", he averred, had no free choices to make about their education.

He concludes:

"If the present educational system is counterproductive for those who designed it, it is also counterproductive to any form of peaceful and democratic conflict regulation" (ibid.).

He asks:

"Could a different kind of education contribute to a peaceful and democratic change? Again, this is not very likely. Of course, an education designed to reduce prejudice instead of actually promoting it would be very attractive; its prospects, however, are very bleak. Under certain conditions education can contribute to reducing prejudice, and to promoting better understanding between different groups in a society. The main condition for a successful educational contribution to that end is, however, an overall policy and strong public support for it. Precisely this condition is not fulfilled in South Africa today. Schools may positively influence attitudes and opinions, but whether these can be translated into behaviour depends largely on factors outside schooling" (ibid.).

Despite the grim pictures painted by the authors quoted, some hope remains. Schutte has advocated the creation of an improved cognitive climate for reform, Marais has written of a genuine process of negotiation, while Hanf concedes that



schools might positively influence attitudes. It is a slender hope. With origins reaching back forty years to the experiences of Deane Yates and Steyn Krige after World War II, N.E.S.T. has built on slender threads of hope such as these.

Yates writes:

"Most of the strategies for ending the apartheid system involve confrontation or violence. An alternative which is at least as viable is to work constructively, but urgently, to confront apartheid with a society which is its opposite" (Jul. 1988).

N.E.S.T. offers a programme based on social reconciliation. But does it imply justice? Justice is, of course, a concept at the root of much contention in political debate. As Andrew Gamble (1984, p. 220) has pointed out, liberalism and socialism are fundamental components of the Western ideology. Concepts of justice have been specific to each. Liberals have declared their detestation of public legal inequalities, while accepting social inequalities and privileges. The socialist response to liberalism proclaimed formal legal equality to be insufficient. Socialists demanded practical equality in the social sphere:

"For socialists real freedom and real equality, true universalism, required the overcoming of social as well as political and legal inequalities" (ibid.).

Meeting the requirements of justice has been a major challenge to N.E.S.T. Their response to the challenge will become clearer in the following pages. Attention will now shift to a consideration of significant principles espoused by the Board of N.E.S.T., from which an initial estimate of their concept of justice and equality can be gleaned, prior

to a more penetrating appraisal in the later chapters. The question of creating just educational institutions will be threaded through the remainder of this research as a central theme.

### 2.3. SELECTED, SIGNIFICANT PRINCIPLES ESPOUSED BY N.E.S.T.

#### 2.3.1. An open, liberal educational milieu.

The Constitution of the New Era Schools Trust makes provision for any child "irrespective of race, class, nationality and faith", to be eligible for admission to N.E.S.T. schools. It reveals the intention to proffer a holistic education promoting a high degree of intellectual, spiritual and physical development (N.E.S.T., 1986, p.2). Pupils will be expressly encouraged to make personal decisions and will be trained in democratic principles (N.E.S.T., Jan. 1988).

The philosophical underpinning of the N.E.S.T. Constitution is broadly reminiscent of the South African liberal perspective described by Leatt et.al. (1986, pp.51-3), as a tradition in which individual liberty is upheld "against the alternatives of socialism and ethnic or racial nationalism". Viewed in the light of this perspective, all individuals are of equal dignity and worthy of the same human rights, without regard to race, culture, sex or creed. This credo of tolerance and understanding is reaffirmed in most recent documents of N.E.S.T. (N.E.S.T., Sept. 1987; Jan. 1988). The philosophy appears also to be consistent with the view of liberalism set forth by Acton (1968, p.146), who describes the first of three important features of liberalism as follows:

"There are no exclusions, everyone is in. This has been regarded as a political expression of the Christian idea that God is equally concerned with everyone, that all men (sic) are equal in His sight".

Acton explains that this view does not regard all persons as alike in some way, but rather that no-one should be despised, ignored, or used merely as means to the purposes of others. The origins of N.E.S.T. schools from within the private church school system would appear to support this analysis. The deep religious convictions of many persons at the centre of N.E.S.T. are very evident.

Despite the liberal image presented by N.E.S.T., several members of the Board (Molette, 6 Oct. 1988; Krige, 7 Oct. 1988; Kane-Berman, 6 Oct. 1988) have pointed out that N.E.S.T. is not politically orientated and cannot be identified with any political ideology. It is viewed rather as a pioneering endeavour to show that non-racial schools can operate admirably in practice as educational and social institutions. In the words of Kane-Berman:

"N.E.S.T. schools are meeting-grounds that transcend political, philosophical, racial, cultural, religious and income barriers. N.E.S.T. does not belong to the political spectrum: it is neither of the Left nor Right" (ibid.).

There is validity in this viewpoint, despite the difficulties experienced in "bracketing" any educational project, or attempting to situate it within a cordon sanitaire that socio-political ideologies cannot break. The researcher acknowledges the extreme complexity of the N.E.S.T. philosophy when taken as a whole, that renders problematic any attempts to settle it nicely into an ideological niche.

### 2.3.2. Multi-cultural education as a central feature.

It is the view of the N.E.S.T. Board of Trustees that a closer relationship and more effective communication between the races in South Africa will be achieved when children of different cultural backgrounds grow up together and are educated in the same institutions (N.E.S.T., 1986, p.1). Understanding and respect are to be fostered between children from different cultural heritages. The schools will have a religious base. They will tolerate and indeed promote the various religious beliefs of their students (N.E.S.T., Sept. 1987). The essence of the policy is expressed thus:

"(To) inculcate in the pupils a spirit of good neighbourliness free from any racial bias, with pupils from various cultural backgrounds learning from each other without having to forsake their own cultures" (ibid.).

Although some conflation of the concepts race and culture is evident, N.E.S.T. schools are thus intended to be broadly characterised by the provision of multi-cultural education as it is described by such writers as Lynch (1983, p.15) and Atkinson (1984, p.1).

### 2.3.3. A multi-racial schooling population, with a policy of non-racism.

A fundamental aim of N.E.S.T. is to establish schools in South Africa that are free of racism, with the intention that the communities thus formed "will be non-racial in their way of life and in their ethos" (N.E.S.T., Jan. 1988). There is to be a fair representation of races on all governing bodies and in the composition of the staff and

pupil corps. Thus N.E.S.T. seeks a fusion of all races in their schools (N.E.S.T., Sept. 1987).

2.3.4. The accommodation of pupils from various socio-economic backgrounds.

It is a stated aim of N.E.S.T. to give assistance in the form of bursaries, in order to make their schools affordable to all sections of the community (N.E.S.T., Jan. 1988).

Bursaries are tailored to the individual financial circumstances of each pupil's family and an endeavour is made to accept pupils from a variety of socio-economic classes. The depth and extent of support are considerable:

"In the strictly limited sense of being an educational project, the pupils, as the beneficiaries, are admitted from every stratum of society. To this end, funds for bursaries are raised to the extent of more than 50% of the total school fees" (N.E.S.T., Sept. 1987).

2.3.5. The relevance of the above integral features of N.E.S.T. to the analysis that follows.

As shown in Chapter Three, many white private schools have accommodated a modest (and in a few cases, substantial) multi-culturalism in their educational programmes (Staples, 1986). Many Catholic schools, as well as selected schools from other Christian denominations, have increasingly pursued an open policy (Christie & Butler, 1988). The N.E.S.T. endeavour has clearly been remarkable for the depth and centrality of its commitment, from its inception, to a non-racial, multi-cultural and multi-class educational policy. The issues of culture, race and class have been selected for particular analysis in this study owing to their worldwide prominence as areas of contention.

Coombs writes:

"In both developing and developed countries, the most widespread and intractable disparities in all education, and particularly higher education, are those rooted in socio-economic, racial and ethnic differences" (1985, p.230).

Since Coombs mentions race distinctly, the term ethnicity in Coombs's statement has been freely interpreted with regard to its cultural connotation. That the issues of culture, race and class are contentious in the context of schooling in South Africa is evident from the work of Kallaway et.al. (1986). Leatt et.al. also write as follows of recent trends in analysis:

"Over the past few years there has been a definite shift in the analysis of South African society. Many observers no longer explain the policy of apartheid in terms of racial or cultural factors but in terms of economic interests" (1986, p.43).

The shift in analysis has been acknowledged and reflected in the present research, although it will be noted that the researcher has eschewed the single-factor economic determinism of the Marxian analysis.

Attention will now shift to an appraisal of problematics experienced in offering education to culturally diverse populations by means of multi-cultural schooling. The concept culture, upon which such schooling (education) is based, will itself be seen as problematic.

## 2.4. CULTURE : THE CONCEPT.

### 2.4.1. The centrality of the concept culture to multi-cultural education.

As will be shown later in this chapter, multi-cultural education implies the process of educating pupils who are bearers of different cultural heritages together in the same positive and enriching classroom environment. The Uthongathi school near Tongaat boasts a pupil enrolment comprised of approximately equal numbers of Zulus, coloureds, Indians and whites. Although the definition of such groups on cultural lines is problematic, as will be more evident later, there is no doubt that a wide variety of languages, religions and life-perspectives is represented. In view of uncertainties surrounding the concept culture, and the fact that the N.E.S.T. schooling system embraces an endeavour to consciously bring together pupils of different cultural heritages in the same classrooms, it is relevant to the present study to explore the concept itself.

### 2.4.2. Some early views on culture.

The word culture, which is derived from the Latin cultura, to cultivate land, has a long history of usage in French and English. Gamst & Norbeck (1976, p.32) note that Voltaire used the term in the sense of "cultivation of the mind", while the late Eighteenth Century lexicographer and grammarian Christopher Adelung referred to culture in its more modern context of human acts and artifacts, while still holding to the view that cultivation of the mind should comprise part of the definition. Adelung believed human beings to have been on an "incessant" course of cultural development from early times. His ideas were developed further by Gustav Klemm, who in 1854 declared culture to be

the result of the interaction between man and nature as well as man and man in a framework of social intercourse.

Edward Tyler, who has often been called "the father of anthropology" developed the ideas of Klemm and other scholars and his Primitive culture, written in 1971, presented the superorganic concept of culture:

"Culture or civilization, taken in its widest ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Gamst & Norbeck, 1976, p.36).

The equation of culture with civilisation can perhaps be challenged on the grounds that not all cultures necessarily possess the complexity and level of development of material and spiritual resources, social milieu, political and legal organisation typically identified with civilisation. Tyler's view has nevertheless exerted a major influence on our modern understanding of culture as a concept, although Collins (1975, p.203) rather uncharitably describes the definition as a "shopping list" of behaviours and elements. Collins points out that merely listing relevant traits or facts does not give a feel for their unique qualities. Significantly for educational theory, Collins suggests that culture can be equated with all those human behaviours that are transmitted from generation to generation by learning. The danger inherent in such view could lie in the conception that behaviours and ideas have an independent existence, existing super-organically "over and above" any human being, and are transferred in unchanged form. This super-organic view was indeed promoted by L.A. White in the face of much opposition (Gamst & Norbeck, 1976, p.35). White stands accused of reifying culture when he describes it as



"a thing sui generis, with a life of its own and its own laws" (Burtonwood, 1986, p. 12). Although Burtonwood acknowledges that culture can act as a restraint on action, it does not, he argues, give rise to an inevitable, deterministic process. White's view has been strongly attacked for diminishing God's role in creation. It was seen to negate the idea of free will; man being moved by culture, and its captive. White has argued from the viewpoint of the Realists that culture has a concrete reality to it. He is quick to reassure us however, that he has not warped or reified that which is abstract:

"To reify", he writes, "is to make a thing of that which is not a thing, such as hope, honesty or freedom. But it is not I who have made culture things. I have merely found real things and events in the external world which are distinguishable as a class of being dependent on symboling, and which may be treated in an extrasomatic context, and I have called these things and events culture" (Gamst & Norbeck, 1976, p. 64).

Collins points out that we might have to do with "overt" forms of culture in those activities and artifacts that the anthropologist can observe directly, while "real" culture refers to actual behaviour; those things and events that really exist or occur in the life of a society (Collins, 1975, p. 210). Collins appears to be leaning towards an idealistic view of culture, in which norms or rules are abstracted from the actual observation of behaviour. Culture is, in this view, the organised body of laws or norms of behaviour that exist in the minds of those who bear culture. It is a view open to the criticism of the realist school, who contend that when culture becomes wholly an abstraction it virtually ceases to exist. Johnson (1968, p. 52) points out how the process of inferring culture from

the observation of uniformities in behaviour renders it to some extent an imperfect, or approximate, construct of the observer himself.

Beals and Hoijer (1972, p. 104) point to yet other interpretations that add to the uncertainties. Culture (or cultivation) is often identified with a command of certain arts, as well as good manners. Historians, according to these authors, often use the term culture to denote special developments in artistic and intellectual fields. Greek culture might, for example, apply only to the activities of learned Greeks who are skilled in art and literature or, more narrowly, to the Greeks of the historical "Golden Age" of Greek intellectual development. It is a concept of culture that Burtonwood (1986, pp. 1-3) describes as elitist, or "high culture". It is mentioned as one of Worsley's (1984, p. 43) ideal-type ways of conceptualising culture. Worsley notes that the concept implies superior values, reserved for the few. He traces the history of this interpretation back to the slave societies of antiquity, where the enjoyment of "culture" was the prerogative of the leisured class. It was, above all, remote from manual labour or the utilitarian values of the majority, and implied a set of superior values monopolised by a socially superior minority. It is a particularly narrow view, set in contrast to the broader anthropological views mostly current at the present time.

During the past century, many varied definitions of culture have been formulated by anthropologists. By the middle of the twentieth century, such definitions usually included a variety of traits, and anthropological connotations became prevalent. Some current definitions suggest that the concept comprises a learned, socially transmitted, symbolically based mechanism for group survival which, like

other complex phenomena, possesses order or pattern. It is commonly seen to be comprised of interrelated and interacting parts that influence each other, and incorporates ideas, sentiments, social arrangements and objects that depend for their formulation and continuation largely on man's ability to create symbols. We are immersed in culture, according to Muller (1985,p.1). It is an "organic" phenomenon that reveals our ways of making sense of the world in which we live. It is neither a static, (nor, according to Tomaselli (1986,p.8), completely coherent) phenomenon. It is subject to change, fragmentation and reformulation. It is a complex phenomenon which is variously described as having intra-organismic aspects, including concepts, beliefs and attitudes, as well as inter-organismic aspects that may include social processes involving interaction between persons. There are also extra-organismic aspects that include material objects. By means of culture, therefore, persons are meaningfully related to others, and to their physical and supernatural environments. Language, economic and technological behaviours, social organisation and control, philosophy and religion are all inter-related aspects of culture (Coombs, 1985, p. 244).

#### 2.4.3. The concept culture relevant to the present research.

In order to formulate an acceptable understanding of the concept culture that can provide a basis for multi-cultural education, the present writer has selected four definitions that appear to be consistent with the broad anthropological view of culture widely current:

"Through the use of language, values, attitudes, images and symbols, we can make sense of our world. We are

able not merely to agree upon the nature of reality but also to order that reality. Through culture as a system of communication, the stability and consensus of society is maintained. Culture thus defined is the essence of the consciousness of the world" (Brown, Cathcart & Cosin, 1977, p. 35).

"So, as a tentative working definition only, what I mean by culture in this book is a network of values, concepts, methods of thinking and communications, customs and sentiments (for it is not wholly rational) used as a socio-ecological coping mechanism by individuals, groups and nations. It is an active capital of non-material, socio-historical character which attracts compound interest in interaction with the social and natural environment so as to secure the survival of the individual and the group. All accretions to the culture are achieved through the 'good offices' of the existing capital" (Lynch, 1983, p. 13).

"On the broadest level culture tends to be related to or defined as the symbolic universe of a group of persons. In this sense it refers to the meanings people attach to relationships to self and others, to humankind's extensions, for example, tools, technology, etc., to institutions, ideas and other groups of people, and to each human's relations to cosmic circumstances" (Macdonald, 1977, p. 8).

"Culture is a patterned system of knowledge and conceptions, embodied in symbolic and non-symbolic communication modes, which a society has evolved from the past, and progressively modifies and augments to give meaning to and cope with the present and anticipated future problems of its existence" (Bullivant, 1981).

With support from the foregoing definitions the present writer has contrived the following definition of culture that will be adopted for the purposes of the present research. Culture comprises:

- (a) a realm of interrelated and patterned meanings
- (b) that are embodied in symbolic and non-symbolic modes of communication;
- (c) transferred to, and modified by, each succeeding generation
- (d) within a group or society,
- (e) and necessary for it to cope with its present and projected future existential problems.

Culture thus seems to embody a shared constellation of meaningful solutions that meet the existential needs of a community, and tends to reflect and enhance consensus and stability within the group.

Several writers have pointed to the uniqueness of each human culture that "embodies the whole way of life of a people" (Mead, 1964, p. 489). Beals & Hoijer (1972, p. 102) too, write of the "distinctive modes or ways of behaving that, taken as a whole, constitute their culture". They assert that "each human society has its own culture, distinct in its entirety from that of any other society" (*ibid.*). Coombs (1985, p. 244) also writes of culture accounting for a society's "distinctive identity". It is, however, possible to argue as Burtonwood (1986, p. 14) has done, that it is nonsense to draw rigid cultural boundaries, since they admit to a greater degree of cultural homogeneity than is ever likely to exist. Burtonwood suggests that it is small-scale anthropological studies in particular that have led to the practice of trying to draw clear boundaries, whereas in complex industrialised societies multi-culturalism is the

norm. Banks (1981,p.181) takes the argument further and, while acknowledging the unique achievements of distinguishable human groups, points out that those who only view the world from unique cultural and ethnic perspectives are denied a share in a broader human experience. They are culturally and ethnically encapsulated (ibid.,p.25). A certain open-mindedness is needed if we are to live in harmony in a world in which interests might too readily clash. Culture provides a lens through which we judge the world, yet it can become a conscious blinder to other ways of thinking, feeling and acting (Gollnick & Chinn, 1983, p.15). It might also serve us well to recognise the similarities shared by cultures:

"Thus it is possible for cultural groups to embrace the same religious doctrine or the same political philosophy and still be distinct cultures, despite the fact that in the highly mobile world order of today virtually no culture can be considered to exist totally separate from other cultures" (Staples,1987,p.6).

Cultures tend to reflect answers to questions that are in essence similar, owing to such common factors as human biological and psychological needs. White (1973,p.12) goes so far as to describe the function of culture as zoological. It can be argued that basic similarities are more pervasive than differences are, especially when the need for food, clothing, shelter, child-rearing and social affiliations are considered. Grant (1977,p.35) points out that even value systems have similar elements, and concludes that no culture is wholly isolated or cocooned. He asserts that humankind shares a great deal in common despite a great diversity of languages and other expressions of culture. It is clear to the present writer that there is advantage in schooling taking into account both the similarities and differences in the cultures of the social communities served.

Cultures are seldom static. The seeds of change are ever present, even in those that are apparently most closely integrated and stable (Ware, 1974, p. 115). Cultural change often arises through the efforts of a group within society to render certain institutions more effective as agents to serve their interests. Culture is not transmitted from one generation to another in fixed and permanent forms (James, 1981, p. 23). Its metamorphosis can rather be likened to that of living matter. Children tend to create a living culture out of elements from the cultural milieu to which they have access, since people play a part in modifying and adapting the culture into which they are born (Bullivant, 1981, p. 2). Cultures are thus not static phenomena but are constantly changing. Where rapid change is involved, it may be less traumatic than slow, uneven change that separates generations and can lead to fragmentation of life, with difficulty in adjustment, according to Mead (1964, p. 507). In the event of rapid change, the entire way of life can be modified so that the community as a whole can be carried with it. The direction in which a society is likely to evolve is, however, understandably difficult to predict. The interaction of environments, complexity of the problems that a society might face and the possible network of solutions are so complex that no single determinant can suffice to explain change (Service, 1971, p. 25). Rapid socio-political changes in South Africa render an analysis of the concept culture in the South African context necessary, since its definition is historically interwoven with socio-political issues.

#### 2.4.4. The concept culture in the socio-political setting of South Africa.

Discussion earlier in this chapter showed multi-cultural education to have originated in Western countries as a

reaction to ethnic revitalisation movements that were opposed to assimilatory policies. Gaganakis (1986, p. 14) points to the difficulty inherent in transposing ideas current overseas in order to explain events in South Africa, where the concepts "ethnicity" and "culture" might be interpreted in ways different from those common in other countries. He reminds us that in South Africa the concept culture is sealed into explicit racial categories and that a static view of culture is widely current. He also argues that cultures are viewed as unchanging and crystallised, while "culture" is often the criterion by which personal identity is created.

In South Africa, race has exerted an undeniable impact on the formulation of group identity. In the past, vigorous moves have been made officially to ensure that racial categories are propagated as a basis for a separation that must be engineered on a firm genetic foundation, although as Muir (1983, p. 17) has pointed out, conservative politicians and academics have tended to legitimise the social structure of South Africa in terms of cultural identity rather than race. The recognition of racial-cultural group identities and consequent separation of communities is usually regarded as a logical and benign policy by its proponents. The nature of such "cultural" pluralism is further explained by Staples (1987, p. 7):

"The cultural pluralist, that is, the person who recognises cultural plurality, argues that culture and cultural identities are facts of life which cannot be denied and who makes a distinction between cultural differentiation and cultural discrimination. For the wellbeing of society he respects differentiation and rejects discrimination. A country following a cultural pluralist ideology is made up of competing cultural and ethnic groups, each of which champions its economic and political interests".



Too often, it seems, cultural discrimination is implemented under the banner of cultural differentiation. Morrow (1986, p.247) points out that the concept culture is particularly vulnerable to misuse. It has a "tangled theoretical and political history" in South Africa, with its "bitter history of domination, oppression and exploitation, much of which has been rationalised in terms of cultural differences" (ibid.). Morrow goes on to explain that the use of culture as a neutral, descriptive concept in the social sciences lends itself well to the application of the concept as a "scientific" basis for classifying people into cultural groups. This approach provides a secure foundation for political practices that are discriminatory.

Gaganakis (1986,p.14) is even more scathing of the apparent misuse of the concept culture in academic circles, and believes we are at the point now where it is "a sort of do-it-yourself term which can mean almost anything you please". It is then possible to harness the concept to a policy that buttresses group privilege. As Bullivant (1986,p.43) has pointed out, boundary markers can become clarified and manipulated in order to provide for the inclusion or exclusion of certain groups from desired resources.

Muir (1983,p.20) has also suggested that concepts are manipulated in South Africa in order to downplay racial policies while presenting a claim to the superiority of certain groups based on cultural identities. He explains that social groups manipulate the concept culture, amongst others, in the course of social interaction, and that their behaviour is much conditioned by the meanings that they give to the term. Such meanings tend to be subjective. Van den Berg (1986,pp.4-6) is also sceptical, even scathing about the misuse of the term culture, which he regards as starkly problematic. He argues that the South African population

cannot be divided neatly into a certain number of cultural groups and that culture is not "frozen": nor is it an immutable entity that cannot be challenged. He considers culture to be a dynamic phenomenon that cannot be perceived as a social cocoon. It is, rather, a set of socially constructed, changing meanings that tend to be experienced or lived, often on an unconscious level.

Muir (1986, p.23) considers cultures to be a mixture of elements, and points out that no culture in South Africa can be regarded as "pure". Much borrowing occurs and new wholes are synthesised from the intermixture. It is quite possible, however, that as a result of the process, certain cultural constituents can be disparaged, or inter-ethnic conflict can result. In South Africa, he asserts, imperialistic and nationalistic movements have in the past proved to be inflexible, intolerant and exclusivist. They have frequently been blinkered in their vision, and educational theory and practice have reflected such limitations. Indeed, Muir argues, education has readily reproduced these nationalisms. It is as capable now of reproducing multi-culturalism, if the society wants to reach inter-group understanding. If such endeavour is to be successful, a deeper insight into the nature of culture is needed, with the development of a concept more generally acceptable than that of the past. McGurk has opened the door to a new vision of culture:

"It demands that we accept an idea of culture that is truly expressive of the dynamic openness of human existence. The transition will take place from a notion of culture and its practice, which is often embodied in what are felt to be prized traditions, and is expected to be normative for all in a group, to a truly pluralistic idea of culture. Effective

acknowledgement must be given to diversity in which the experience of cultures and religions other than one's own is not alien, but in which the resources of the other culture and religions are appreciated in an 'imaginative passing over' from one's own culture and religion to others. One may then return to one's own culture and religion with new creativity and insight" (1988,p.7).

## 2.5. MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION.

### 2.5.1. The concept in historical-philosophical perspective.

Jeffcoate points out that multi-cultural education is a phenomenon about which there is little agreement:

"Education and race relations are both contested areas of study and intervention", he writes, "so it is hardly surprising that multi-cultural education, which straddles the two, should have become a site for ideological debate and conflict" (1984,p.161).

He suggests that, remote from conservative ideologies, multi-cultural education can be characterised as a contested terrain between liberalism and radicalism. In Jeffcoate's view, liberalism can be traced back to the Romantic libertarian tradition of creativity and self-fulfillment espoused by Rousseau, which surfaced at a later time in such phenomena as Neill's Summerhill School, the Victorian meritocratic philosophy and Dewey's democratic education. It has dominated multi-cultural education for the past twenty years and is clearly Jeffcoate's preferred philosophical underpinning for such education despite its "naive optimism". He puts forward a spirited defence of the liberal position, which is dedicated to the enhancement of

individual life chances, in the face of the Marxist argument that liberal ideology presents a perfect apologia for retaining the arrangements of a capitalist society (*ibid.*, p. 164). Marxist arguments are thought by Jeffcoate to be characterised by neglect or ill-use of empirical data and their educational endeavours to be permeated with indoctrination (*ibid.*, p. 186). He does, however, concede that Marxist analyses have a point to make in condemning the lack of theoretical rigour that frequently characterises liberal arguments. It is clear that an appraisal of the New Era Schools Trust can most profitably be undertaken with both liberal and Marxist critiques in mind.

Banks (1986, pp. 1-5) contends that a liberal ideology has characterised the Western nations since World War II, and argues that this ideology was initially reflected in an assimilationist policy that envisaged all immigrant minorities participating fully and equally in the life of the Western nation-states. In order that they might participate thus in Anglo-dominated society, it was regarded as essential that all ethnic, cultural and racial minorities be freed of traditional cultural attachments. Only by doing so would they be free to interact as equals in the modern, technological culture of the state. Considerable success was achieved until the nineteen-sixties, in such countries as the United States of America, Australia and Canada. During that decade problems relating to the ethnic minorities increasingly surfaced. Banks describes the fundamental problem as follows:

"The ethnic and racial problems in the Western nations developed in part because specific ethnic groups, because of their physical and cultural characteristics, were denied the opportunity to attain the attributes and behaviours that were needed to assimilate in the mainstream society" (1986, p. 4).

The Western nations, he concludes, created expectations and goals for ethnic groups but made it impossible in practice for these groups to attain them. Considerable political mobilisation of ethnic groups resulted and gave rise to ethnic protest and "revitalisation movements". Demands were made for the inclusion of the ethnic group's cultural heritages in the school systems, with multi-cultural education as one among many responses.

Bullivant (1986,p.33) also alludes to multi-cultural education as the culmination of a lengthy process. It has involved the development of solutions to the problem of accommodating ethnic minorities in English-speaking pluralist societies such as the United States of America, Great Britain and Australia. Each approach, he argues, has been promoted as a panacea, has had its weaknesses exposed and has been superceded by another policy, including assimilation, the "melting pot", integration, the "cultural mosaic", bi-culturalism and finally multi-culturalism. The latter is viewed by Bullivant as an educational juggernaut, not without its weaknesses.

"A disturbing feature of this approach", he writes, "is that it seems to be based on the same conventional wisdom about pluralist and compensatory education as previous approaches. That is, given sufficient cultural understanding and goodwill between members of ethnic groups, enough government funding and the kind of democratic liberal idealism that has long characterised Western societies, the problems of achieving inter-cultural understanding, equality of opportunity and improved educational achievements will be solved: so runs the belief. Spurred on by its underlying assumptions, alternative approaches are denigrated and more realistic interpretations of the nature and effects of pluralism ignored" (*ibid.*,p.33).

From the passage quoted it is apparent that Bullivant considers multi-cultural education to be founded on a utopian view that does not sufficiently acknowledge the hard realities of cultural diversity. In the view of the present writer great caution must be exercised in assuming a too-clearcut definition of cultures. The complex intertwining of cultures that is characteristic of industrialised societies, as well as uncertainties surrounding the concept culture itself, mitigate against a reification of cultures. Concomitant with an acceptance of cultural differences therefore, should be acknowledgement that future citizens should learn, acquire and master the common sentiments, skills and knowledges that will enable them to function effectively with others in the mainstream culture (Banks, 1986, p.24). The dilemma of acknowledging both the prevalent community cultures as well as the mainstream culture is characterised by Bullivant (1981, p.1) as the "pluralist dilemma". It is a dilemma that is central to multi-cultural education.

#### 2.5.2. Some current views on multi-cultural education.

It is obvious from the literature that widely different interpretations are attendant on the concept multi-cultural education. The debate has been particularly fierce during the 1980's, with confusion and contradiction permeating the interchange. Educators in the field have nevertheless sought to establish a new consensus and some of the more contentious positions of the past appear to have been eschewed. The current understanding of the concept in Great Britain seems to rest upon the general approach of individual educators to the education of a culturally diverse society; whether they favour an assimilationist, cultural pluralist or anti-racist approach (Mogdil, Verma, Mallik & Mogdil, 1986, p.5). In the assimilatory model, also

known as the "melting pot", according to Saunders (1982, p.13), the principal intention is to merge all groups to the extent that their traditional characteristics are lost and a new, unique blend emerges. The cultural pluralist model, on the other hand, emphasises retention of the unique cultures (ibid.). By contrast, multi-culturalism permits the retention of existing cultures, while also generating a mutual enrichment of cultural experience.

The concept multi-culturalism might, however, rest on a conceptual muddle, writes Gaganakis (1986), who has expressed doubt concerning its further use as a concept. It is obvious that we must have a clear understanding of our meanings when we link the word "multi-cultural" with "education". The concept tends to become warped and limited if used in too restricted a sense, as may be the case with terms such as health education or special education (Tesconi, 1985, p.22). It is obvious from the paradigms explored by Banks (1986, p.11) that multi-cultural education is no longer viewed as a discrete, optional subject that forms part of the school curriculum, or entails the addition of a few "exotic" elements to it. It should, rather, focus on the general curricular needs of all pupils, as well as the special needs of some, in the view of Nixon (1985, p.4). Nixon explains further:

"Issues relating to multicultural education, in other words, are allowed to soak into the very fibre of schooling" (ibid., p.41).

The inappropriate connotations that can surround the term multi-cultural education have constrained Staples (1987, p. 12) to prefer use of the description "education that is multi-cultural", as unambiguous and less likely to be taken as a form of education that is supplementary or limited.

The essence of multi-cultural education appears to lie in the experiences of children in classrooms that accommodate persons with different cultural heritages, living and learning together. It involves the acceptance of each child as the bearer of a unique heritage of cultural experience. The individual is enabled to retain a secure identification with her essential cultural origins, while classmates are also exposed to her culture in a process of enrichment of their own. Further, insists Macdonald (1977,p.8), the cultural heritage of each person is seen to be something of real worth, that can provide a foundation for personal development.

Staples (1987,p.11), while shifting emphasis to the concept of cultural group, clarifies the concept further:

"A school is practising multi-cultural education when equal dignity, respect and privilege are accorded all cultural groups in the school, but each group is allowed to maintain its culture fairly intact so long as it does not conflict with (a) the welfare of others, and (b) the establishment of an efficient cohesive school spirit".

A culturally pluralistic society is thus seen to be a positive asset, and such cultural differences as there may be are welcomed for providing pupils with wider understandings. Multi-culturalism, however, goes beyond a mere understanding of different cultures to a recognition of the right of different cultural groups to exist as distinct entities (ASCD Multicultural Education Commission,1977,p.3). The contribution of each child to an enrichment of the learning experiences of all is acknowledged and encouraged. In view of such enrichment, one might argue the case that multi-cultural education is superior to mono-cultural



education, in which children of a particular 'cultural group' are identified and educated together.

The weaknesses of mono-cultural education are criticised most harshly by Parekh (1986, pp.23-29). Parekh condemns the approach, in particular because he considers it unlikely to arouse a child's curiosity about other cultures. It is not likely to nourish the faculty of imagination, by which alternatives to known patterns of life are willingly explored. It can stunt the growth of a critical outlook.

"A child taught to look at the world from the narrow perspective of his own culture and not exposed to any other is bound to reject all that cannot be accommodated within the narrow categories of his own way of looking at the world. He judges other cultures and societies by the norms and standards derived from his own, and predictably finds them odd or even worthless" (ibid., p.23).

Parekh also writes of the insensitivity and arrogance that can be bred through exposure to mono-cultural education. It presents a fertile ground for racism and the characteristic response to other cultures is often made in terms of superficial generalisations and stereotypes. Finer feelings can be stunted. Parekh concludes that multi-cultural education is therefore superior to mono-cultural education (ibid., p.29). In considering Parekh's view, one might argue that multi-cultural education itself might be vulnerable to an interpretation that overaccentuates the distinctions between groups, though all be educated under the same roof. Multi-cultural education obviously implies much more than the accommodation of cultural groups in the same facilities. Attitudes are important and the experience is directed to the enrichment of all. A complex interweaving of cultures

is sought, while the richness that diversity can bring to schooling and to society is not neglected.

"Metaphorically speaking", write Seelye & Wasilewski (1981,p.42), "it might be that the optimum model for the organisation of society is not so much the rational design of an eighteenth century French garden but the organically interwoven, complex multiplicity of a tropical rain forest".

The interwovenness of society to which these authors refer can be reflected in schooling that provides for multi-cultural educative experiences, incorporating cultural diversity in all its richness, as well as a measure of cultural "mainstreaming". There is thus a recognition of the benefits to be derived from retaining the home culture as well as the mutual benefits that the experience of other cultures can bring. That there might be problematics in such exposure, however, is mentioned by Atkinson (1984, p.15), who warns against the danger of presenting all aspects of a culture in a positive way. Such an approach might result in the abdication of standards of critical judgement. Lynch (1983,pp.14-15) too,warns against "soft folksy tokenism" in which all cultural values and meanings of all the cultural communities involved in such schooling are equally acceptable, simply because they are different. He emphasises the undesirability of such an approach and argues that the more positive educational benefits of multiculturalism could be negated by its adoption.

It is possible to conclude from the above that there is advantage in vigorous and open debate in multi-cultural classrooms, undertaken in a spirit of sympathy, empathy and understanding, while not jettisoning objective and critical judgement for the sake of sentimentality. There is scope

for the acceptance of unfamiliar values where such are seen to be good, if different. Lynch (1986,p.193) indeed considers multi-cultural education to be a good vehicle for facilitating the exercise of democracy : a point with which Parekh (1986,p.26) essentially agrees. In essence, Parekh argues, multi-cultural education is an attempt to release children from the confines of ethnocentric straightjackets. It can be viewed as an endeavour to free them from biases and prejudices, to render them willing to explore the world's rich diversity. Multi-culturalism is thus, according to Parekh, an education in freedom. It implies freedom from inherited biases and narrow feelings and sentiments, as well as freedom to explore other cultures and perspectives and make one's own choices in full awareness of available and practical alternatives. It is a way of sensitising the child to the inherent plurality of the world. Atkinson defines it succinctly:

"as education which gives a central place to all the main cultural traditions represented in a particular community or society, and which seeks to develop within pupils attitudes of pride and understanding regarding their own cultural tradition and tolerance, respect and understanding regarding the cultural traditions of others" (1984,p.1).

It is essentially a creative affirmation of individual and group differences within a common humanity. Both unity and diversity are accommodated. With acquaintance and understanding, respect and tolerance are given a chance of developing:

"It is most important if we are to share the world peacefully that we share ourselves and our cultures. It is crucial for efforts in this direction to begin in the school, if not in the home" (Baptiste,1978,p.29).

It is apparent from the foregoing discussion that the endeavour with multi-cultural education is to avoid either of the following :

- (a) weaving the education of children into insular cultural cocoons, or
- (b) pressing pupils into an unfamiliar cultural mould, with a consequent loss of identity.

The former is a possible feature of mono-cultural education set in a pluralist framework : the latter is assimilatory. The literature suggests that multi-cultural education is directed towards children enjoying the preservation of their home cultural heritage while being positively exposed to the cultures of others.

### 2.5.3. Multi-cultural education in the socio-political context of South Africa

In the face of the many prevailing uncertainties and conflicting opinions on the most appropriate schooling dispensation for South Africa's racially and culturally complex society, many white private schools have opened their doors to black pupils. In many cases, according to Christie & Butler (1988), the numbers of such pupils have been small, with the development of an inevitable assimilatory policy. As will become apparent in Chapter Three, other schools have evolved towards an approximately even distribution of white and black pupils on the roll. During a visit to selected schools in Johannesburg, the researcher noted that some of these schools had begun to make quite penetrating adaptations and accommodations to meet the needs of their black intake. They appeared to have begun a shift towards multi-culturality rather than blatant assimilation. The headmaster of Sacred Heart College, Bro. Neil McGurk, explains the initial process thus:

"With the advent of only a few blacks who cope academically the fears of the original supporting community about opening the school are found to be irrational and it adjusts to their presence" (1988, p. 49).

McGurk considers this first phase in the development of a "non-racial" consciousness to imply a tolerance of the unthreatening assimilation of a few "aliens". He explains that the dynamics alter with an increase in numbers. New tensions can arise, especially if the children are under pressure from their township peers. As the numbers rise further, a new consciousness must begin to permeate the institution and new relationships between students and staff are needed. Also required are adaptations to the formal and hidden curriculum. Bridging classes might be created (ibid., p. 50).

McGurk urges an open embrace of all the historically alienated ethnic, cultural, class and religious groups in order to counter the fragmentation of society (ibid., p. 32). He expresses the need for open cultures to evolve through schooling within which students can acquire the skills and necessary enculturation to make South African society truly non-racial;

"Because of the growing demographic pressures on 'white education' a basic dynamic will begin to operate. Schools are going to have to open and increasingly reflect the demographic proportions of the population at large, otherwise 'white' schools will become objects of great resentment. Once transformed in this way they will become the basis of a pattern for the new hierarchical ordering of a nonracial society which they

are at present reproducing as 'white'. Generally, 'white' South Africa will have to reconstitute itself through education into a more homogeneous nonracial cultural entity in a nation-building exercise" (ibid., p.40).

The difficulties faced by those private schools that have made special efforts to accommodate cultural plurality, such as Mayfair Convent, Sacred Heart College, St. Barnabas College and Woodmead are mentioned by Headmaster of St. Barnabas College, Mr Michael Corke (1988, p.7). These schools and a few others appear to have progressed well beyond assimilatory approaches geared towards the admittance of a few black pupils. They are in the vanguard of change and may yet face the first stirrings of an "ethnic revitalisation movement" amongst their black pupils. It is conceivable that multi-cultural education could arise in these South African schools by means of processes of reaction to assimilation, as has happened overseas, although writers such as Christie & Butler have pointed out that there are essential differences. It is evident that multi-cultural education in South Africa must be geared to contend with many unique problems that are not encountered in most Western countries.

Christie & Butler (1988, p.159) make plain their reservations about multi-cultural education in the context of South Africa. They point to the origins of the approach in certain overseas countries during the 1960's, as an endeavour to accommodate immigrant minorities. They do not accept the application of a term used to accommodate minorities, if it is also to be used in the South African context to describe the integration of an established black majority into white schools (ibid.). Nor are they accepting of the manner in which the concept culture is used in multi-

cultural education. It tends to be superficial, related to ethnic practices, observable behaviour and articulated beliefs. The curriculum too readily becomes a collection of trivialised practices that do not capture the complexity of experiences of open school students:

"This points to the dangers of teaching tribal customs and folklore as the main thrust of a multi-cultural curriculum. To concentrate on these aspects as observable elements of African culture not only runs the danger of stereotyping; it also sidesteps the lived cultural experiences of black township dwellers" (ibid., p. 161).

Christie & Butler also deplore the assumption that cultures are possessed by groups equal in power, and that such cultures are currently being equally represented in schooling practices. Finally, they point to the confusion of the term "multi-cultural education" with "racially mixed education", and argue:

"This in itself raises doubts about the relevance and accuracy of the term 'multiculturalism' in the South African context. If it is intended to apply to the mixing of racial groups, there seems little point in using the term 'culture', especially since 'culture' could equally be used to refer to ethnically desegregated groups (such as Afrikaans, Zulu and so on)" (ibid. p. 162).

Implied in the reservations of Christie & Butler is the apprehension that multi-cultural education might be implemented to serve sectional interests. The complexities of the South African setting for multi-cultural education is further elaborated by Robert Muir (1986, pp. 17-22), who

suggests that current debates on education in South Africa can be viewed from any of three pervasive rationales, and that the multi-cultural education programme emanating from each is quite different from the others. The first rationale described by Muir is the technocratic, which implies the use of empirically testable propositions as a basis for educational theory. Aspects of the educational process are regarded as amenable to identification and manipulation as concrete objects of scientific interest. Multi-cultural education is seen to be largely subjective and therefore "soft" data. The most serious consequence for multi-cultural education programmes is that experts plan it from outside the system itself, design it without consultation or negotiation and impose it on the participants. The present writer would characterise much of the past educational dispensations in South Africa as motivated by this functionalist rationale, with the Human Sciences Research Council Report on Education in the R.S.A. (1981) as a typical but by no means extreme example of research emanating from its use.

The second rationale described by Muir is that of the Marxists, who point to multi-cultural education as a liberal, humanistic attempt to produce desired results including the equalisation of opportunity, but which does not penetrate to the central political and economic issues that divide society. Education is seen to be an agent for social reproduction. It is used in order to establish the hegemony of the dominant class that itself interprets and defines the multi-culturalism of society. Muir disparages this rationale on the grounds that it denies any initiative to the perceptive and caring teacher. The processes involved are viewed as mechanistic, with the teacher a mere puppet. Nor does it allow for the initiative of the pupils in that potentially creative, innovatory role that can help to create a multi-cultural future.



The third rationale described by Muir, and particularly cogent to the present research, is the interpretive. According to this rationale, meanings in education are negotiated between participants who are thinking, conscious people endeavouring to understand the world. Knowledge is consciously negotiated in an active, creative way. Multi-cultural education is accordingly characterised by an interchange of viewpoints between persons from different cultures. The resulting, negotiated content is incorporated into the curriculum to make it part of the reality of the pupils. Muir describes the essence of the interchange as follows:

"It is a negotiation between equal partners of different cultures to forge a system of thought which will provide them both with intellectual and emotional security" (1986, p.23).

It is this view of a negotiated dispensation for multi-cultural education that most adequately answers several of the serious questions raised by Christie & Butler. It would imply the creation of structures to ameliorate the hegemonic power of any dominant racial or cultural group. By negotiation there could be an accommodation of persons from different cultural, racial or socio-economic backgrounds within the schooling system. Negotiation implies the adaptation of multi-cultural education to suit the needs of participants, rather than the creation of schooling structures into which unwilling individuals are thrust. The present writer concedes, however, that such dispensation cannot operate in isolation. To succeed, widespread changes will be necessary in South African society, including a stress on affirmative action to promote a greater measure of equality.

## 2.6 SELECTED PROBLEMATICS OF MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING.

### 2.6.1 Inequalities in the transmission of culture through schooling.

#### 2.6.1.1. The transmission of culture through schooling: a benign or problematic process?

Beals & Hoijer (1972,p.102) characterise culture as "those behaviours which have in common the fact that they are learned", while Collins (1975,p.205) reminds us that cultural ideas, activities and artifacts are passed from generation to generation. The willingness of humans to "transmit" and "receive" culture is critical to the process. Its transmission is not automatic (Collins,1975,p.206). Human agents thus have a role to play in interpreting and adapting culture to suit individual needs. The acculturation of the younger generation clearly implies a close relationship between cultures and education (Bullivant,1981,p.2; Luthuli,1985,p.23).

Carnoy (1974,p.2) points out that in most societies it is formal schooling that provides the most prominent institution for transmitting culture. He perceives the "traditional" theory of schooling to be based on the view that Western education lifts people from their ignorance to a state of enlightenment and civilization (ibid.,p.4), but argues that this is not necessarily true. He asserts that western formal education came to most countries as a feature of imperialist domination. It focused on training the colonised for roles that suited the coloniser (ibid.,p.3). A great effort is thus made to preserve the status quo and to subordinate the colonised to an acquiescent position. He argues that culture is used actively in this process and tends not to be transmitted in a neutral way. It is used

purposefully to foster the prevailing social dispensation. The culture of the coloniser predominates.

In any dynamic society, according to Parekh (1986,p.20), one culture will generally enjoy dominance and become sanctioned and promoted in law, morality, politics and in economic and educational institutions. The dominant public culture is accordingly disseminated through the schooling system and assumes a hegemonic role. It tends to influence the structure, organisation,ethos, pedagogical techniques and view of what constitutes knowledge in the education system (*ibid.*). The education system thus helps to legitimise the dominant culture, especially the world view that characterises it. Specific attitudes and values are thereby cultivated:

"All this means that although an educational system may avow the ideals of freedom, objectivity,independent thought, universality of knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and so on, in actual practise it often does little more than initiate and even indoctrinate its pupils into the dominant culture" (*ibid.*).

Burtonwood (1986,pp.24-5) explains the allegation of Carnoy and Parekh that dominant forces in society tend to propagate their culture and world-view by alluding to the work of Dawe. Dawe, Burtonwood points out, refers to the Durkheimian view of society as one that holds to a highly reified view of culture. It has a deterministic and mechanistic dynamism that results in conformity being gladly given to the claims of society. Education is, in this paradigm, mainly concerned with the perpetuation of an officially sanctioned culture, with little scope provided for unfettered views and independent problem-solving. The concept culture itself has tended to enhance this

functionalist view. Burtonwood (*ibid.*, p.48)) also clearly sees the harder Marxisms as part of a sociology that magnifies the role of external constraints on the individual. The Marxist view would appear to fit the "radical paradigm" of Banks (1986, p.19). It is a paradigm that, as mentioned previously, places great stress on reproductionism. Schools are viewed as part of the problem of inequality in society. They are characterised as playing a key role in keeping certain groups oppressed, the purpose being to reproduce the social-class structure. According to the radical paradigm, multi-cultural education is harnessed to this end:

"Multicultural education is a palliative to keep excluded and oppressed groups such as blacks from rebelling against a system that promotes structural inequality and institutional racism" (*ibid.*).

Multi-cultural education, according to radical authors, does not adequately address the issues of class, institution-alised racism, power or capitalism. It is alleged to divert attention from these most critical issues.

The present writer does not accept without demur the mechanistic interpretations of schooling that characterise the radical writers, yet recognises that there are facets of their work that hold compelling insights. In view of the endeavours of N.E.S.T. to provide a non-discriminatory system of schooling, therefore, several radical critiques have been selected in order to explore insidious forces that might operate to propagate inequalities. Bernstein, Bourdieu, Gramsci, and Bowles & Gintis might all hold insights that are relevant to multi-cultural schooling in South Africa.

#### 2.6.1.2. The propagation of social structures: Bernstein.

One of the foremost writers on the problematics of schooling as an agent for the propagation of discriminatory social structures is the social scientist Bernstein. According to Atkinson (1985,p.21), Bernstein's writing on schooling represents an embryonic anthropology of schools as agents of reproduction. Bernstein's work stems from the anthropological tradition of Durkheim, who viewed the individual as a being caught in mechanistic social forces that form an unbreakable cycle, reproducing societal norms and structures. The model of schooling Bernstein puts forward is intended to be of considerable generality. It focuses on the propagation of the structures of transmission.

Burtonwood (1986,p.28) comments on some of the major themes of Bernstein's writing. He explains how Bernstein, borrowing from Durkheim, draws a distinction between mechanical solidarity, in which society coheres because of similarities amongst people, and organic solidarity in which society is held together because of differences and the independent characteristics of people. Under conditions of mechanical solidarity in society, status is determined by the social positions of a largely "similar" population. Solidarity depends on sameness within social categories, and social boundaries are kept distinctive so that categories do not become muddled. Schooling that reflects a society characterised by mechanical solidarity thus embraces "an educational code within which subjects retain separate and clear identities and where the roles of teacher and pupil are clearly demarkated" (ibid.). Organic solidarity, by contrast, is regarded as prevalent in societies in which the structural division of labour is characterised by increased specialisation. Individuals are viewed as different, and

solidarity in the society is maintained by an acknowledgement of functional independence amongst the persons who comprise it. A change of educational code is necessary to accommodate such social dispensation. An integrative approach to curriculum is characteristic, and there are weak subject boundaries. Pedagogies are used that involve the pupil most actively in the educational process. Each child is regarded as unique.

Multi-cultural schooling that is embedded in a society characterised by mechanical solidarity could tend to reflect such society by sanctioning a separation of discrete cultural groups, with clear boundaries and a control that is explicit and hierarchical. The logical consequence would be a diminution of cross-cultural contact and the possible emergence of alienation. The very nature of multi-cultural education as it is widely understood, implies a more integrative approach with appropriate child-centric pedagogies that are perhaps more characteristic of the organic solidarity model: while nevertheless recognising the integrity of the constituent cultures. Some dislocation must inevitably be expected between such schooling and a society in which mechanical solidarity might be the norm.

Bernstein clearly views the school's structural arrangements as instruments for communicating societal norms and structures. Social control is propagated by means of pedagogy, the curriculum and evaluation. By means of exposure to schooling, pupils are socialised into a particular moral order that is embedded in society at large. They are subjected to a reproduction of society in their consciousness (Brown, Cathcart & Cosin, 1977, p. 14). The child is thus socialised to become a particular member of society by internalising the collective sentiments, values and ideologies of the pervasive culture (*ibid.*, p. 47), while

the school also reflects the power structure of society and its "inevitable" class domination through classroom experience. There appears to be little scope in Bernstein's model for the pupil to actively create his own perception of reality (ibid., p.44).

The present writer contests the rigidly deterministic interpretation of the reproduction argument presented by Bernstein, which suggests too little scope for independent thought and action on the part of pupils and teachers. Even granting the presence of mechanical reproduction tendencies, they do not absolve educators from interpreting values and ideologies in an original way. It will be shown that Bernstein himself advocates necessary internal adjustments in the school.

Bernstein presents a picture of organic solidarity as a mechanism that could well characterise the social structure of industrialised urban centres, where individual differences tend to be magnified by specialisation, and there is a richer cultural mix than in traditional rural societies. It follows that dynamics that are congruent with organic solidarity might be operative in these areas, conducive to the implementation of multi-cultural schooling that accommodates a variety of cultures and classes. In view of the potential of such schooling to accommodate children from widely divergent socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, a further aspect of Bernstein's writing is pertinent. His admonishment that schools too seldom examine their own deficiencies, while holding a view of children and their parents as possible deficit systems, could well be relevant to South Africa. Bernstein (1980, p.65) believes that the school often views its role as compensatory. Children not successful at school are regarded as deficient, and compensatory education is offered to make up for the

lack of parental mediation. Cultural "deprivation" is a label duly applied. It is a label, however, that tends to do its "own sad work". The parents' culture becomes despised and the teachers consequently have lower expectations of pupils from such homes. The pupils tend, as a consequence, to fulfill such lowered expectations. It appears that a widening gulf can be established in the classroom between these and other scholars, while frequently little effort is expended by teachers in establishing bridges with the world of the apparently deprived child. The child and his parents are inevitably expected to accommodate themselves to the expectations of the school:

"Each way the child is expected, and his parents as well, to drop their social identity, their way of life and its symbolic representations, at the school gate. For, by definition, their culture is deprived, and the parents are inadequate in both the moral and the skill orders they transmit" (ibid.).

Bernstein concludes that too little attention is given to remedying defects in the school itself. While portraying the school as an unconscious agent of societal reproduction, Bernstein does not thereby absolve it of the task of self-examination and improvement of its services in accommodating the individual needs of pupils.

In multi-cultural schooling that incorporates a variety of different cultures, some "modern", technological and industrialised and others more traditional, a denigration of traditional cultural patterns is an obvious possibility. Acceptance of the validity of Bernstein's view on the deficit syndrome should lead to an avoidance of negative stereotyping. His work, taken in toto, suggests that it is



sound policy to:

- . be alert to the possible insidious presence of reproductive mechanisms in schooling, particularly that which is multi-cultural,
- . retain an open, child-centred pedagogy,
- . subject the practices and policies of the school to constant appraisal, and
- . be alert to negative stereotyping.

While noting the critical view of schooling put forward by Bernstein, the present writer identifies with the greater optimism of Banks (1986,p.27). Banks believes that, while there is wisdom in recognising the limitations of formal schooling to effect change in society, there is good reason for faith in the view that the school can play a limited but relevant role in fostering cross-cultured competencies in a genuinely egalitarian milieu. It is the professional duty of educators to explore, develop and utilise all possible avenues to achieve such end.

#### 2.6.1.3. The mechanistic propagation of cultural inequalities : Bourdieu.

Bourdieu presents a powerful yet contentious picture of schooling as a propagator of cultural inequalities. Writing with the educational system of France in mind, Bourdieu points out that schooling is commonly seen to be a liberating force (1976,p.110), but argues that there is ample evidence of its effectiveness in perpetuating existing patterns of social inequality. Bourdieu points out that each family transmits to its children a certain cultural "capital" and ethos, or system of values. Discrepancies among families as regards such capital can lead to unequal chances amongst children faced with school examinations and

tests. Bourdieu (ibid.) considers the social class to which parents and children belong to be a powerful determinant of the attitudes they express towards the culture of their schools, as well as the type of studies chosen. Many children are doomed to failure simply because of their embeddedness in a particular social class. Handicaps experienced in the early years of schooling are often cumulative since pupils from the lower classes tend to face a greater measure of teacher prejudice than children with a more favourable "habitus", or disposition towards learning. Middle class children, on the other hand, receive encouragement from their parents. They experience an ethos at home that is conducive to their good progress at school. Success tends to breed further success. In the process, family attitudes to school are vitally important to success, as is the disposition of the school towards pupils.

"In fact", writes Bourdieu, "to penalise the underprivileged and favour the most privileged, the school has only to neglect, in its teaching methods and techniques and its criteria when making academic judgements, to take into account the cultural inequalities between children of different social classes. In other words, by treating all pupils, however unequal they may be in reality, as equal in rights and duties, the educational system is led to give its de facto sanction to initial cultural inequalities" (1976, p.112).

It is clear that Bourdieu considers the schooling system to be propagating an elitist culture, while simultaneously asserting the presumed neutrality of schooling. Certain facets of culture come to be "consecrated" by the authorities in charge and these become the orthodox and official culture. Schools transmit this consecrated culture

and reject "heresy". There is transmission of an appropriate habitus, comprised of acceptable, officially sanctioned habits of thought, perceptions, attitudes, manners and taste. The education system thereby shapes a "common cultural unconscious" by which conditions conducive to cultural reproduction are propagated. Habitus is, according to comment on Bourdieu by Cosin et.al. (1977,p.38) a cultural code, the master pattern of which ensures the perpetuation of the cultural heritage, although some adaptation is tolerated. The concept habitus appears to be consistent with thought-patterns that are characteristic of the "cultural elite". Those who have access to such habitus gain power and prestige in society and tend to propagate the interests of the ruling class. By legitimising only those cultural forms that are their own, according to Bourdieu (ibid.,p.40), the ruling class perpetrates symbolic violence over the dominated. Pupils who, because of their class origins do not have easy access to the dominant culture come to consider their own cultural heritage as worthless, to the detriment of their self-esteem. If "cultural capital" is not forthcoming from the home, it is only to the school that the child can turn for access to the dominant culture. He cannot thus fairly compete with those whose family background equips them with the necessary habitus to handle the demands of an academic training. A cultural rift occurs between pupils, and success or failure in school in turn determines to a great extent the child's subsequent place in society. Cultural capital is thus converted into scholastic capital, resulting in superior occupations and privileges.

Musgrove (1977,p.14) is harshly critical of Bourdieu. He describes Bourdieu's view of the social order as a "hard view" in the Durkheimian tradition and sees it as consistent with Marxist theory. It is, Musgrove argues, a rather despairing view of education as a mechanical process in

which immutable forces operate within the thing-like nature of the social order. Musgrove sees this view as mechanistic while neo-Marxist theory assigns to the school a formidable and sinister potency to perpetuate inequality and injustice. Musgrove (*ibid.*, p.24) clearly does not find Bourdieu convincing: nor does he consider the core proposition to be at all remarkable. That schools can convert a child's family advantages into cultural symbols and credentials to form a legitimate basis for the acquisition of a high position in society is an unremarkable assertion. Nor does Musgrove accept Bourdieu's apparent "contempt for evidence, his claims to be offering a transcendental view of the social order in terms of 'structuralism' and his recourse in practice to ramshackle statistics that do not bear examination" (*ibid.*, p.25). Musgrove goes to some lengths to disprove Bourdieu's statistics, and contends:

"It is not the rich and the powerful (who are so efficiently 'reproduced') who consume culture and read philosophy and eighteenth-century novels. Culture in the main is consumed by people who are well-educated but relatively poor and weak-notably by teachers" (*ibid.*, p.26).

Musgrove points out that people are largely free, even in schooling, to construct their own meanings. He directs our attention to the force of human intelligence and autonomy. In doing so, he is supported by Burtonwood (1986, p.29) who, with the hindsight of an intervening decade, castigates Bourdieu for his neglect of the creative potential of people to formulate their own meanings. Burtonwood views schools as a contested arena rather than institutions for the propagation of a narrow interpretation of culture. He joins Musgrove in rejecting the mechanistic, Durkheimian interpretation that emanates from Bourdieu's pen, the

reified and narrow view of culture to which Bourdieu holds, and the lack of scope he affords to independent action. He cites the work of P.E. Willis, pointing out how Willis has sought to free his thought from the reproduction framework. Willis, Burtonwood (ibid., p.41) asserts, acknowledges the constraints of gender, class, religion and socialisation within a particular culture, but emphasises the active production of culture, while playing down the deterministic connotation. Willis's work Learning to Labour (1977) is a study of a group of twelve non-academic working-class "lads" from a town designated as Hammerton. Willis concluded from the study that the resistance of these pupils, who set up a culture in opposition to that of the school, was the inevitable result of their working-class roots. The transition from the school to the shop floor was a relatively easy process since their counter-culture had paved the way. Opposition to authority is a major feature of Willis's findings. Blackledge & Hunt (1985, p.208) however, do not believe that Willis has proved his point that the counter-culture of the lads is a realistic representation of working-class culture, since his study shows that the majority of the working-class school population are conformists. Nor, they argue, is working-class culture a unity. Other researchers might point to a long tradition of deference to authority! Willis, suggest Blackledge & Hunt, wants us to believe in a one-dimensional world in which there are some pupils who want an education, and others who simply enjoy life. He never seems to appreciate that the two modes of living can be combined (ibid., p.216).

Returning to Musgrove (1979, p.173), one notes his explanation for "upper-class" counter-cultures that are also in evidence in several countries. He cites the "Situationists" in Strasbourg, Californian hippies and

Germany's extremist Baader-Mainhof movement, and contends that their activities comprise a "spectacular revolt" by upper class children against being socially reproduced. Musgrove believes that Marxists find this revolt difficult to explain, since the youngsters involved are privileged and unoppressed. These counter-cultures are explained by sociologists as habitus that failed. Reared by tolerant and non-interventionist parents, when the youngsters meet bureaucracy and technology, they experience outrage and shock. Much of this counter-culture, identified perhaps with progressive schools, is congruent with societies marked by rampant capitalism:

"The counter-culture and progressive schools are not found with failure, poverty and privation, but with success and great concentrations of wealth"  
(ibid., p.175).

According to Musgrove, only circuitous Marxist arguments can present these oppositional movements as the outcome of class oppression. It is a real difficulty for them that the most blatant and visible, counter-hegemonic youth cultures of our times were cradled not in privation but in privilege. These phenomena of upper-class reactions raise more questions about Willis. Nevertheless, partly as a result of Willis's work, culture is seen to be more actively created by resistance and compromise than was the view held during the mid-1970's when social reproduction theories held sway. There is more acceptance now of the view that dominated groups are comprised of potentially active individuals who, although socially located, possess their own alternative view of the world. Nasson (1986, p.112) would appear to concur with this view, when he writes of schooling in South Africa as an arena of contest:

"With vast numbers of schoolchildren, including some from rural towns, actively protesting the bankruptcy of their educational systems, schools are today, more than ever, arenas of conflict and contradiction. Children, sometimes in mutual alliance with parents, teachers and community organistaions, are able to make and remake a cultural idiom not only separate from, but also opposed to, much of the dominant educational culture".

Muir (1980,p.6) has commented quite specifically on the applicability of Bourdieu's ideas to South Africa. He contends that, if one accepts Bourdieu's argument that scholastic success is largely dependent on mastery of the habitus and cultural capital of dominant groups in society, then in a plural society such as South Africa's, some cultural groups could well be disadvantaged. These tend in South Africa to be black pupils. In presenting his analysis, Muir (and Mary Crewe, who engages in debate with him), tends to broadly equate the culture of black pupils in South Africa to that of the working classes in Bourdieu's analysis. The conflation seems justifiable, since in both cases the disadvantaged groups are perplexed and rebuffed by "arbitrariness" of the dominant culture. Muir (ibid.,p.16) argues for a remediation of the inherent disadvantages of black pupils, and suggests greater attention in South African schools to curriculum development, as well as to a better understanding of the cultural patterning of thought. In response to Muir, Crewe (1980,p.18) asserts that he does not go far enough when he restricts his comments to a consideration of habitus and symbolic violence alone. Capitalistic economic violence is, in her view, at the root of South African problems. She argues that economic discrepancies are too overwhelming to be overlooked. The many economic disadvantages that detract from effective learning experiences for black schoolchildren must be taken

into account. Crewe argues further that Bourdieu's theory would be inappropriate if applied to South Africa, because it basically confines the problem to one of providing different schools for different socio-cultural groups. This, she asserts, could lead to further exploitation (*ibid.*, p.20). It is not a question of less habitus as an intrinsic deficiency, but rather a matter of disadvantage caused by economic factors. One cannot lightly tinker with the symbolic alone: it is too completely fused with the economic:

"What one needs", she argues, "is to step outside from the situation and through an identification of the role of the economic and the symbolic, the dominators and the dominated, work towards a vision of a transformed society, not merely a vision of a transformed curriculum" (*ibid.*, p.21).

The present writer leans towards a qualified acceptance of Bourdieu's thesis that cultural inequalities tend to be both consciously and unconsciously propagated by schooling. The rigidly mechanistic interpretation promulgated by Bourdieu seems, however, to be inconsistent with experience in the real world of teaching where, it is clear, there is evidence of more freedom to create independent meanings than Bourdieu will apparently acknowledge. Events in education in South Africa, including boycotts and the rise of Peoples' Education would support this view. The essential premise that the cultural environment of the home may be a critical factor to success at school is readily accepted. There is indeed good reason to individualise curricula and pedagogy to accord with individual needs where possible. The interwovenness of the school and home environments is difficult to deny and implies a substantial, systematic improvement of economic possibilities for deprived groups if



greater parity is to be facilitated by schooling in South Africa.

The discrepancies evident across class boundaries could be exacerbated in the context of multi-cultural education, where sanctified Western culture could assume a hegemonic role to the detriment of pupils from traditional communities. There would appear to be little justification for thrusting together pupils from very widely differing backgrounds where a "deficiency syndrome" could operate, unless prior bridging courses and ongoing pedagogical support were available. Further, a curriculum congenial to all cultural groups represented would appear to be relevant. A democratic environment and considerable degree of negotiation are evidently necessary, with curricula possibly sanctioned by a central, representative accreditation body at national level. Such negotiated and evolutionary dispensation holds greater promise than the fomenting of a climate of mistrust, and even violence, that has increasingly characterised South African schooling in recent years as an agent for forcing change.

#### 2.6.2. Race and ethnicity as complicating factors.

As mentioned early in this chapter, a fundamental feature of N.E.S.T. policy is the acceptance of students irrespective of their racial classification. Indeed, it is the purposeful endeavour of N.E.S.T. to ensure a representative balance of races in their schools. The implication is that their schools will inevitably reflect an approximate profile of the races present in the local communities, albeit by orchestration of intake numbers.

The H.S.R.C. investigation The South African society: realities and further prospects (1985, p.35) points out that

race and ethnic groupings can sometimes coincide, but that the relationship is not inevitably present. Race is determined by external physical characteristics emanating from biological history, whereas ethnicity is an apparently more complex concept embracing cultural and language commonalities, an awareness of group solidarity, historical destiny, kinship and other factors. Straker-Welds (1984,p.1) is sceptical of the very category 'race' as a scientific category, and considers it to have arisen as a result of racism to divide human beings. He points out that it feeds on a historical legacy of imperialism and colonialism and is utilised in order to label certain ethnic groups as biologically inferior or superior. Mead, too, argues against any fundamental racial categories being used to distinguish people:

"There is no evidence that there is any difference in the capacity to learn, to innovate, and to transmit culture among any of the existing human stocks, all of whom are members of one species, capable of fertile matings and possessed of the same general range of capabilities. Thus, differences in race should not be regarded as having any significance unless they have been given social significance" (1964,p.489).

The phenomenon of racial discrimination and negative stereotyping is nevertheless widespread and pervasive. Its effects can be profound. In many contexts, the oppressed come to hate the oppressors. Such hatred can erupt when restraints are lifted (Morgan & King,1975,p.383), although when the racially oppressed are thoroughly cowed such hate might not be openly manifested. These authors deduce that a vicious circle of handicaps and discrimination can be set up. If, for example, blacks are prevented through prejudice from getting adequate schooling, housing and other social

advantages, the resulting social handicaps may lead to retardation of educative experience, thus providing a basis for further racial prejudice. Attempts to combat prejudice, they urge, must begin with the abolition of segregation (ibid.). In the United States of America "segregated" schooling for minority group children is perceived as inferior to that given to other children. Such perceptions have led to attitudes of inferiority in the minds of minority children and superiority in the minds of Anglo children (Estrade & Vasquez, 1981, p. 59). A negative self-image can result in damage to the child's self-esteem and identity.

The most pressing need in British education, according to Bullivant (1981, p. 219), is to alleviate the serious disadvantages of children from "coloured" minorities. Such disadvantages are obviously widespread, but are more evident in some areas and countries than others. Problems of socio-economic discrimination occur in certain urban areas of Canada, as well as the United States, where Puerto Ricans, Chicanos and blacks are greatly disadvantaged. Ethnic stratification also occurs in Hawaii (ibid.). In Great Britain "whiteness" appears to be the only norm, writes Mukerjee (1984, pp. 187-8), and any group not readily accommodating to middle-class "white" norms is regarded as deficient and abnormal. Since the racist ideology is under attack worldwide, Mukerjee argues, Britain has no alternative but to embark on a political initiative focused on the development of an anti-racist perspective. The alternatives are stagnation or the "culture of revolt". Parekh (1986, p. 30) is equally vociferous in condemning British racism. Children must be confronted patiently with facts and arguments about others, he asserts, and their curiosity must be awakened. In short, he concludes, "one needs to embark on multi-cultural education" (ibid.).

Children should not only experience the world of meanings that comprise other cultures, but should be exposed to persons from different racial groups so that they can become ethnically literate. Banks explains the approach further:

"If we develop educational programmes and policies that are designed to make students more accepting of cultural differences but fail to deal seriously with problems caused by racial differences, we will not solve our most basic intergroup problems" (1981,p.185).

In South Africa the network of apartheid laws has for many years set strong boundaries between racial classification groups, with disastrous effects. As Christie (1988,p.70) points out, categories of race are recognised and accorded social significance in every sphere of daily life. Particularly pernicious are the Population Registration Act and Group Areas Act. Although there has been some relaxation in recent years, these Acts tend to be divisive, leading to the arousal of resentment. McGurk (1988,p.2) considers them to be "the origin of the spiral of violence that now threatens to drag us all into its vortex". He considers the group orientation of South African society to be embedded in "an irrational racial immortality ideology that continues to suppress the right to common nationhood in the land of their birth of the vast majority of South Africans" (*ibid.*,p.41). He calls for new relevancies and argues against placing trust in collective immortality based on racial factors.

The fact that perceptions on the matter of race (and culture) are complex in South Africa is further explained by Muir (1983,p.21), who reminds us that the biological and genetic differences between black and white is fact, however clouded intermarriage may make the issue. Like McGurk, he

suggests that factors other than obvious racial differences are, however, used as a basis for racial differentiation. He points out that, officially, such differentiation is not suspended when persons of mixed race are implicated. Race only becomes of significance, Muir contends, in respect of the purpose to which it is put in social action. The manner in which people judge or act towards a person of a particular race is intricately connected with the culture and material circumstances to which the person so judged is seen to be bound. Muir goes on to give examples of such perceptions in the South African context, quoting extensively from Lever. Whites of lower status, he contends, tend to regard blacks as a threat. They denigrate blacks in order to enhance their own status by such denigration. On the other hand, upper class whites have more guilt feelings and tend to favour the educational, economic and political advancement of blacks.

The main objection of Africans, coloureds and Indians is that the group membership of individuals is ascriptively and statutorily enforced by a political group seen to be bent on propagating inequalities. The result of such legislated racial classification, according to Adam & Moodley (1986, p. 13) is a negation of self identification, with consequent rejection of the imposed identity. Such identity is regarded as a stigma and not a source of pride. Adam & Moodley, however, themselves affirm the use of racial distinctions under some circumstances:

"Where racial distinctions are upheld, as in affirmative action programmes, it is for the purpose of eradicating racial injustice rather than perpetuating it" (*ibid.*, p. 15).

Although education should be used to promote skills conducive to constructive inter-group relations in a multi-

cultural society (H.S.R.C., 1985, p.170), the isolated functioning of subsystems of education in South Africa leads rather to mistrust, prejudice and competition. For example, the present reformist endeavours in education are dismissed by some as a separate-but-equal myth (Sebidi, 1988, p.50). Kane-Berman (1988, p.4) in turn attacks the separation of systems of schooling from a wholly different perspective when he writes:

"Our present schooling system is doing a disservice to the children of this country because it is preparing them - irrespective of whether they are black or white - for a future that does not exist - a segregated economy. Despite the fact that the business environment will be totally integrated from a racial point of view by the end of the century, most children are growing up in separate racial and educational compartments, where they have little chance of routine inter-racial contact".

Although the process of bringing pupils of different races together in shared schooling might be a problematic enterprise in the socio-political context of South Africa, there are clearly many rational arguments for doing so. Yet, by segregating schools on the basis of statutory population group classification, according to van den Berg (1987, p.11), the state in South Africa has taught the youth of the country that separateness is normal and natural and that living and playing together is somehow unnatural and odd.

N.E.S.T. policy endeavours to counter estrangement by means of multi-cultural schooling to which all races are afforded entry. Such schooling is not without its detractors, however. Parekh (1985, p.23) highlights the views of writers

of the Left in Britain, who believe that the roots of racism lie too deep to be affected by the tinkering with curricula or school assemblies that they consider to be characteristic of multi-cultural education. Parekh stresses their commitment to anti-racist education; also their allegations that multi-cultural education tends to lull ethnic minorities into a false sense of self-complacency. Further, Parekh points out, multi-cultural education is opposed by the Left because it allegedly diffuses black resistance by diverting it into harmless channels. They classify it as part of the "race relations industry" that is designed to pacify ethnic minorities and co-opt them into British society. In order to answer such allegations from the Left and from black nationalists in South Africa, it is evident that the issues of race and racism must be confronted vigorously, yet with great sensitivity, if multi-cultural schooling is to present a credible alternative to the present system.

Christie has pointed out that it is impossible for open schools operating in South Africa as private, fee-paying, white-registered religious schools to escape the legislative network of racism (1988, p.38). They tend to be drawn into the context of racially differentiated schooling and need to be aware of the operation of racial factors inside and outside the classroom. By denying the significance of race, she argues, schools might fail to engage with issues of racism within their own practices (ibid., p.35). She contends that within the school, appropriate curriculum programmes, student mixed-race committees and S.R.C's, and awareness programmes are relevant. A balance of black and white pupils within classrooms should be engineered by principals and teachers (ibid., p.3), while group work involving students of different races could be more actively set up and greater efforts could be made to encourage racial

mixing in the playgrounds. In view of the great sensitivity towards racial stereotyping (and the very concept of race) that is prevalent amongst much of the population in South Africa, it is evident that any such integrative strategies as are implemented on a racial basis could prove contentious. A powerful unifying force is needed to guide integrative processes in open schooling and indeed in society as a whole.

McGurk (1988, p.4) has attacked the logic of ethnic unity as a principle upon which South African society has for years been founded. He describes it as a principle of disunity that has led to fragmentation. Only the regulating vision of a non-racial democracy is acceptable, he contends, as the projected desirable national future. To achieve such future, writes McGurk, constitutive principles that are universal and eternal in human experiences are needed. These can be concretised into more tangible ideals, but should emanate from a profound encounter:

"It is the discovery of the one God, who is to be found in love of neighbour, and nowhere else. This love of neighbour has to be extended from its more intimate experience in smaller communities into a national commitment".

McGurk, a Catholic, does not present his view from a denominational perspective. Indeed, the school of which he is headmaster has become inter-denominational in ethos. He therefore avoids the divisiveness of evangelisation to any creed or dogma. It is in the essential simplicity of his view that the strength lies. It implies belief in a living God who is the universal constitutive principle upon which love of neighbour is based, with a recognition of the essential worthiness and dignity of all. Resulting non-



racial practices in multi-cultural schooling could incorporate revised school policy on entry requirements, the composition of the staff, school board and classroom populations, as well as other strategies in pursuit of racial equality. Such matters are dealt with, as appropriate, in the sections that follow. The fundamentally anti-racist stance of N.E.S.T. is discussed in Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

#### 2.6.3. Economic issues in the propagation of inequalities through schooling.

The New Era Schools Trust has stated its commitment to making its schools affordable to all sections of the community and has instituted a generous bursary scheme in order to give effect to the policy. In view of the endeavours of N.E.S.T. schools to ameliorate the effects of divisive economic factors in their pupil populations, a discussion of economic inequalities in schooling is relevant. Following a general survey of pertinent issues, the focus will shift to the debate in South Africa.

Jeffcoate (1984, p.164) characterises the essential role of schools in capitalist societies to be the reproduction of class structures and, inevitably, social divisions. In doing so, he suggests, schools also satisfy the demands of the labour market by classifying and selecting children. The hierarchies of the work-place are replicated, and in general the interests of the middle class are promoted. The system is thus regarded as facilitating a social control that propagates existing inequalities. By receiving schooling, people can thus improve their "market worth" (Carnoy, 1974, pp. 4-5) as valuable inputs into the capitalist production process. The individual is moulded to become more rational, competitive and motivated by the extrinsic rewards of the capitalist framework.

"On the whole," writes Carnoy, "schools reward those who are, in Capitalist societies, most desirable from the standpoint of capitalist economic, social and political institutions" (ibid.,p.8).

Bowles & Gintis, in their book Schooling in Capitalist America (1976) point out that mass schooling was developed in that country during the last century to create a pliant labour force for the capitalist economy. Schooling, they suggest, is quite possibly the most important means for propagating the capitalist mode of production. It creates personalities that are in harmony with work in factories. Bowles (1976,p.32) considers inequalities that can arise in schooling to be part of the product of capitalist society. Such inequalities are likely to persist for as long as capitalism survives. He regards the reproduction of social divisions of labour as too evident to be denied and alludes to schools occupied by children of the poor in order to illustrate his point. Such schools, Bowles asserts, tend to be characterised by a lack of pupil independence. Pupils are treated like materials on a production line. There is a great premium on obedience and punctuality and little creative work, or individual attention from teachers (ibid.,p.35). Well-financed schools, on the other hand, can offer much greater opportunities to children of the rich, in order to prepare in them the capacities required for jobs in the upper levels of the occupational hierarchy. Self-reliance is taught to the children of managers and professionals, while the children of production-line workers are taught obedience. Aspirations not in keeping with the social class of pupils are not countenanced. Bowles (ibid.,p.37 ) nevertheless concedes that children spend but a small part of their time in schools and that the power of a school to alter a child's personality and values is somewhat limited. For a hundred and fifty years, he

contends, the schooling system has changed only in response to the needs generated by the economic system. Efforts to equalise education through government policy will only "scratch the surface of inequality" (*ibid.*, p.39). Bowles calls for a radical restructuring of the power relations outside schools, with a redefinition of jobs and the social division of labour.

In response to the work of Bowles & Gintis, Sarup (1978, p.176) attacks the deterministic, passive model of schooling they put forward. Possessed of free will, people are active agents capable of constructing personal meanings and gaining a perspective on their situation. Sarup writes of the views of Bowles & Gintis as Durkheimian, pointing out that according to their model society infinitely dominates the individual. Musgrove (1977, pp.74-5) has also refuted several of the arguments put forward by Bowles *et.al.* He contends that rural areas in Great Britain and the United States of America have, within the past century and a half, developed educational infrastructures at a greater rate than industrial areas. Religion appears thus to have been a greater motivating factor in the establishment of schooling than economic needs and a focus on the training of factory manpower. Musgrove goes on to argue that ruling ideologies do not inevitably pervade the schooling system (*ibid.*, p.77).

Until the mid-1970's, Musgrove alleges (*ibid.*, p.87), Marxists argued that schooling made the working classes docile so that they would fit smoothly into their inferior roles within the capitalist system. The upper classes were made self-confident so that they could exercise control. Within a few years, however, the argument was put forward that it was the middle classes who were docile because of their early upbringing. They were rewarded at school for their compliance. The defiant working classes were

punished. Musgrove declares that he cannot take such shifting arguments seriously. He contends (*ibid.*, p.88) that the competitive position of the working classes has been greatly strengthened by "mass schooling". They have not been made servile, but have tended to become more capable and skilled. Musgrove also points to the crippling costs to be experienced in trying to eliminate all inequalities in schooling (*ibid.*, p.20), as well as the contentious nature of any (even benevolent) state interference in family and home life.

Halsey (1980, p.225) argues that there is widespread disillusionment concerning the possibility of reaching an egalitarian society through educational reform. He points to political and economic reform as more productive avenues. The role of education would be to maintain such reformed society once it had been achieved. Halsey suggests many factors that mitigate against the success of working-class children within the educational system, including the common arguments centred on a lack of linguistic and other stimulation within the family and neighbourhood (*ibid.*, p.230). Above all, however, it is a matter of economic resources. At every point less is spent on the working-class child than on his middle-class contemporary. More public support is needed in the fields of educational resources, housing and job opportunities. Halsey argues that such action would require a political leadership capable of going beyond the confines of traditional liberal assumptions. He thus stands in opposition to Musgrove.

The foregoing discussion appears to hold much relevance for multi-cultural education. Of particular concern is the possible close identification of pupils from a particular cultural heritage or race with predictable locations in the economic class structure identified with capitalist society.

In the United States of America, for example, there is some support for the view that this has indeed occurred. In that country, Tesconi (1985,p.23) suggests, ethno-cultural groups have tended to separate out and gravitate to positions at the top, middle or bottom of the social class ladder. While Tesconi considers some upward mobility to be possible, he alleges that rhetoric has far outstripped actuality. Compensatory or enrichment programmes have been attempted, to promote greater opportunity for all. These have, however, tended "to foster cultural pluralism, but have not dealt directly with the issue of social stratification" (*ibid.*). This contention appears to be partly rebutted by Coleman (1980,p.272), who highlights the radical evolution of the concept of equality in the United States. Equality was initially considered to be achieved by the provision of free schooling for all. In a liberal climate allowing for personal achievement, educators encouraged the child and his family to make profitable use of available resources. There has, however, been a gradual shift to an emphasis on greater responsibility of the educational institution itself to eliminate inequality in a positive way by its own practices.

McGurk (1988,p.38) points out that all formal systems of education, whether of capitalist countries of the Western world or of the East-block countries with their command economies, tend to reproduce an elite hierarchical ordering of society. He believes it likely to be true in any future dispensation in South Africa too, despite the rhetoric of the radical egalitarians. In the past the South African education system tended to produce a white Afrikaner elite, the members of which caste exercised state executive, administrative and military power, while the English-speaking whites were content to enculturate an economic elite (*ibid.*,p.33). The white private schooling system has assumed an important role in this process. A diminishing

white minority remains in an elitist position, with the resettled rural poor (mostly blacks) comprising the most economically disadvantaged group (ibid., p.46). McGurk stresses the extent to which the system has been contested in the recent past.

The state in South Africa has certainly been castigated by numerous writers for apparently using state power massively to the advantage of particular ethnic groups and to restrict market access by "disenfranchised" groups. Ethnicity has accordingly become strongly linked to economic discrimination (Adam & Moodley, 1986, p.30). The argument that educational policies in South Africa have been harnessed to the same ends is proposed by Kallaway (1986, p.6). He alleges that schooling produces a selected, docile population that provides appropriate manpower for an increasingly mechanised industrial sector, thus acknowledging the arguments of Bowles & Gintis in the United States of America. The power relations embedded in the schooling system tend to be overlooked, Kallaway contends. It is viewed as a benign tradition in which schools are automatically "a good thing", provided by a disinterested or benevolent state with unbiased knowledge and an egalitarian philosophy. The reality, according to Kallaway, is very different (ibid., p.7). He is also averse to the alleged general strategy of the state to 'co-opt' a favoured black elite. Kallaway (ibid., p.16) has described the reformist strategy of Capital and Government as one that is aimed to defuse the political situation through granting economic concessions to a black elite in order to enable them to participate more freely in the free enterprise system. It is intended thereby to create a black middle class. The role of education is thus to create appropriate social strata. Schooling, according to Kallaway, is evidently aimed at creating a match or correspondence between the

needs of industry and the products of schooling, rather than at creating an ideal, harmonious state of society.

That there are severe limitations on schooling in general as an agent for improving the life chances of millions of disadvantaged South African schoolchildren is also stressed by Nasson (1986,p.100). He believes the "human capital" arguments to have had a long run since the 1960's and suggests that it is time for us to turn our backs on them. The lessons of Plowden in the United Kingdom and Project Headstart in the United States of America have indicated the inability of schooling to ameliorate disparities of wealth, welfare and opportunity. Nasson asserts that high economic growth and a massive redistribution of income and wealth are required. He writes:

"An impressive range of comparative studies worldwide continues to show us, in empirical terms, the limitations of policies and programmes that attempt to ameliorate the educational disadvantages of children from impoverished backgrounds. The roots of such childhood hardships lie outside of schooling, in a system of economic power and privilege in which class and racial oppression play crucial, determining roles" (ibid.).

Deeply conscious of the disparities of wealth in South African society, Neil McGurk (1987,p.50) suggests that part of the solution might lie in the development of an education system that provides equal opportunities for all in the modern sector of the economy. Such approach would create a large entrepreneurial class who would generate opportunities for employment (1985,p.37). Further, he argues, there is a great need for technical education for employment generation as well as education for self-employment. Private schools

are nevertheless singled out for McGurk's criticism as heirs and custodians of "an ideological hegemony over an education system which functions to reproduce an economic elite and hierarchical ordering of our society". Such schools give access to economic privilege. Blacks are at present very largely excluded, hence their protest against "racist capitalism". McGurk argues in favour of white South Africans following the moral high road of sacrifice. He urges radical changes in the structure and content of the curriculum of white private schools, in order to accommodate more human and social goals:

"If our schools are going to be places where a shrinking white minority and a handful of privileged blacks are going to find access to economic privilege, what do you think will happen to our schools in the future South Africa?" (1987, p.48).

Open schools are, however, not well positioned to overcome the deficiencies of the state's past unequal educational provision. Such schools are faced with severe restraints, including the pressures exerted by parents in a market situation (Christie, 1988, p.33).

The foregoing clearly has serious implications for the development of multi-cultural education in South Africa. In general, white and Indian children have schools of good quality to which they have ready access. White children, many of whom form part of the economic elite, are in particular exposed to a commonsense view of reality that recognises an inherent right to privilege. White schools clearly stand in a relationship of market competition to multi-cultural schools. Private multi-cultural schools must inevitably vie with white state schools in order to attract a white intake and might gravitate towards elitism.



By contrast, many children desirous of entrance to multi-cultural schools would doubtless originate from deprived backgrounds, if the social responsibility of such schools was to have substance. In the context of South Africa, many such children would be coloured or black; many would carry with them a history of educational disadvantages originating in a heritage of poverty. Such disparities would render the implementation of a multi-cultural learning environment contentious, with profound implications for entrance policies, bursary schemes, curricula, pedagogy and programmes of academic support. The rising cost of private schooling revealed in Finance Week, 17-23 Nov., 1988, renders a powerful bursary support programme essential for many pupils hoping to enter private multi-cultural schools. Further, in the view of the present writer, the foregoing discussion points to the need for a drastic nationwide attack on poverty.

## 2.7. A SUMMARY OF SOME ISSUES OF CULTURE, RACE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS FACING MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING IN SOUTH AFRICA, AS EXEMPLIFIED BY N.E.S.T.

### 2.7.1. The approach of N.E.S.T. : an overview.

The discussion in the first half of this chapter has dealt with several significant principles enshrined in the N.E.S.T. Constitution. These principles relate to the creation of an open, liberal educational milieu that will be accessible inter alia to pupils representative of different cultural heritages, races and socio-economic classes. Essentially, the N.E.S.T. programme involves the creation of a school society that will present a model of non-discriminatory practices, as a template upon which a future system of schooling might be based, to the ultimate benefit of the wider society of South Africa. The writer will now draw the threads of the preceding discussions together.

### 2.7.2. The issue of culture.

It has been shown that the policy of bringing together children from different cultural heritages generates many problematics. In South Africa culture is a concept that has for long been used to justify separation. Yet it is an ill-defined, problematic concept. Cultures appear to be amenable to modification and transformation. The context of multi-cultural education implies (a) recognition of cultural heritages as worthy of reinforcement and protection, and (b) the coupling of such propagation of cultures to a process of assimilation within a broader, common cultural pattern. It follows that the bearers of traditional cultures further removed from the evolving dominant culture (which in South Africa tends to be Western industrial), might be disadvantaged in mastering the codes and keys to unlock such dominant culture. Support, adaptations and accommodation appear to be imperative, with the "centre of gravity" of the evolving common culture becoming more freely negotiable. The evolving educational pattern based on organic solidarity, described by Bernstein, could well be relevant. The points made by Bourdieu on habitus, and by Willis and Musgrove on counter-culture, although open to debate, might with profit be borne in mind in order to ameliorate a potentially divisive tendency. The essential conclusion would appear to be the promotion of an open, flexible and negotiated approach as most appropriate, with attention given to the expressed needs of people. There is thus scope for the interpretive rationale for multi-cultural schooling suggested by Muir. Strategies to accommodate a diversity of cultural heritages in the same classrooms have implications for the following aspects of schooling:

- the composition of parent bodies,

- the appointment of Board members, administrative and academic staff,
- the design of entrance criteria,
- designing of an appropriate curriculum,
- approaches to pedagogy,
- academic support programmes,
- the training of teachers.

### 2.7.3. Racial issues.

The accommodation of persons of different races within a single school might generate further problematics, if only because it is not yet the norm in South Africa where the system of racial estates represents the status quo. Race has in the past been a determinant of economic opportunities although the reform programme of the past decade has somewhat softened its effects. In education, vigorous efforts are being made to equalise, but within separate systems. Smouldering resentment at the perceived indignities of racism continue to exacerbate and heighten the tensions. The implications of racial prejudice for schooling are manifold: yet central to all strategies for accommodating the impact of racial differences would be the principle of upholding the dignity and equality of the individual in the face of arbitrary criteria for differentiation. The school will be faced, inter alia, with the problem of deciding on policy regarding:

- the composition of the school board, parent committee and staff,
- whether to adopt a laissez faire or orchestrated pupil intake, and
- the management of incidents of a racial nature.

#### 2.7.4. Socio-economic class.

The considerable disparities in wealth between sectors of the population in South Africa could render any attempt to bring together pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds very problematic indeed. In a multi-cultural schooling system, such disparities could create a significant compounding of the potentially divisive elements already present, with a heightened tendency towards fission amongst the school's constituent populations. Even the so-called working class itself is divided in South Africa, its solidarity being fractured along a racial divide. The white working class and black working class tend to be encamped at opposing poles of the political spectrum. Accommodating socio-economic class differences in multi-cultural schooling could imply the implementation of specific policies to deal with the following issues;

- modifications to the entrance criteria,
- financial support via bursaries,
- affirmative action programmes,
- academic support.

A more penetrating involvement would imply an outreach to parents.

#### 2.7.5. The pursuit of just educational institutions against a background complexity of divisive factors.

These issues of culture, race and class each present a matrix of considerable complexity to schools that are bent on challenging them. Taken together, they comprise an intricate network of potential problematics that place considerable demands on the resources of energy, planning and finance of school administrations. In some countries

the admixture of these factors has apparently proved detrimental to the education offered. In the United States of America where assimilatory desegregation and bussing have been in operation for some decades in the aftermath of the historic Brown vs Board of Education Supreme Court judgement made in 1954, many schools have recently been described as atrocious (White, 1988, p.29). Indeed, at the end of each year, according to White, a million youngsters are estimated to leave school without adequate intellectual equipment. In the same vein as White, van Zijl has written of his experiences during a study tour of the United States (1989):

"The issue of dropping standards is further compounded by student attitudes, and teachers say that an anti-learning culture is prevalent in some schools. The drug issue, crime in schools and very potent peer pressures are contributory factors which have led to widely disparate standards in the country's 15 300 different educational systems. One trained teacher interviewed mentioned that in some schools the philosophy of 'insistent persistence' was totally foreign to staff and students alike and the idea of accompanying the teacher on a never-ending voyage of discovery was equally unknown - leading to the observation that kids have been given a free ride instead of a road map".

Although both White and Van Zijl point to a lack of adequate funding as central to the issue, Van Zijl also hints at the laissez faire approach, at top level, as a potential problem. He also reports on the concern expressed by many researchers about the underachievement of black and Hispanic students, whose performance is significantly below that of their white counterparts. He asserts that most evidence points to economic status rather than race as a causal

factor. The effects of poverty "and its socio-psychological toll" (ibid.) reduce the chances of success for many black and Hispanic students. Van Zijl's report suggests improvements in the broader socio-economic and legal structures as a remedy. It is a point made elsewhere in the present research. Some of the evidence emanating from overseas suggests serious problematics in enforced assimilation and in laissez faire policies. Such evidence must be borne in mind when contemplating the appropriateness of open schooling in South Africa. A careful selection of appropriate strategies for implementing non-racial, multi-cultural education should be made, so that the apparent problems encountered overseas are not repeated. A more thorough appraisal of the overseas experience than is possible in the present study appears to be necessary in order to gain a balanced perspective on the problematics of enforced assimilation.

It is evident that, in attempting to negate potentially divisive factors (as well as offering co-educational schooling), N.E.S.T. has to contend with beliefs and practices that are "commonsense" in South African society. Gramsci developed the concept hegemony to explain how commonsense can become a part of the consciousness of people. Bullivant explains as follows:

"In short," he writes, "hegemony by the dominants involves the construction of a social and cultural reality to seduce the dominated class into accepting it as the reality and taken-for-granted common sense" (1981,p.227).

A particular world-view becomes disseminated. It becomes part of the cultural content in the minds of people. The purpose of the ruling groups in popularising their

philosophy and culture is to perpetuate their power, wealth and status. According to Gramsci agents such as the schools, amongst others, present the philosophy of the dominant groups as the "official" view of the world. Such agencies are nevertheless given the appearance of representing the interests of society at large, rather than the consciousness of a particular class (Brown, Cathcart & Cosin, 1977, p.68). As pointed out earlier in the present chapter, the Marxist counter to hegemony depends on the fostering of resentment and a polarisation of society in order to foment revolution. Multi-cultural education depends rather on bringing disparate groups together in an atmosphere of trust, as a platform from which to contribute to social justice in the wider society. In developing a schooling system that is fundamentally multi-cultural, N.E.S.T. has chosen the peaceful reformist approach to achieve quite radical goals. Deane Yates, co-founder of N.E.S.T., has described the venture in these words:

"Most remedies which are being prescribed to bring an end to apartheid are violent or confrontational. But with these, the end of apartheid will not be the end of the travail. Because they are destructive in their nature, the cost of the cure may well be less expensive than the price of rehabilitation. Another strategy is to confront the present legally constituted apartheid society with its antithesis. Let there be established within the confines of South Africa communities which, from the grassroots in their structures and in their personnel are totally nonracial, in which there is a fair representation in physical partnership of the four racial groups. Let them live together in these communities for four or five years. In the ongoing comparison that follows apartheid will be seen for what it is" (Aug. 1988).

In thus challenging the conventional wisdom of apartheid, N.E.S.T. has adopted a course parallel to the reformist moves of the state, although their aim of non-racialism appears to extend beyond the boundaries of current reformist endeavours. The school operates in comparative independence. The functionalists might be disapproving of N.E.S.T. schools because the micro society thus created is so different from the structure of the macro. In some conservative quarters it might even be seen as a cancerous growth that would place in jeopardy the homeostasis of society. Consciousness Movements might look askance at the sharing of cultures, while radicals of the Left would pour invective on the project because its prime thrust runs counter to the polarisation of society that is at the root of Marxist strategy. The justice pursued by N.E.S.T. appears to be that of Rawls rather than of Marx. Indeed, in its search for just educational institutions, N.E.S.T. might be appraised against the principles suggested by John Rawls. Charles Simkins (1986, p.13) explains these principles:

"South Africans will never rid themselves of the fact or the fear of the oppressive use of power until they bind themselves to just institutions. It is in the search for just institutions that liberalism finds its application. In the most remarkable liberal text of our time John Rawls summarises the requirements of justice in two principles:

1. Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.



2. Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both:

(a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, the claims of later generations being taken into account, and

(b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.

The first principle is prior to the second and fair opportunity is prior to the difference principle (arranging matters to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged)".

The imperatives for N.E.S.T. of Rawls's principles imply opportunities for all pupils to forge ahead within the limits of their capabilities, coupled to a strong affirmative action programme to aid the least advantaged.

Leatt et.al. (1986, p.63) describe John Rawls's A theory of Justice as an important recent attempt to reconstruct general liberal theory, but argue that "it ought to be read in conjunction with liberal attempts to apply it to groups". These authors explain the problem thus:

"The real bone of contention is liberalism's insistence that the individual is the basic unit of social analysis; its refusal to give proper weight to the interests and aspirations of groups in a multi-racial, pluralistic society. For liberals have long held that the tradition of individual liberty does not have to be cut according to the multi-racial and culturally diverse cloth of South Africa".

Multi-cultural education can, as shown earlier, be implemented with a certain measure of flexibility. The existence of "cultural groups" within a school can be emphasised with a bias towards "pluralism under one roof", or towards greater assimilation. Too great a shift in either direction, however, could create pluralist or "melting pot" dispensations rather than one that is multi-cultural in the broadly accepted sense. The present writer experiences no discomfort with an emphasis on group identities, provided the model upon which such schools are based is developed by means of negotiation and choice at local community level.

Attention will now focus on strategies that have been suggested as appropriate to multi-cultural schooling. In appraising these strategies and models developed overseas, careful consideration must be given to their appropriateness to South Africa.

## 2.8. SELECTED STRATEGIES APPROPRIATE TO MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING.

### 2.8.1. The need for multi-factor paradigms and an integrated, holistic approach.

Banks (1986, pp.10-25) has undertaken a synopsis of paradigms dealing with strategies that can be implemented in schools endeavouring to accommodate a variety of minority cultural groups. Each paradigm is grounded in a particular perspective on schooling. Each is described by Banks and subjected to a rational critique. Banks is scathing of single-factor endeavours that seek to solve complex problems by the application of a single strategy such as a cultural deprivation, ethnic additive, language or anti-racist approach. He is particularly critical of the radical

paradigm based on Marxist ideology because of the lack of any realistic solutions generated from its critique of other models. Banks nevertheless acknowledges its role in sensitising educators to the needs of deprived students, while also making such educators aware of some limitations of formal schooling. He contends that the experience of major Western nations since the late 1960's has shown that the academic achievement problems of ethnic minority students are too complex to be solved by the use of single-factor paradigms (ibid., p.22). Although we must be sensitive to the limitations of formal schooling, he argues, we must maintain faith that the school can play a useful role in bringing about equal educational opportunities for poor and minority students and in helping all students to gain cross-cultural competencies and understanding. The school, according to Banks, is a field of complexly interrelated factors. A holistic approach is accordingly needed, with a multi-factor paradigm. The total school environment must be reformed, he maintains, with recognition of both the dominant culture and subcultures. Acculturation is desirable, in which sub-cultures of the school become modified; also accommodation, during which process separate identities are retained. He believes that ethnic minority students:

"can assimilate essential aspects of the mainstream culture without surrendering the most important aspects of their first culture or becoming alienated from it. The school should help students to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to function effectively in their community culture, in the mainstream national culture, and within and between other ethnic cultures and subsocieties" (ibid., p.24).

Mitchell (1984, p.44) shares Banks's view of the manifold complexities of schooling in multi-cultural societies. He

urges the encouragement of cross-cultural understanding, opening the school in a way that is most responsive to the community, building cross-cultural content into the curriculum, encouraging teacher competence in handling controversial classroom issues, being anti-racist and giving emphasis to learning experiences which involve students in active enquiry. He considers multi-cultural education that relies exclusively on changes of content to be no more than tokenism (ibid., p.44).

Multi-cultural education practices should "permeate the total school environment", according to Gollnick & Chinn (1983, p.29) and should be reflected in staffing, the curriculum, instructional materials and attitudes. Similar detailed summaries of a variety of strategies for multi-cultural schooling are put forward by the A.S.C.D. Multi-cultural Education Commission (1977, p.4), who describe a range of appropriate policies, practices and approaches. They refer inter alia to relevant teaching approaches, the creation of an environment conducive to effective multi-cultural education, the organisation of resources in such a way as to enrich the multi-cultural environment, the implementation of shared governance and the design of appropriate in-service courses for staff. It is clear from the authors cited above, as well as from the writings of others such as Corbin & Marion (1983, pp.1-9) as well as Lynch (1983, p.69), that there is considerable support for the multi-factor paradigm put forward by Banks. These authors eschew tokenism and advocate a deep-rooted penetration of all facets of schooling by strategies and policies that will best serve the interests of all members of culturally plural societies. Such multi-factor paradigms appear to be essential to the effective implementation of multi-cultural education in the complex social milieu of South Africa.

### 2.8.2. Accommodating the needs of diverse cultural communities.

An implication of multi-cultural education is that cultural communities with often widely divergent world-views will be educated together, necessitating the creation of machinery to facilitate the discussion and debate of schooling issues. Bearing in mind the interpretive rationale proposed by Muir for multi-cultural education, shared control and the representation of different culture-based viewpoints on school boards is relevant.

Justice implies the establishment of a system of shared governance, with a democratic approach (A.S.C.D. Multicultural Commission, 1977, p.4). There is advantage too, in developing policies that promote positive home-school relations in order to monitor such tensions as may arise between communities possessed of different cultural heritages. Constant interaction between teachers and parent communities is considered to be essential, in the view of Craft & Klein. They write:

"Schools need to listen closely to the concerns and criticisms of ethnic minority parents and educationists and take serious account of their views and expressed needs" (1986, p.10).

In the context of South Africa, open multi-cultural schooling could imply an influx of pupils drawn from a black majority, whose needs have become increasingly articulated. Some are yet bound to traditional cultures. Unless schools are sensitive to their needs, such pupils could become mismatched with a strange environment, to which their cultural and psychological characteristics are not necessarily attuned (Berry, 1986, p.185). Thrust into a

situation in which they must accommodate to a more powerful culture, pupils could defensively revert to aggressive self-assertion, or a denial of their cultural roots. Some blacks in the United States of America, for example, have adopted Anglo-Saxon modes of speech, values and behaviour (Banks, 1981, p. 26). They have tended to become alienated from their communities, deny their ethnic cultures and reject an important part of their selves. Banks expresses an argument common in South Africa:

"Individuals who deny and/or reject their basic group identity, for whatever reasons are not capable of becoming fully functioning and self-actualising persons" (ibid.).

The argument has been used for many years in South Africa to create and sustain separate systems of education for designated racial-cultural groups. For self-actualisation to emerge, a degree of personal choice appears to be imperative. Multi-cultural education might offer a vehicle through which pupils can achieve a self-directed balance between a reinforcement of the home cultural heritage and an accommodation with the mainstream of their society. By negotiation and discussion at local level, multi-cultural schools can thus become sensitive to differing needs. Considerable flexibility is implied. In order to alleviate tensions, according to Nixon (1981, p. 51), the school administration should be open and welcoming.

It is clear to the present writer that bringing together persons from different cultures will imply considerable adaptations in every facet of school practice, if the needs of the parents and pupils representative of particular cultures or classes are to be met. Such complex interaction is consistent with the maintenance of a flexible democratic

approach, that will enable the school to respond to a complex set of interactions, relationships and needs.

Many writers have stressed the importance of an egalitarian approach to schooling that accommodates a variety of cultures, races or classes. Entwistle (1978, pp.2-3) considers that, although it is possible that the dictum "all men are created equal" is vulnerable to empirical falsification, the doctrine of human equality has functioned historically as a moral imperative and remains widely current at the present time. He notes that the liberal view tends to emphasise equality of opportunity, while the Marxist perspective seeks equality of product through schooling. The liberal, meritocratic conception of equality lies in giving everyone a fair chance of being reclassified socially. The logical consequence of the meritocratic approach could be acceptance of pupils on grounds of academic merit or learning ability, while ensuring that poor pupils who are talented are not turned away. Entwistle, however, warns that equality of opportunity could well imply unequal provision as a result of a policy of positive discrimination. It could also lead to the risk of depressing the rate of learning of certain (mainly middle-class) children (*ibid.*, pp.13-14).

It is obvious that a wide variety of policies designed to aid apparently disadvantaged ethnic or cultural communities are currently applied in schooling. Wang (1983) mentions several approaches that are commonly utilised in different countries. Among these is the application of different qualifying standards for admission to institutions in order to benefit apparently disadvantaged groups (*ibid.*, p.195). Such policy tends to be applied rather arbitrarily in practice, while unless the level and quality of instruction are adjusted downwards to accommodate the weaker students so

admitted, the groups supposedly benefited could fail. Quotas (*ibid.*, p.146) might also be utilized to enable a sufficient number of students from a particular group to be admitted, with the invariable result that the entry requirement levels of some students will be lowered. It is clear that this level should not fall below the level required for completion of the course of study. A further approach cited by Wang is affirmative action (as used in the United States of America), that is directed towards implementing positive discrimination. The problems that can emanate from differentiated entry requirements are stated thus:

"This means that either standards of teaching and learning in such institutions will be compromised or the students admitted under positive discrimination policies will fail to profit fully from having been admitted. In rigidly structured institutions or courses, where all students are put through the same demanding examinations each year, students admitted in spite of lower achievement scores stand a great risk of failure to complete their programmes. In other cases, students who manage to graduate may do so without having acquired as much of the knowledge or skills as the certification might otherwise imply, or they may have been diverted to less demanding fields of study than originally intended" (*ibid.*, p.198).

Wang believes that remedial coursework can be implemented prior to entry to the courses. It is a strategy that he asserts should be more widely used.

Musgrove (1979, p.121) also expresses himself on the question of policies designed to create more equal opportunities for the disadvantaged. His remarks are heavy with cynicism:



"If people cannot be made equal, they can be treated as if they were. The short-cut solution to the obstinate problem of human inequality is the quota".

Musgrove considers quotas to be a short-term expedient with great attraction to all highly plural societies but believes that they will neither promote justice nor equality in any meaningful sense. He does not believe that equality "at either the starting-line or the finishing line of schooling" is possible, although he concedes that his pessimistic view is not a valid reason for not trying. He is wary of relatively culture-free intelligence tests for children who are so radically disadvantaged that they cannot reach "first base" (*ibid.*, p.120). Equality of results is not possible, he argues, "without massive and unprecedented intervention in family life and the lives of very young children". Musgrove thus appears to concur with Wang on the difficulties inherent in remedial school programmes. Both accept the need for support programmes prior to school entry.

Writing of the current situation in South Africa, Christie (1988, p.41) points to other severe difficulties experienced by black parents and students bent on gaining access to "open" schools. Historically, young blacks have been in an ambiguous position in these schools, which are registered as "white". They tend to be set in white neighbourhoods and thus open their doors to white students without demur. Black students must, however, travel considerable distances from townships in which there are pressures from peers against their attendance. That this pressure can be overwhelming is evident:

"This pressure takes a number of forms: phone calls; threats of arson to homes and vehicles; threats of

'necklacings' and boycotts of parents' businesses. Some children have been stoned in vehicles on their way to or from school; and almost all have on occasion worn civilian clothes and travelled to school without books in an attempt to avoid township pressures. Often, black children who attend open schools are receiving schooling while their community is boycotting school, and the children may be seen as 'sell outs' or 'not supporting the struggle'. In the face of pressure some black children have left open schools. At times of township tensions, the decision to contravene township sanctions and potentially endanger lives and property to attend school is a decision which is faced by black, but not white, parents and students" (ibid.).

Apart from these very real disadvantages to entry and attendance experienced by some sectors of the open school population, Christie cites other problems, such as standard testing procedures (ibid., p.33). Although criteria used for testing are claimed to apply evenly to all students, regardless of race, the generally inferior schooling provision experienced by black children puts them at a great disadvantage. The meritocratic policy behind such testing, as it is usually applied, assumes a basis of freedom and equality that is not generally present (ibid., p.47). The question of prior inequalities is not thus addressed, although there is clearly good reason to do so.

Tests selected to determine intake to school should be chosen with their appropriateness to all prospective candidates in mind. Although writers such as Cole & Scribner (1974, p.193) maintain that there is no clear evidence of lack of basic processes such as abstraction, categorisation or inferential reasoning in any cultural group, others including Berry (1986, p.202) believe that

groups that are subject to different ecological and cultural factors to those experienced by other groups will differ from them in cognitive structure. The tight, agricultural communities are characterised by Berry as "field dependent" in testing, while persons from the more varied and flexible social milieu of Western communities tend to be less so. Fontana (1983, p.120) argues that intelligence tests are particularly culture-bound. Those commonly used in the West might have little validity outside white Western society. Becker & Maclure (1978, p.100) warn that:

"there is now a fair amount of evidence also to suggest that teaching procedures, however technically ingenious, remain stubbornly context-dependent: the milieu in which the student lives strongly conditions his or her test performance. Thus a pupil with a deprived home background in a socially run-down neighbourhood is almost automatically penalised in comparison with a peer from a good home in a culturally and economically rich area".

It is clear that, if there is to be fairness and consistency in the implementation of multi-culturalism, then the methods of assessment employed and the norms applied ought to be appropriate to everybody (Straker-Welds, 1984, p.4). Cultural differences can be real and extensive, and imply the application of quite comprehensive modifications in testing (Berry, 1986, p.196). It is possible that tests of "general intelligence" and "learning potential" will form the most appropriate core of the test programme for entry to multi-cultural schools. Further, the concept of affirmative action could be applied where appropriate, in order to remediate inequalities.

Children entering a new school environment might be totally confused and disorientated by the experience, especially

where a foreign language and culture are involved (Rex, 1981, p.44). The child could thus need support, provided by means of the early reinforcement of his home culture. Rex insists that efforts be made to ensure that the pupil so disadvantaged does not come to regard his home culture as inferior or not legitimate (*ibid.*, pp.45-6). The pupil must thus be made to feel at ease in the new environment. Schutz (1971, pp.27-32) has described with perception the problems of an individual approaching and accommodating to a strange cultural environment. Shock can be experienced, with a loss of confidence by the individual in his habitual mode of thinking. His scheme of interpretation and picture of the cultural pattern of the approached group might become invalidated. It cannot, as a consequence, be used as a scheme for orientation within the new social surroundings (*ibid.*, p.30). The stranger also tends to lack status within the approached group: in his marginal position he can no longer consider himself a central part of his social environment. It is evident that he must first gain knowledge of the new cultural pattern before adopting it as a scheme to facilitate orientation. Only the in-group members are fully in command of the schemata and the stranger is not "at home" until he understands the elements of the strange pattern, including its dynamics. He is vulnerable to misunderstanding by the in-group because they may not recognise his confusion, but believe him to be ungrateful for the shelter offered him. He, on the other hand, may have lost all sense of his bearings (*ibid.*, p.32). He must integrate the strange patterns into a map of personal meanings.

An environment of security and support would doubtless aid the integration of pupils from "minority" cultures entering multi-cultural schools. The problem of their accommodation might be exacerbated in South African schools where the

culture of the black majority tends to be denigrated by adherents of the more powerful 'Western' culture.

### 2.8.3. School management and staffing.

The role of the principal and teaching staff would appear to be central to the success of multi-cultural schooling. Childeric School in London can be cited in support of this contention. Following the realisation that there was "a need to examine all practices at the school with the multi-cultural dimension in mind" (Milman, 1984, p.36), a carefully developed strategy was implemented to shift the school to a more profound accommodation of ethnicities. With considerable success the school's teaching staff developed more positive attitudes towards languages in use in the school, endeavoured to better understand differing life styles, avoided stereotyping, encouraged positive multi-cultural activities, fostered contact with parents, challenged racism wherever it appeared, and brought more outside speakers to the school. The growing success achieved at Childeric was largely attributed to the determined and systematic implementation of these policies, with a broad range of contributions from individual members of staff, whose role was profound.

Rex (1981, p.46) considers the employment of "minority" teachers who can teach their "own" cultures to be essential in multi-cultural schools, although it might be argued that this policy can be carried to extreme lengths (Baptiste, 1978, p.28). It is essential that teachers show sensitivity in their teaching about other societies, cultures, religions and moral systems not their own (Parekh, 1986, p.28). Parekh urges that beliefs and practices should be implemented with sympathy and the teacher should let the cultures "speak for themselves". Gollnick & Chinn (1983, pp.30-1) also admonish

teachers in multi-cultural environments to be sensitive to cultural diversity, and to deal with questions of race and intergroup relations on an objective, frank and professional basis. There should be an understanding by teachers of the advantages to be gained from drawing on the best elements of different cultures in a process of enriching the learning experiences offered.

Craft & Klein (1986, p.29) consider pre-service and in-service preparation of teaching staff to be essential if they are to teach successfully in a multi-cultural environment. The view is shared by Gay (1986, p.173), who contends that the fact of teacher accountability implies at least a grasp of basic knowledge on the part of the teacher about ethnic pluralism, and also some pedagogic competence in translating such knowledge into effective practice. Gay argues in favour of at least four multi-cultural components in teacher education programmes. The first component relates to theoretical conceptions and ideologies of multi-culturalism and the implications of these for classroom instruction. The second embraces philosophical assumptions, values and beliefs about the worth of multi-cultural education to schools and societies while the third component suggested by Gay deals in essence with cultural characteristics and socio-political experiences of different ethnic groups in pluralistic societies. Included would be selected "cultural components", amongst which could be value systems, learning styles, communication patterns, and socialisation and interactional styles. The fourth component would feature skills and techniques for teaching ethnically different students; and also for teaching multi-cultural content to all students. In South Africa with its highly complex, culturally diverse society, the concerns of multi-cultural education could provide a valuable and productive component of teacher preparation in order that

the profession be adequately equipped to meet likely future needs (van Zijl, 1987, p.187).

Writing of British local authority schools that offer education to culturally plural societies, Kraft & Klein (1986, p.26) advocate the promulgation of agreed policy statements as a guide to teaching staff, parents and pupils. They suggest that such statement be disseminated to all concerned in order to provide a guide on such issues as racial incidents, graffiti and parental complaints:

"A school policy statement should aim to provide teachers with a theoretical rationale for education in a culturally diverse society, and it should include practical suggestions for a positive approach to multifaith, multilingual and multicultural education. The policy must make clear that education in and for multicultural society affects all aspects of school life and needs to permeate the whole ethos and atmosphere of the school" (ibid., p.8).

South African schools that endeavour to accommodate cultural plurality as diverse as that found in Great Britain could also benefit from a written guide to the management of the complex educational milieu that accompanies multiculturalism. It is the view of the present writer, however, that no such policy statement represents a substitute for the independent judgement of sensitive, committed and well-trained professional staff.

#### 2.8.4. The multi-cultural curriculum.

In South Africa the curriculum for state school education has proved to be a hotly contested terrain, as events since 1976 in Bantu Education and schooling for the coloured

community have shown. The nature of such contestation is outlined in Chapter Three. The design of a school curriculum satisfactory to all major cultural communities is a matter of persistent controversy.

Bullivant's very broad conception of curriculum is accepted for purposes of the present research because Bullivant hints at the potentially contested nature of curriculum in his definition, which shows curriculum to be vulnerable to ideological influence. Bullivant writes thus on curriculum:

"It comprises that set of knowledge, ideas and experiences resulting from ideologically influenced and value-laden processes of selection from a social group's stock of traditional and current knowledge, ideas and experiences, their organisation into sub-sets (syllabus and units), transmission to clients (students, pupils) in teacher-learner interface situations and periodic evaluation which provides feedback into previous processes" (1986,p.37).

The development of an appropriate curriculum for multi-cultural schools implies a complex process of selection, structuring and interaction, the infinite permutations of which are attested by the sophisticated and complex models that are current. One such model for the multi-cultural curriculum is that of Saunders. Saunders's model (1982,p.19) provides considerable scope for "mainstreaming" as well as an affirmation of the cultural terrain of ethnic minorities. The model therefore endeavours to wed the concept of assimilation (within the mainstream culture, which tends to be Western industrialised), with a recognition of the particular cultural needs of minority ethnic groups. These two major divisions of the paradigm are labelled "melting pot" and "cultural pluralist".



Clearly a strong bias towards either extreme would shift the focus of the curriculum away from multi-culturalism, as it is understood for the purpose of this research, towards paradigms of assimilation or separation. Planned curriculum strategies are also articulated in Saunders's model, relating to the needs of "all pupils" or "ethnic minority pupils".

The adoption of a paradigm such as Saunders's for multi-cultural schooling in South Africa could be particularly contentious. Much scepticism prevails concerning current political endeavours to structure education and other institutions along the lines of "own affairs" and "general affairs" relating to commonalities and particularities of interest among discrete racial groupings. It can be argued that the dispensation preserves an underlying hegemony. Hence there is a particular imperative towards broad negotiation on the curriculum, if general acceptance is sought.

A further interesting point about Saunders's work is that his view of knowledge tends to be culturally invariant:

"Wherever one lives", he writes, "whatever the culture in which one is reared, the structure of the traditional subjects will not vary and the concepts that are used can be transmitted across cultures" (ibid., p. 11).

Although Saunders acknowledges that certain adaptations can be made in the processes of curriculum, the nature of knowledge, as he comprehends it, appears to be "fixed". Such viewpoint is, of course, common to the view of knowledge held by many philosophers. Phenix (1964) has, for example, identified six "realms of meaning" that include the

fields of symbolics, empirics, aesthetics, ethics, synoptics and synnoetics. All of these tend to be seen as irreducible and essential (if broad) domains of knowledge. Should any category be excluded from the education of an individual, he would be hampered in the quest to develop his essential humanness (*ibid.*, p.270). A basic ingredient of experience would be missing. Hirst (1980) too, has put forward a list of irreducible categories of knowledge that bear a superficial resemblance to subjects commonly taught in Western schooling. Each has its own generic concepts, skills and methods of evaluation. Each comprises a field or form of knowledge rather than a subject. Further, as Tunmer (1982, p.82) reminds us, a group of Her Majesty's Inspectorate in England, influenced by Hirst's arguments, have published their own comprehensive list of categories based on domains of experience. All children, they argue, should be exposed to eight "areas of experience" including the aesthetic, ethical, linguistic, mathematical, physical, scientific, social and political, as well as the spiritual.

A danger inherent in these attempts at categorisation has been pointed out by Tunmer (1981, p.35), who argues that Hirst's curriculum could restrict children from inter-relating several forms of thinking in order to solve problems. Where the experience of inter-cultural accommodation is desired, flexibility of mind appears to be essential. It is evident that such apparently discrete compartments as have evolved from the endeavours of these liberal philosophers should be approached with some caution. Sarup (1978, p.19) points out that many teachers have taken Hirst's view that knowledge tends to be fixed, rather too literally. Hirst's view of knowledge tends to be conservative and elitist and may lead to a passive learner. Sarup argues further that the view institutionalises present practices in order to serve ideological interests, whereas

knowledge should be viewed as socially constructed in an historical context. He writes:

"But we know that definitions of knowledge vary in different cultures; that it is man-made; and if in our schools it has become not only institutionalised and objectified but reified and alienating, we know that the divisions we have made between school and non-school knowledge, intellectual and manual, theoretical and practical, liberal and vocational, are not necessary and can be changed" (*ibid.*, p.27).

Buckland is equally challenging:

"What is required is an abandonment of the categorical mode of reasoning which treats culture, or curriculum, or knowledge as something 'out there', separate from the socio-political context and historical process" (1982, p.171).

Buckland's view implies great flexibility in the structuring and selection of knowledge for the curriculum. A negotiated, multi-cultural curriculum would imply selection from the infinity of knowledge content. Yet, as Bullivant (1981, p.5) points out, it is only from the best and most relevant aspects of any culture that a selection will usually be made. It appears to be logical to involve persons representative of all major cultural heritages implicated in the process of curriculum construction, thereby ensuring the best chance of selecting appropriate content.

Coggin (1979, p.109) has, by contrast, tended to place emphasis on processes within curriculum rather than on the curriculum as a body of cultural knowledge. He stress the

view that education should provide appropriate skills, disciplines and attitudes so that the pupil can become "an active and creatively critical participator in the process". Pupils faced with cultural diversity and a variety of curricular options, who have mastered a common set of learning tools and cognitive resources, will not find such plethora of options an obstacle to unity of comprehension but rather an incentive. There is much to commend Coggin's advocacy of a mastery of the tools by which unfamiliar cultural concepts can be unlocked.

The present writer is emphatically not convinced that the usefulness of rational, categorical structures of knowledge has passed, yet acknowledges the need to gain insight into apparently culture-bound perspectives on knowledge. The reification of the structures and content of knowledge implies a loss of flexibility, perhaps, yet a gain in the level of standardisation and communication possible. A critical and open mind to the utilisation of apparently deterministic structures would appear to be advantageous in the context of a culturally plural society, while the uses to which the curriculum might be put should be subjected to constant appraisal. In South Africa curricula are extremely vulnerable to manipulation for purposes other than education. A recent development has been the rise of People's Education in opposition to Christian National Education. Both are clearly ideological in character, and both were born of anguish resulting from perceived social injustices.

Barrett (1988) has presented an analysis and brief critique of the rationales behind Christian National Education and People's Education, both of which he perceives to be essentially flawed. Barrett considers the development of independent, critical thinking to be the primary aim of

education. The autonomous person will be characterised by independent, critical thought. He argues that such education is the only form of education appropriate to a democracy. It implies an open form of curriculum that is not constrained by a focus on narrow, functional training or the achievement of a particular niche in society.

Barrett asserts that C.N.E. is essentially flawed because it tends to propagate a particular world view or philosophy of life, with emphasis on the handing down of a particular community culture. Thinking thus lies apparently confined to the filter provided by a particular culture. Education can readily be characterised as an "own affair". Culture, he points out, is a contentious and vague concept, while it is virtually impossible to devise criteria to determine the cultural framework. Thought is capable of transcending cultural boundaries, however difficult this might be. Barrett concludes:

"What I've argued is that a central feature of education - to develop thinking and understanding-is seen in a logically untenable way by C.N.E. If you're teaching people to think, you must, logically, necessarily, accept that there are no bounds that you ought intentionally to impose on that process, otherwise you are engaging in indoctrination not education" (ibid., p.5).

People's Education is also considered by Barrett to be flawed, with a narrow or closed view in some versions, that relies most heavily on socio-economic class motives and perspectives. It implies harnessing education to the particular purpose of uniting a particular section of the population. It thus binds thinking to a particular theoretical framework. Its emphasis on power of the masses

tends to weaken individual autonomy. Only leaders are likely to enjoy autonomy of thought within the system.

"Freedom and justice", writes Barrett, "are not such robust creatures as I once believed them to be. In my view education which is open is crucial to their nurturing" (ibid., p.9).

Barrett's critique has several potential consequences for the multi-cultural curriculum. Such curriculum would incorporate content and practices that would enable pupils to develop their critical faculties and independence of thought. They would form autonomous judgements about their own and other cultures, be open-minded and amenable to persuasion about the cultural values of others. Their education would thus be harnessed to the freeing of the human spirit rather than to binding it in cultural cocoons or subjecting it to immersion in mass thought. In the paper quoted, Barrett acknowledges a debt to Morrow (1986, p.248-9), who has asserted that a valid education would enable the recipient to transcend the particularities of his community's culture. It should not embed him immovably in it, as is so often emphasised in academic circles in South Africa. By such reasoning, Morrow contends that education should not be an "own affair" of distinct racial-cultural groups, as is presently the case.

Mc Gurk (1988, p.28) also gives support to the view that the best interests of the South African populace would be served by their living dynamically beyond the confines of their "own" cultures:

"We must learn not to live within our cultures, where culture is conceived of in terms of a spatial metaphor of the territorial imperative of 'own' institutions to

preserve and guard our 'own', but to live creatively out of our cultures, in which the predominant symbolism becomes the dynamic, the developmental, the temporal, the dialectically interdependent, the adventure of exigency and response".

Mc Gurk (16-21 Aug. 1988, p.7) suggests that there is a dialectical tension between past and future socio-cultural realities. The reality of the past, which he describes as the archaeology of our South African society, expresses itself as a symbolic refuge that exerts a delimiting influence on the future. Shared cultural meanings and values of the past serve as a protection and source of security for cultural groups, but the current social system has tended to arrest socialisation in these historically defined groups. By contrast, Mc Gurk offers an alternative vision. He believes the constellations of cultural symbols to also embrace "a future orientation that points to new culture and community". They thus hold a prophetic content that can result in ambiguities in the lives of those who live within them. The prophetic element points to the re-generation of culture and the recovery of lost human values.

"Also", he writes, "these symbols become shared in common and complimentary ways by different individuals in the groups, and also with their dialectical meanings in an evolving historical consciousness. Open education sets about facilitating this emergence" (ibid.).

Despite visions such as that of Mc Gurk, little adaptation of curricula would appear to have taken place in open private schools, with the notable exceptions of Woodmead and a few others. Christie (1985, p.5) points out that most have not changed their curricular practices since former days

when they were white schools. She argues that, although the senior school curriculum is doubtless directed by the demands of an external examination system, much flexibility is possible in lower standards. She explains:

"Open schools could benefit from schools-based curriculum development, instead of adhering strictly to departmental syllabuses. Ideally, the curriculum of the open school should take into account the fact that the student body is racially mixed" (ibid.).

The first step in such curriculum development would be with the selection of objectives appropriate to a diversity of life-views and cultural meanings. Hirst (1974,p.2) points out that objectives are essential to any curriculum, and Hirst & Peters (1970,p.60) believe the curriculum to be a "logical nonsense" until the objectives being aimed at are clarified. The clarification of curricular objectives for multi-cultural education is critical, in view of the potentially divisive nature of the disparate world-views accommodated.

The problem in South Africa, according to Christie (1988, p.162), lies with apartheid practices rather than with cultural concerns. It is apartheid that must be confronted via curricular objectives. She queries how a curriculum focussed on culture would enable white and black students to recognise and confront racial assumptions. A culture-based approach might well divert attention from wider issues. A solution to the dilemma might be found in the work of Jeffcoate (1981,pp.4-5). Jeffcoate offers a comprehensive taxonomy of objectives classified under the major categories "respect for self" and "respect for others". Each of these broad categories incorporates sub-categories in the cognitive (knowledge), psycho-motor (skill) and affective



domains. The objectives that arise detail what a pupil should know, be able to do, and feel. Jeffcoate frankly acknowledges the limitations of his curriculum model and recognises its inadequacy in trying to approximate the complexity of school life. In the view of the present writer the selection of the fundamental categories "respect for self" and "respect for others" reflects a self-consciousness of the multi-ethnic nature of such schooling that could well exacerbate tensions and not alleviate them. Further, the overbearing dominance of these stark categories is questionable in the light of other pressing educational needs, however praiseworthy the intentions might be. It smacks of the restrictions on education deplored by Barrett and suggests coercion rather than independent judgement. More subtlety is needed than Jeffcoate apparently envisages. Bloom's original taxonomies appear to be more appropriate as a basis from which to work, coupled with an appropriate school policy statement.

There are many possible avenues for including challenging concepts, values, practices and phenomena from different cultural heritages in a syllabus for multi-cultural schooling in South Africa, while avoiding superficial gestures to ethnicity. Language is undoubtedly a major area of concern in any endeavour to accommodate a diversity of cultures. The inclusion of several languages, apart from enriching the conceptual experiences of pupils, is a prime example of anti-racist practice (Craft & Klein, 1986, p.60). Although many open schools are already teaching African languages in South Africa, these have seldom in the past been offered as a matriculation option. Christie (1988, p.5) has argued for all pupils in open schools to have some conversational ability in an African language, as well as in English. A multi-language approach could provide a vehicle for the study of others' world-views, facilitate inter-

disciplinary studies and serve to hone faculties of critical judgement.

A further useful means by which the curriculum could be structured in order to facilitate the exercise of critical judgement and the inclusion of material from a variety of cultural heritages, is by the use of generic concepts selected from different disciplines. These should be relevant to a variety of ethnic groups (Gay, 1977, p. 102). Such fields as the social sciences, behavioural sciences, linguistics and communication are suggested as particularly fruitful terrain for the pursuit of themes or concepts. Supporting concepts can also be derived from generic concepts and be duly explored (*ibid.*). There is good reason, however, for a pupil to acquire familiarity with the major representative forms of a discipline before exploring concepts of special cultural interest. Parekh (1986, p. 27) suggests, for example, that the syllabus for Religious Studies would include the major religions of the world. Similarly, with History there would be an initial emphasis on the major trends and themes to which any broadly educated person would have been exposed.

There is some evidence that British pupils from ethnic groups culturally different from the mainstream have not been particularly well served by a curriculum that has tended to present them with offerings of their own culture, usually as appendages to the main curriculum. This is the so-called "ethnic additive" approach so deplored by Banks (1986, p. 11). Bullivant (1986, p. 43) too, believes that the life-chances of children from ethnic backgrounds are poorly served by an extensive concentration on their cultural heritages, languages, histories and customs. Ethnic minority pupils would obviously benefit from gaining a mastery of the skills and knowledge to cope with mainstream

society. The mastery of a dominant language would be central. It is clear to the present writer that a sensitive balance is needed. While ensuring that all pupils experience a thorough grounding in curricular aspects that would enable them to cope adequately with the wider society, their own cultures should not be despised. Even the hidden curriculum should be sensitive to such cultural concerns, including the question of meals and religious observance (Craft & Klein, 1988, pp. 17-19), as well as multi-faith assemblies, different diets, variations in dress, and the celebration of selected holidays significant for each group.

In South Africa, with curricula for schooling a contentious and contested terrain, the most relevant strategy for the development of acceptable multi-cultural curricula would appear to lie with the tolerance of a flexible, school-based approach. Such curricula could be negotiated at regional level, with the final sanction left to a widely representative national validating body. Such body could be comprised of persons representative of all cultural communities implicated, insofar as such is possible, in order to accommodate a diversity of views. In the light of the above it is appropriate that the Independent Examinations Board, committed to the exploration of curricula and also the development of examinations appropriate to a non-racial South African society, is set to take over some functions of the Joint Matriculation Board (Bauer, 1988, p. 9). Its endeavour is to maintain acceptable standards, while responding effectively to the diversity of interests in the country. The development of a flexible core syllabus, with scope for local interpretations, would appear to be an appropriate result of this endeavour.

It is in the work of such open-minded South African writers as Maboea (1987) that the route to an acceptable multi-

cultural curriculum for South Africa might be found. Maboea contends that a multi-cultural curriculum for South Africa should confirm each students' own ethnicity and human worth, while validating other ethnic groups' life-styles (*ibid.*, p.113). He suggests the following goals for such multi-cultural curriculum:

- "1. an awareness and acceptance of racial, cultural and ethnic differences;
2. a recognition of the positive contributions made by different racial, cultural and ethnic groups;
3. a promotion of societal cohesiveness based on the shared participation of ethnically diverse people;
4. an increase of equality of opportunity for all individuals and groups;
5. an attempt to facilitate constructive societal change that enhances human dignity and democratic ideals."

In the sections that follow, pedagogy and academic support programmes are viewed as integral parts of the process of curriculum. This approach is consistent with the definition of curriculum accepted earlier.

#### 2.8.5. Approaches to teaching

The process of inter-cultural learning in the multi-cultural classroom can be explained by means of a continuum, according to Hoopes (1981, p.18). Such continuum will reflect a course of progressive insights from ethnocentrism through awareness and understanding to acceptance, respect and the appreciation of other cultures. The culmination occurs when there is the selection and adoption of new attitudes and behaviours. Such achievement implies a new perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of other

cultures, with a growing ability to value them. It is usually characterised by new adjustments and adaptations and an increasing ability to function in the other culture, although assimilation or acculturation in the fullest sense remain unlikely. Hoopes points out that any person who has indeed acculturated, is not however likely to lose the conditioning achieved within the original cultural milieu (ibid., p.19). Comprehensive multi-culturalism is not realistic, he feels, since the depth and breadth of experience required to "learn" a culture fluently is probably too great to be repeated many times. Much of the value of inter-cultural experience lies rather in the mastery of the framework of inter-cultural communications and cross-cultural human relations, with the successful application of these frameworks to the new cultures encountered (ibid., p.21). Hoopes recognises the value to society of persons capable of mediating conflicting interests between cultures. The concomitant advantages to the individual experiencing multi-cultural education are considerable. Staples (1987, pp.143-5) suggests a number of possible benefits derived from such experience. Individuals can develop a greater sensitivity to, and appreciation of, humanness in all its rich diversity. They might also experience the development of skills, attitudes and values originating in response to "the beauty of human diversity". Multi-culturality, he feels, will help ensure that cultural groups with distinct values and interests will be enabled to flourish. This significant feature is explained as follows:

"Multi-culturality has the potential for teaching that no cultural group or lifestyle is intrinsically better or worse than another. A child can discover, under successful guidance, that instead of being apologetic for his cultural identity and trying to repress it, he should applaud who he is" (ibid.).

In order to facilitate inter-cultural understanding, it follows that the classroom environment should be conducive to the growth of such understanding. The creation of a climate of tolerance and support is central. Mc Dermott & Goldman (1983,p.150) place great emphasis on sensitivity to cultural differences as a feature of teaching. Communication is often necessary across tremendous variations in assumptions, values and perceptions. Even language, the very stuff that makes communication possible, can present a barrier in the classroom. If language is to flow, they suggest, communication problems should be handled with great patience. There is good reason to generate a warm and understanding classroom atmosphere that acknowledges the value and intrinsic worth of cultural differences. Such differences might also surface in discrepancies in learning styles. As Anderson (1988,p.3) points out, in each culture reality is distinctively conceptualised in implicit and explicit premises and generalisations that together form a coherent system. He argues that, in the United States of America, white children tend to follow a linear course through schooling, never being asked to be bi-cultural, bi-dialectic or bi-cognitive. For children of colour, on the other hand, bi-culturality is a prerequisite for successful participation in society. Their performance is measured against a Euro-American yardstick and they are frequently castigated when they attempt to express their indigenous cultural and cognitive styles. Cognitive conflict results (*ibid.*,p.5). Many teachers in secondary schools are not equipped to identify, interpret and respond to various learning styles of multi-cultural populations. A communication gap thus exists between their teaching styles and the students' indigenous learning styles (*ibid.*,p.7). Yet other teachers might prove to be too enamoured of their discipline's abstractions, too concerned with elitism or the mystique of their subject to be really effective in the classroom, or they might be lazy or even fearful (*ibid.*).

For teaching and learning to be successful in the multi-cultural classroom, considerable flexibility of approach on the part of the teacher is clearly essential. Teacher-centric approaches do not facilitate such flexibility. That a teacher might regard himself primarily as a vessel possessed of a corpus of knowledge to be transmitted to pupils is mentioned by Sarup (1978, p.53). A deficit view of the pupil tends to result. Apparently drawing on the work of Paulo Freire, Sarup refers to this as the "banking" model of teaching. In this approach to pedagogy, pupils are regarded as receptacles within whom knowledge can be banked by the teacher. Sarup appears to favour Freire's emphasis on problem-solving pedagogy, where students become "critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher" (*ibid.*, p.54). Such an approach would appear to accord well with a multi-cultural classroom milieu that is characterised by diverse viewpoints and a complexity of different learning styles. Freire (1983, p.140) writes of the need for pupils to develop a critical consciousness that would enable them to create a world of personal meanings. He decries endeavours to render them passive beings who are moulded to adapt to the world as they find it, and writes:

"The truly committed must reject the banking concept in its entirety, adopting instead a concept of men (*sic.*) as conscious beings, and consciousness as consciousness directed towards the world. They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of men in their relations with the world" (*ibid.*, p.144).

An active, creative role for the learner, such as that outlined by Freire, is apposite to the needs of pupils in the multi-cultural classroom, in which enrichment is engendered by the input from a variety of cultural

perspectives. It implies the creation of a positive and dynamic multi-cultural world. The shift from a teacher-centric to a more empathetic approach is reaffirmed by Parekh (1985,p.28). When dealing with a culture not their own, he argues, teachers should give an account of it that is as authentic as possible. Ideally, teachers should let another culture, religion or society "speak for itself". On the other hand, he urges, standards of critical judgement should not be cast aside in order to present all aspects of cultural traditions in a positive way. Multi-cultural education practices in the classroom are largely the application of general education principles and procedures to situations "that are special in so far as pupils belong to a variety of cultural traditions" (ibid.,p.16).

Gay (1977,p.99) also elaborates on strategies that can be used for the selection and teaching of multi-cultural content. Reliance on the addition of factual information is scorned by Gay as an ineffective method that tends to prove superficial and fragmentary. The components are too often viewed in isolation. They do not readily become integrated into a comprehensive scheme. The skills-orientated approach, by contrast, provides a core of abilities for experiencing the total curriculum and enables the class to explore a selection of cultures with use of the new skills (ibid.,p.100). The thematic approach goes yet further. It facilitates the use of a mass of relevant materials, experiences and techniques that can be interwoven into multi-cultural education programmes. Knowledge, concepts and principles from many different disciplines can be used,

"Thus", writes Gay, "interdisciplinary techniques, comparative analysis, and multi-ethnic perspectives are necessary in examining each theme to determine what it means to different ethnic groups, how they have



responded to it, and to ascertain others' reactions to their responses. For students to adequately explore each ethnic group's search for identity they will have to examine the ideologies, values, behaviours and communications of each. This will mean studying their philosophy, literature, language, folklore, psychology, history, sociology and music" (*ibid.*, p.101).

Gay particularly advocates the thematic approach outlined above, as well as the conceptual framework design. This latter approach enables the pupils to focus on major concepts analysed and illustrated by images and examples drawn from a variety of cultures. Its use makes possible an exploration of the vast mass of available knowledge engendered by the multi-cultural environment.

Apart from the variety of interdisciplinary approaches that can be used in the multi-cultural classroom, subject teaching is itself amenable to methodologies appropriate to such environments. Craft & Klein (1986) in particular, have written comprehensively on the teaching of specific subjects in the multi-cultural classroom. They point to the central place of a mainstream language that is necessary if the pupils are to accommodate to the wider society and also enter the economy productively (*ibid.*, p.46). They point out how parents in England, for example, have all recognised the importance of oral and written English. They also advocate considerable support for children whose first language is not English. A hospitable classroom atmosphere is essential if pupils are to feel that their own experiences and languages are welcome (*ibid.*, p.21). Oral groupwork around shared tasks is important, as is work in small independent groups. Language across the curriculum and stories and drama from different languages can be used. Debates and role play are both important.

In the multi-cultural classroom, according to Craft & Klein, science can be explored as a phenomenon present in all cultures while the contribution to science from many cultures can be analysed with the use of culture-specific projects. Biology can be fruitfully taught in a multi-cultural context. Living organisms from many countries can be studied. Mathematics can also be given a strong multi-cultural bias, with an exploration of the contributions from India and China, as well as an analysis of games and counting systems from many cultures (*ibid.*, pp.64-5). Geography lends itself to the study of many regions of the globe and this subject can help to engender an appreciation of diversity. History content can be exposed to various cultural viewpoints. Indeed, Craft & Klein (*ibid.*, p.55) point out that the multi-cultural approach to history, involving the use of different perspectives, is consistent with the best traditions of history teaching. Evidence can be evaluated, and analytical skills and objectivity cultivated. In Religious Education the pupils can learn about persons holding faiths different to their own. A sensitive, pluralist approach is called for, with the study of world religions undertaken on a comparative basis. Much thematic work is possible (*ibid.*, p.76). The creative arts present a further fruitful field for multi-cultural exploration. Creativity can be given free reign through visual arts, drawing, singing, music, concerts and play productions. Children might be exposed to the best of foreign art, and ethnic artists could be invited to the school. Many themes could be explained via group work, with each group contributing to the work of the class as a whole.

It is clear that pedagogy in the multi-cultural classroom will make extraordinary demands on the teacher, who will be required to master a wide range of teaching approaches if the richness of the cultural milieu is to be exploited.

Good judgement and moral character, sensitivity and compassion are imperative. While the classroom itself is a fertile field for cultural enrichment and the exploration of diversity, a further dimension is added by moving into the community at large (Mac Donald, 1977, p. 12). By moving into the neighbourhood for the purpose of study, new areas can be opened up in a variety of subjects. It is possible that, as a result of such approach, classroom activities can become greatly enriched by new multi-cultural perspectives (Khan, 1977, p. 27). Pupils might also bring foodstuffs and artifacts from home, could compare and share their religious ceremonies and observances, investigate their home languages and even explore each other's skin colours in an objective way (Craft & Klein, 1986, p. 36).

In essence, effective teaching practices in the multi-cultural environment appear to orientate around the creation of a milieu in which diverse viewpoints can be harnessed creatively to the development of new meanings. The shared meanings within cultural "segments" are thereby exposed, explored and potentially reinforced, while a constellation of more widely experienced meanings is created, enriched by the unique perspectives of all participants. In creating such learning experiences the perceptive teacher will not lose sight of the individual worthiness of each child as a unique being en route to the development of an autonomous, critical perspective on reality. The appreciation and acceptance of diversity cannot be forced. Independent judgements are imperative if pupils are to develop personal autonomy.

#### 2.8.6. Educational support programmes.

The policy of bringing together children from a variety of cultural heritages to form a multi-cultural school

population might be expected to result in an enrichment of the intra-cultural learning experiences of all. Nevertheless, the relative insularity of some cultural heritages could precipitate learning difficulties for those identified with them. In the context of South Africa with its history of separation by cultural and racial criteria, the dislocation of pupils could be acute. The resulting disadvantages are often explained as "cultural deficits", a concept that is both contentious and bitterly contested.

Poor housing, inadequate child-care resulting from conditions of poverty, large families, malnutrition and a resulting paucity of interaction with their socio-cultural and physical environments might all be part of the experience of disadvantaged pupils. Such factors can serve to hinder the development of mental capacities, and the favourable attitudes necessary to learning. The results of a deprived background, according to Guildford (1976, p.121) can be a combination of various of the following characteristics : failure to fully develop an attention span, perception or thinking; retarded language development; poor motivation to learn; and behavioural and adjustment problems. Retarded perceptual behaviour is possible, especially in interpreting pictures, discriminating patterns and letters, as well as in developing visuo-motor skills such as writing, drawing and manipulation. There might also be insufficient development of language (*ibid.*, p.124).

The picture in South Africa has been complicated by a process of recent and rapid urbanisation, with large numbers of Africans moving from rural communities to the main urban centres. Although many migrants have adapted effectively, others have apparently not yet acculturated to the level necessary for success in the large, industrialised centres where the establishment of multi-cultural schooling appears

most likely. It is probable that the first-world structures of these centres of economic development will continue to inexorably and increasingly accommodate a third-world population. Systems of education for the more privileged sections of the population are likely to be deeply affected. There is evident an increasing measure of contact between persons of different cultural heritages and much integration into a common economy. The resulting process of assimilation is extremely complicated (Rautenbach, 1985, p. 11). It depends on such factors as the cultures and their differences, way in which contact was established and level of domination of the "minority" group involved. There may be loss of traditional psychological and economic support from the extended family, with a lapse of confidence in the home culture. In many cases, according to Rautenbach, such families are not well adapted to the new situation. Schooling that endeavours to accommodate these children can be hampered by their paucity of thinking, with reduced intellectual performance and emotional disturbances as a result. Although the etiologies might be inappropriate, these children could appear to be retarded (*ibid.*, p. 14). The "lack", however, is generally cultural and environmental rather than mental.

Hoopes (1981, p. 14) points out that members of one cultural group share basic sets of perceptions which differ from the sets of perceptions shared by members of other cultural groups. Children are bombarded by much sensory data each day and the mind works on a process of selective perception, screening out much irrelevant information:

"Clearly many things affect the selection process : environment, personality and immediate needs; but the basic framework is produced by culture. We learn to make these selections, to select out what we do from

our experience, principally according to the instructions we receive from our culture. Those instructions come from all the spoken and unspoken norms we begin learning from the moment we are born" (ibid., p. 14).

Hoopes goes on to argue that communication is likely to break down when we encounter values, behaviour and communication styles that do not fit our categories of meaning.

Berry (1986, p. 20) considers cognitive styles to be influenced by such acculturative influences as the availability of formal education, the move from traditional economic activity to wage employment, and the process of urbanisation. Improved education and a move to wage employment usually signal a shift from field dependence to field independence, with an apparent improvement in the ability to wrestle with abstract concepts. Bloom et al. (1967, p. 71) pointed out two decades ago that "culturally deprived" children have particular difficulties with abstracts. These deficiencies become more marked in the senior years, during which a high level of ability to abstract is required. We are, indeed, again reminded that the achievements of disadvantaged children are characterised by a cumulative-deficit phenomenon, with inadequacies in language, perceptual skills, attention skills and motivation growing progressively greater through the years of schooling (ibid., p. 73). This scenario is within the framework of traditional cultural-deficit models. Mitchell & Watson (1980, p. 155) remind us that supporters of the cultural-deficit model are generally in favour of special education programmes to offset the negative effects of the students' apparently inadequate family background and culture. In the United State of America a great many such schemes have been

launched. Many were patently inadequate and did not produce lasting benefits, possibly because the schemes were too brief, or because the home situation remained untouched.

Wang (1983, p.202) writes:

"If a group's disadvantage is primarily the result of and perpetuated by structural factors such as the availability of opportunities and by discrimination against them, then positive discrimination programmes should theoretically work to reduce or eliminate their disadvantage. On the other hand, if characteristics intrinsic to the group are primarily responsible, such as lack of ambition, fatalistic attitudes, ambivalence towards education for their children, and general cultural deprivation associated with poverty, then a strategy aimed at these motivational factors and the basic aptitudes of their children at the lower levels of schooling would be more appropriate. In reality, however, which of these two causal models is primary is hard to distinguish; it is like the chicken-and-the-egg question".

The present writer concludes that it would be educationally unsound to bring children from very widely differing home environments together in the same classroom without prior bridging courses being provided for those who are apparently deprived. Further, it is clear that considerable adaptations will be demanded of educational institutions themselves. A programme of pedagogical support might be necessary during the first few years of schooling.

"Culture-free" testing might have to be implemented at secondary level if entry to multi-cultural schooling first takes place there. Programmes of language development are of particular importance. A feature central to the

acculturation of children experiencing problems in adapting to the mainstream culture is the fact that many will learn through medium of a second language. To be true to the concept of multi-cultural education, however, there should be appropriate support for the mother tongue where possible. Although in Britain teaching through the second language has long been the responsibility of specialists working with small groups outside the usual class environment, the approach is criticised by Craft & Klein (1986,p.20), on grounds that it can isolate pupils who may be viewed as "deficient". The most recent trend in many schools is towards a more integrated policy, with second-language teachers moving firmly into the mainstream.

The work of Reuven Feuerstein is prominent in the remediation of the cultural "inadequacies" of apparently deprived cultural groups striving to accommodate to "advanced" civilizations, often in a comparatively short period of time. Feuerstein (1979,p.39) argues that individuals who have learned to function within their own cultures have already experienced a process of adaptation and accommodation. Their experiences have much general adaptive value. A template for further learning has been created. Much emphasis is placed by Feuerstein (*ibid.*,p.7) on "mediated learning experience". This he defines as:

"the interactional processes between the developing human organism and an experienced, intentional adult who, by interposing himself between the child and external sources of stimulation, 'mediates' the world to the child by framing, selecting, focussing, and feeding back environmental experiences in such a way as to produce in him appropriate learning and habits".

The stimulatory field is thereby focused and interpreted. Plentiful experience in such mediated learning can arguably



lead to greater success in learning by direct exposure. It precedes reflective thought and acts as a catalyst to it. A map of reality becomes constituted, upon which the child can build.

Feuerstein (1980, p.1) originated the Feuerstein Instrumental Enrichment Programme that is devoted to changing the overall cognitive structure of the "retarded" performer from one that is passive and dependent to one that is characteristic of the autonomous thinker. Feuerstein thus presupposes a great flexibility in the human organism, who is regarded as an open system capable of considerable modifiability. Nothing in the cognitive domain is regarded as fixed and immutable. The individual is systematically rendered receptive to further learning and experience. It is clear from his writings that Feuerstein (ibid., p.13) does not regard any cultural heritage as deprived or deficient. Culture is clearly not perceived as a static inventory of behaviours, but rather the process by which knowledge, values and beliefs are transmitted. Persons who are identified with a particular culture tend not to be deprived, since they have the tools necessary for expanding their developmental experiences. It is those who are not possessed of a specific cultural identity who are likely to be most disadvantaged. The Learning Potential Assessment Device devised by Feuerstein is designed to measure the learning potential of the individual and to identify those essential cognitive capacities that are missing.

Morphet (1985, pp.7-8) has elaborated on Feuerstein's view of cultural deprivation, interpreting it as a result of the breakdown of the process of cultural transmission that can, for example, occur when there is rapid social change, political disruption or economic collapse. He draws attention to its possible relevance to the social transition

from rural subsistence to industrial society but remains sceptical about its applicability in practice. Chance (1981,p,63) is doubtful of Feuerstein's claims that persons with apparently modest intelligences can be quite drastically improved in mental capacities. Nor is he convinced that Feuerstein's programme will be sufficient in itself in South Africa, where a broader programme of social and political transformation is needed if a real effect is to be felt. Burden (1985,p.77) has also posed the question whether Feuerstein's work has been really effective, pointing out that no widespread support was available for the claims made, although much positive anecdotal evidence abounds in many L.E.A.'s in Britain. Burden feels that the theoretical basis is sound, but remains critical of the cost of the programme, that would preclude its widespread use.

Feuerstein's own optimism concerning the enculturation of African Falashas in Israel is reported by Sharon (1985, p.17). The rich oral culture and close family links of the Falashas proved crucial to the success of the programme. Feuerstein urges that cultures be not broken down, since they form the platform from which progress can be made. Feuerstein is quoted by Sharon:

"Great care must be taken by educators not to break down an indigenous culture like that of the Falashas before they have had a chance to adapt to a new dominant culture".

Weil (1985,p.17) also mentions the success obtained with Ethiopian Jews, some of whom had completed twelve years of education in an impressively short time, despite having to presumably "jump from the 5th to 20th century in the space of several months". This testimony holds out the hope that the principles can be used in South African schools,

probably in a modified form. It could have powerful implications for teacher education curricula. Further, the stress on retention of the traditional culture so as to use it as a springboard for further development has implications for multi-cultural education, through medium of which the home culture is promoted and enhanced.

The work of Paolo Freire (1976) holds out possibilities for the development of an enriched home cultural environment within traditional cultures, that can pave the way to greater accommodation with the more complex cultures of Western civilization. His endeavours in Brazil were largely in the area of enabling the peasantry to master their environments and thereby create culture. An effort is made to help them to critically perceive the themes of their time and to develop a flexible, critical spirit.

He writes:

"Towards this end, the first dimension of our new programme content would be the anthropological concept of culture - that is, the distinction between the world of nature and the world of culture; the active role of men (sic) in and with their reality; the role of mediation which nature plays in relationships and communication among men; culture as the addition made by men to a world they did not make; culture as a result of men's labour, of their efforts to create and re-create; the transcendental meaning of human relationships; the humanist dimension of culture; culture as a systematic acquisition of human experiences (but as creative assimilation, not as information-storing); the democratization of culture; the learning of reading and writing as a key to the world of written communications. In short, the role of

man as subject in the world and with the world. From that point of departure, the illiterate would begin to effect a change in his former attitude, by discovering himself to be a maker of the world of culture, by discovering that he, as well as the literate person, has a creative and re-creative impulse" (ibid.,pp.47).

The role of the educator, in Freire's view, is to thus accompany the illiterate in the mastery of concrete situations and to help him to teach himself to read and write. Much responsibility lies on the shoulders of the illiterate. In implementing the proposals of Freire, supplementary schools can do much to offer pupils cultural enrichment. Many such schools overseas offer additional teaching of minority languages, or remediation of academic deficiencies. A note of warning is, however, sounded by Jenks, et.al., (1973,p.255) who are pessimistic of the value of educational "compensation" in general. They consider such endeavours to be of only marginal value.

As expressed earlier in this chapter, cultural deprivation due to poverty is a dire factor in underachievement at school, although the relationship is not necessarily immutable (Robinson,1976,p.112). As Brown et.al. (1977,p.63) point out, the "culture of poverty" breeds a culture of fatalism and resignation among the poor. Generations are successively bound to poverty because the cycle is self-perpetuating. Children coming from these poor homes, according to Illich (1973,p.14), thus have difficulty competing with those from middle-class homes because their home environment remains deprived. Illich also points to the poor showing that teachers have made in their attempts to increase learning amongst the poor. The problem is often exacerbated by parents' perceptions of their childrens' schooling as a potential source of revenue rather than as an

asset of intrinsic worth (*ibid.*, p.35). It is evident that problems of poverty can only be remediated if the home environment is enriched in such a way that it becomes more compatible with the school, and if the school in turn gives greater attention and understanding to the needs of children from economically deprived homes. Bloom *et.al.* (1967, pp. 4-23) concur with the view that the school should adjust to the deprived pupil. They point to the complications created by large families, broken homes, slum conditions and the effects of discrimination, but are optimistic that much can be done to bring children experiencing these disadvantages to a satisfactory level where learning can profitably take place. The basic approach, they believe, should be to start "with the child where he is" (*ibid.*, p.23) and to implement a carefully developed programme to bring him up to a level where he can gain from the educational experience offered. The implication of this view is that some form of pre-school bridging programme should be mounted.

These views have important consequences for multi-cultural education in South Africa. If multi-cultural education is to not be reserved for the privileged few, penetrating endeavours will be needed to lift the rural peasantry and urban shack-dwellers from their poverty. Schools will be called on to re-examine their entry requirements with compassion. Thought must be given to the creation of bridging classes at primary level, as well as pervasive academic support programmes through the years of schooling.

## 2.9. CONCLUDING SUMMARY.

In this chapter the writer has provided a brief overview of the prospects for social change in South Africa. Major principles of the N.E.S.T. philosophy have been subjected to elaboration and appraisal, and relevant implications of the

philosophy have been debated. With multi-cultural education as a main theme, the issues of culture, race and class have been discussed. Whole-school policies and strategies commonly used in multi-cultural education have been surveyed. A word of caution has been sounded regarding their selection and use in South Africa. Strategies used to integrate minority cultural groups into Western society might be inappropriate when used in a country with an established black majority possessed of a traditional culture in disjunction with the dominant Western culture of most state schooling.

## CHAPTER THREE

A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ORIGINS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST.

## 3.1. INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a critical, contextual perspective on the origins and development of the New Era Schools Trust system of schooling. As Kallaway (1986,p.1) has pointed out, the study of educational issues in South Africa should be located in their social, political and economic contexts in order to provide richer insights into the underlying dynamics. Any attempt to understand the complexities of education in South Africa that evades these concerns runs the risk of being irrelevant or misleading.

3.2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SEPARATE EDUCATION  
SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA3.2.1. Bantu Education and other racially exclusive systems  
of education during the period 1948 to 1975.

Christie (1988,p.18) argues that it is inaccurate to blame the implementation of apartheid (the principle of separation of races) for the introduction of segregated schooling in South Africa, because South African schools have been segregated since the early days of white settlement. Separation was not the primary aim of all such past schooling, however. Indeed, according to Dickie-Clarke (1971,p.223), the mission education that functioned in South Africa prior to the introduction of Bantu Education was aimed at producing Africans who were "culturally white" in order to integrate them into the common, unified society that the missionaries thought was likely to evolve. This

approach to the education of blacks was, in the view of Dickie-Clarke, in stark contrast to the Bantu Education introduced by the Nationalist government after 1948.

Events after the election of an Afrikaner Nationalist government in 1948 heralded a radical departure in thinking about education. Within a year of the electoral victory, a commission under Dr. W.M. Eiselen was set up with significant terms of reference. The Commission began its work with the premise that there should be clear distinctions between the education to be offered to whites and that afforded blacks (Rose & Tunmer, 1975, p.244). Their terms of reference included the requirement that they take into account the distinctive characteristics, needs and aptitudes of the "Natives". In its published findings, the Commission stressed the conflict that contemporary mission education produced between traditional tribal society and Western European society. It was a conflict, the commissioners argued, that led to the denigration of Bantu culture (ibid., p.248). They considered the task of education to be the extension of such culture, which could be most effectively achieved by using the geographical areas reserved for Bantu.

"Educational practice", they stated, "must recognise that it has to deal with a Bantu child, i.e. a child trained and conditioned in Bantu culture, endowed with a knowledge of a Bantu language and imbued with values, interests and behavioural patterns learned at the knee of a Bantu mother. These facts must dictate to a very large extent the content and methods of his early education" (ibid., p.251).

The above statement reflects the pattern subsequently followed during several decades. Jones (1970, p.85)



considers the recommendation of the Eiselen Commission to be congruent with the socio-political policy of apartheid, which he harshly condemns as a mechanism of defence brought to bear against blacks and non-Afrikaner whites. The view that the ideas that were crystallised in the Eiselen Report fitted neatly into the Government's policy of separate development of racial groups is also held by Rose & Tunmer (1975,p.258). The subsequent unfolding of the policy in practice lends some credibility to this view.

In 1953, the Bantu Education Act (No.47 of 1953) was passed in Parliament. That it conferred wide powers on the Minister of Native Affairs can be clearly understood from the speech of Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, Minister of Bantu Education, in the Senate on 7 June 1954. Speaking of the place of the black man in South African society, the Minister stated:

"There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, where he cannot be absorbed" (Rose & Tunmer, 1975,p.266).

This new policy effectively closed the door on the assimilatory approach of missionary education, and swung the pendulum very firmly in the direction of the separate provision of educational resources. The Bantu Education Act came into force on 1 January 1954 and brought about a number of drastic changes in the education of Africans (Paton,1973, p.232). Under control of the Department of Native Affairs, Paton explains, all private schools had to apply for registration. No high schools for blacks were to be built

in urban areas: a provision that caused much hardship for black parents living in such areas. They were faced with increased schooling expenses, and might be compelled to send their children to an unfamiliar rural environment.

Despite these moves, Dickie-Clarke (1971, p.224) is adamant that the policy of separation proved in many respects to be as superficial as the apparent social equality of mission education, since the cultural content of Bantu Education remained largely "Western". Dickie-Clarke believes that the advocates of Bantu Education should have taken into account the common economy and political order of the plural society, however much the cultural diversity of the country be propagated. It is possible to ignore similarities, he points out, but impossible to prevent the acculturation that produces them. Dickie-Clarke argues further that the effect of Bantu Education, no matter how segregated and controlled, has been to heighten the African's desire and ability to share in the common society (*ibid.*, p.224).

It is obvious that perceptions on the nature of Bantu Education differ widely. Kruger (1971, pp.282-3) for example, views the process of creating a system of separate education for Africans as essentially benign. He writes:

"Its declared purpose was to provide for a centralised and state controlled system of education for the Bantu. It would be applied in a spirit of service to the Bantu community and in conformity with their own traditions and needs".

He points to the lack of funds available to the missionary schools, their dilapidated buildings and inadequate salaries, and contends (correctly, no doubt) that education for the Bantu was badly in need of revision. It was also

far too Europeanised, while some of the schools bred "frustrated agitators". Kruger claims that, since the transfer of Bantu Education to the Bantu Affairs Department on 1 April 1954, "the Bantu have grown to appreciate the beneficial results" (*ibid.*, p.283).

Although an objective view of Bantu Education would recognise and acknowledge many improvements in the scope and extent of the education offered, much bitterness has resulted from the perceived inferiority of a system that has been described as "one of the the most vilified systems in the world" (Kambule, 1983, p.9). It can be argued, as Maree (1986, pp. 148-9) has done, that the system was in fact introduced in order to ensure the conscientisation of blacks into accepting the white ruling class view of the world. The outcome has, in the main, been anger and frustration on the part of young blacks, with the emergence of Black Consciousness (Attwell, 1986, p.110) as an inevitable consequence.

Although the Afrikaner Nationalist government bore the brunt of black anger against its separatist view of education, English-speaking whites could not claim immunity from accusations of prejudice. The absence of black pupils in the predominantly English-speaking private schools was not a major issue until 1958 and 1959, when the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Joost de Blank, and Cabinet Ministers such as Mr. Eric Louw and Dr. T. Donges engaged in furious debate on the issue (Randall, 1982, p.189). The government policies were portrayed as not Christian, and the Anglican Church was in turn accused of hypocrisy for maintaining all-white church schools. The archbishop asked that the legal barriers to integration be removed, in which event he would endeavour to admit blacks to Anglican schools. In 1963 (*ibid.*, p.190), De Blank and leading

clerics, working with students at the University of Cape Town, condemned the racially exclusive nature of the all-white church schools. They urged the promotion of inter-racial contact. The headmasters reacted predictably, concludes Randall:

"While there was support for the less threatening proposals (greater inter-racial contact, etc.), the possibility of 'integrating' their schools was rejected with varying degrees of vehemence. One general response was that 'integration' was illegal and would risk the closure of the schools by the government. Another was that most white Anglicans were too conservative to accept such a move, and that large numbers of white pupils would be withdrawn, thus facing the schools with financial ruin. Apart from these 'practical' problems, there were also educational standards to be considered ..." (ibid.).

The 1950's and 1960's have been characterised by Jarvis (1984, pp.51-56) as a period of "relative tranquility" during which state control was freely exercised. He implies, however, that since blacks value education greatly as an avenue to social mobility, there was during this time an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with their education. Disillusionment with education has, it is clear, been gradually merged with such other issues as poor living conditions, high unemployment and wage discrimination. A growing black consciousness re-emerged in student rebellion and industrial unrest in the 1970's. Throughout the period of Bantu Education, Jarvis declares, inadequacies have persisted (ibid., p.14). He believes Dr. Verwoerd to have been fundamentally incorrect in his view that state schooling would improve the education offered to blacks. The present writer is essentially in agreement with this

perception, yet is cautious of making such judgement without qualification. The explosion of student numbers, as well as other trends in Third World education systems revealed by writers such as Coombs (1985), must inevitably be taken into account. A grim picture can be painted of education in many sub-Saharan African countries, where some governments appear to be losing ground (Porter, 1986, pp. 106-112). In certain countries less than fifty percent of primary age children are enrolled in school and there is a high dropout rate. In South Africa many statistics can be quoted in support of government endeavours during this period (Behr, 1978) although events from 1976 on have shown the depth of frustration and anger generated by the prevailing system. Black politicians and educationists have condemned what they perceive to be a general strategy of domination pursued by the National Party on behalf of sectional interests (Buthelezi, 1986, p. 1). Many blacks consider themselves to have been relegated by school education to the bottom of the social structure, and have encountered tremendous obstacles that have negated their best efforts (Thembela, 1986, p. 43). Exacerbating factors include negative adult-child relationships and deprived home backgrounds. The father in a black household might be away from home for long periods as a migrant labourer and in urban areas both parents could be away for much of the day (ibid., p. 42). Thembela clearly views the wider socio-economic conditions under which many blacks live as conducive to cultural deprivation. Included amongst the problems are a limited range of stimuli, little individual attentions to children and a scarcity of objects to manipulate in the squalid slum conditions. He points out that many blacks consider education to have a major role to play in enabling them to acquire the satisfying lives for which they yearn. The dilemma is that the conditions under which many live do not facilitate effective learning (ibid., p. 38).

In contrast to this view of relative black deprivation with an apparently complex and ambiguous etiology, can be proposed a more benign viewpoint that acknowledges the many insurmountable difficulties faced by recent governments in providing education, sound nutrition, a secure place of residence and good working conditions for an expanding black population. Many projections published since the H.S.R.C. Investigation into Education in the R.S.A. (1981,p.51) show the rapid climb in black school population figures. One might, however, agree with Nasson (1986,p.107) that it is the disparity in the allocation of resources between black and white rather than inadequacies per se in black schooling that is at issue. Nasson clearly shows the disparities in school achievement, pupil enrolment in various standards as well as pupil-teacher ratios (ibid.,p.97). Corke (2 July 1988) has more recently listed indicators of discrimination that reveal the discrepancy in expenditure between the various schooling systems, differentials in teacher-student ratios and teacher qualifications. In all cases the indicators favour whites, with black students apparently most disadvantaged. In the light of these statistics, the cynicism, anger and doubt raised by Bantu Education, which is based on a hated racial classification, is understandable.

Apartheid flourished during the 1960's. Kruger depicts the effects as follows:

"The Bantu were advancing along the path of civilization but still living their own lives. Contact between whites and non-whites was closer than ever, without, like oil and water in the same receptacle, really mixing. Their close physical nearness still did not make them one, not because of apartheid, but as the result of a natural disinclination to give up their own racial identity" (1971,p.333).

Spurred on by their successes, during the 1950's and 1960's the government also moved vigorously to consolidate its control over education for whites. In 1962 the National Advisory Education Council was created. Following a series of meetings, an action plan was devised to regulate white schooling. The National Education Policy Act was eventually passed in 1967, with a focus on a broadly-based national character for such education. Education was to be Christian in character, and mother-tongue instruction was accorded prominence (Rose & Tunmer, 1975, p.72). Malherbe (1977, p.143) considers the "national" concept to be particularly contentious, in view of the creation of different "nations", each with its own identity. He considers the policy behind the act to be divisive and retrogressive, largely tailored to the needs of Afrikaner nationalism. The development of a distinctive system of education for whites was matched by a similar dispensation for Indians by the Indian Education Act, No. 61 of 1965, and for coloureds by the Coloured Persons Education Act, No. 47 of 1963.

Although the development of apparently distinct education systems (with accompanying perceptions on the part of many, of inequality and inferiority), has clearly contributed to such devastating reactions as the events of 16 June 1976 in Soweto and much trauma and disruption subsequently, no simple causal explanation for these events is tenable. Nasson (1986, p.96) points to the complex interrelationships between apparently separate education systems and structures. A symbiotic relationship is discernible between such systems and no system can be characterised in overly-simplistic terms. Black schooling is not pursued solely in order to produce a mass of subordinate workers, nor are all white children likely to become managers (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, as Nasson points out, discrepancies and inequalities remain tangible, most starkly evident in

discriminatory budgets. Such perceived discrepancies doubtless contributed to the explosive repudiation of government policy in education by the black youth in Soweto in 1976.

### 3.2.2. The Soweto uprising of 1976 and the boycotts of 1980.

On the morning of 16 June 1976, protests were held in the streets of Soweto by several thousand black pupils. The initial protest was evidently mounted against the policy whereby black students in secondary schools were taught certain subjects through medium of Afrikaans, which was regarded as "the language of the oppressor" (Kane-Berman, 1978, p.1). The protest culminated in a confrontation with the police, during which violence erupted. Many hundreds of pupils were reported to have been injured or killed. Four days of rioting followed and the surrounding townships endured an orgy of mayhem. Violence and the destruction of property spread across the Reef and within a few weeks the Western Cape was engulfed. Within two months of 16 June, at least eighty black communities all over the country had expressed their fury, and within four months one hundred and sixty were thus affected (*ibid.*, p.2). Coloured students were also extensively involved, a development that Attwell (1986, p.113) regards as wholly new. He considers the series of actions that followed the events of 16 June to have reflected the surfacing of black consciousness. A month after the riots, Maree (1986, p.156) visited Soweto and found the black schoolchildren there determined to have a single education department in South Africa, with free and compulsory education for all. All students were to be educated in the same schools and universities, interviewees asserted, without distinctions based on colour. That these educational issues were becoming increasingly immersed in



the broader issues of black worker grievances in the political economy has been supported by Jarvis (1984,p.54) and also Behr (1984,p.196). Behr remarks on the breadth and scope of the unrest, including vandalism at the University of Zululand where the administration block was razed, while the Cillie Report that followed as a government reaction to the unrest stated that the attitude of the Indian population "was more than a token of sympathy with the people of Soweto" (ibid.,p.197). A number of improvements were introduced by Government during the months after the riots, including an extension of compulsory education, changes in language medium and improvements in housing.

Kallaway (1986,p.11) contends that, although the black schools were established to be mechanisms of social control, they became filled with their own dynamics and became centres of protest instead. This view is in apparent contradiction to views such as that of Purdey et.al. (1980,p.22) that Bantu Education teaches passive obedience. It also tends to stand in opposition to the deterministic or mechanistic view of social control propagated through schooling, that was much favoured by Marxist writers until recently. Kane-Berman (1980,p.16) regards the education system for blacks to be the direct cause of the racial violence which erupted in Soweto on 16 June 1976, and cites the Cillie Commission as proof. He considers the ideological motivation of Bantu Education to have discredited such education from its earliest days (Kane-Berman,1978,p.22), and mentions that Dr. Verwoerd's Senate speech of 1953 was reported to have been quoted by black students in Soweto in 1976.

Despite the remedial measures instituted in 1976 after the riots, within a few years (in 1980) a massive country-wide boycott occurred in black schools. In this event, Purdey

et.al. (1980,p.23) maintain, purely educational demands were transcended as the entire system and ideology of apartheid was tackled by means of resistance in the schools. Almost eighty African schools were closed in Soweto, Bloemfontein and the Eastern Cape. Demands were made for a single, completely non-racial education system. In 1980, Molteno (1983,p.33) writes, tens of thousands of Black students rose from their desks to demand democratic and free schooling in a "liberated" South Africa. Coloured and Indian schools closed too. Principals of schools were cowed, their authority stripped from them. In general, there tended not to be overt animosity towards those in authority, but teachers were frequently ignored. Many mass meetings and marches were held, with rallies and freedom songs. Awareness programmes, talks, films and poetry readings were organised, but the momentum gradually faded as the novelty wore off (ibid.). Boredom set in and many children began to absent themselves from school. The apparent aimlessness of the programmes in their closing phases suggests the difficulty inherent in supplanting the established system with a worthwhile alternative, once the rhetoric has quietened. The boycotts were nevertheless sufficient to show that the apparently inadequate endeavours to improve the education of blacks, as well as the wider socio-political dispensation, were not acceptable to many.

The involvement of coloured and Indian Schools in these boycotts was a source of understandable concern to the government. The coloured community, according to Pollack (1971,p.3) is composed of largely heterogeneous elements; yet it remains mainly Western in culture, social life, religion and language. It occupies an intermediate position in the racially stratified social structure of South Africa. It is highly urbanised. Pollack also points out that there have indeed been noticeable similarities in the education of

coloureds and whites, with frequent contact between coloured and white educationists. Despite such contacts, projections showing coloured pupil populations (H.S.R.C., 1981, p. 47) reveal the traumatic disruption of schooling attendance caused by the boycotts. The school boycotts also impinged on Indian education (Behr, 1984, p. 294), with tertiary education institutions particularly deeply affected. Complaints were heard against inadequate schooling and there were protests against the government's policy of separate and parallel education systems. These are apparently less easy to justify than is the case with Bantu Education, but they do reveal the sensitivity of coloured and Indian pupils to discrimination that has emanated from past government policy. Samuels (1985, pp. 12-14) nevertheless points out that the takeover of Indian education in Natal in April 1966 and in the Transvaal in 1967 brought a new era of educational advancement. Prior to that date, he argues, Indian education had been in a state of acute deprivation with regard to the provision of schooling. An intensive school building programme had been undertaken, resulting in manageable classes, improved secondary certificate results and greater professional growth. There is much evidence to show the steady growth of Indian education over the years. Demographic projections of the numbers of Indian pupils in schools show few lasting effects of the boycotts (H.S.R.C., 1981, p. 49). It is nevertheless evident that large numbers of Indians rose at the time of crisis to identify with their African and coloured counterparts. They protested once again against a system of schooling that they deemed inherently inferior.

Despite the protests in coloured and Indian education in support of the boycotts instigated in 1980, Bantu Education was clearly the prime focus of contention. It has persistently revealed a capacity to disrupt the social

fabric of South Africa as it has become interwoven with wider issues. Kane-Berman explains some of the consequences:

"Bantu Education not only inflicted grave injustices and crippling disabilities upon black people, it was also a tragedy for South Africa as a whole. It has left us with such huge educational backlogs that we are badly handicapped in competing against the newly industrialised countries of the Pacific rim in a trading environment which would be difficult enough even if the American Congress had not declared economic war against us" (1988, p.2).

The history of inequalities has in the past frequently led to the repudiation of separate schooling systems by individual South African educationists who have held their own, personal visions for a future educational dispensation for South Africa. The section that follows deals with selected endeavours that have, as their essence, a policy of offering non-discriminatory, multi-cultural schooling. It represents an endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity for pupils within the same classroom. The deeper motivation behind all of these endeavours would appear to be the Christian conviction that schooling should give practical recognition to the essential value of individuals, all of whom are equal in the sight of God. Those endeavours that have been especially influential in creating the philosophy and practices of N.E.S.T. are described most completely. Only passing reference is made to other significant efforts, such as those of Bro. Jude Pieterse and his colleagues in the Catholic Church, whose endeavours might have only obliquely affected N.E.S.T. The work of the few schools illuminated should be seen in the context of the broader thrust of church schools as a whole.

### 3.3 SOME INITIATIVES TOWARDS NON-RACIAL, MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

#### 3.3.1. Waterford-Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa.

In 1955 Father Trevor Huddleston of the Anglican Church arranged for Mr. Michael Stern to come from England to assume Headmastership of St Peter's, a private Anglican school in Rosettenville in Johannesburg (Malan, 1982; Yates, Dec. 1987). Following the introduction of Bantu Education, the school (which was predominantly black), was closed in 1958 since it was set in a white area (Linden, 1983, p. 11). The Anglican diocese of Johannesburg decided to establish a school for whites on the premises. Michael Stern accordingly took over the physical plant and premises of St Peter's and established the St Martin's school there. He followed a policy of accommodating black students in the school, in the hope of making it fully non-racial (Yates, Dec. 1987). The school was nevertheless declared by Government to be white, following a period of three or four years of intense pressures and negotiations. Stern realised the impossibility of a truly non-racial school surviving in South Africa at that time and, supported by a small circle of colleagues, looked abroad for a country that would accommodate his vision (Malan, 1982). He decided on Swaziland, and left South Africa in 1962 to establish the Waterford School. It was built on twenty-five acres of land outside Mbabane. The school opened in 1963 on a small budget, with a modest initial intake of pupils. It accommodated the teaching of these sixteen pupils in a single classroom, with a staff totalling six members (*ibid.*). Since the school was established as a direct response to the education system in South Africa, which Stern viewed as divisive and unequal for the various

communities implicated in the schooling provided, it was non-racial from the start. The criteria for admission were based on academic merit and character reference. According to the Waterford-Kamhlaba School Prospectus, neither religion nor the ability to pay fees were considered in the admission policy. The ethos and philosophy of the school were described by Stern in a paper written during the first year of operation of Waterford. He wrote the following:

"The way in which we differ from most educationists in the Republic of South Africa is that we believe in educating boys (sic) together, regardless of colour or creed. We believe in a human mixture of the kind you would naturally expect to find in this part of the world at this stage in the country's history. How the mixture came to be, whether it could have been otherwise, these are irrelevant questions, for we are concerned with reality not hypothesis, and the reality is that we live in a multi-racial society of Jew and Gentile, bond and free, Catholic and Protestant, African and Asian, English and Afrikaner, rich and poor, black, brown, yellow and white. This diversity can be strength not weakness, and to mix the children of these groups in schools is not idealistic but realistic. To ignore the mixture is in our view both fatuous and dangerous - and a luxury that the whites can ill afford. Set against this background our school does nor seem to us to be an experiment, nor to need any special justification. The 'experiment' is taking place in the Republic, in the form of the artificially conceived and legally enforced segregated schools" (Stern, 1963.).

In a speech made during the following year, Stern pointed out that Waterford was the first school in Afrikaans or

English-speaking territory South of the Limpopo to open to pupils of all races, denominations and faiths (Stern,1984). In 1964 a further one hundred and seventy acres of ground were purchased and a classroom block, kitchen and diningroom were built. In 1967 His Majesty King Sobhuza II visited and named the school Waterford-Kamhlaba. The meaning of the name was "of the earth" or "of the world". The period 1970 to 1980 was characterised by a considerable development of physical plant, with an increasing number of students, including girls. The Rev. Atholl Jennings became Headmaster in 1974 (Jennings,1987). In 1981 the school became the Waterford-Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa and in 1982 the first International Baccalaureate candidates were accepted. As a United World College the school shares a tradition reaching back to the establishment of Atlantic College on the premises of St Donat's Castle in Wales in 1960. Based on the ideals of the educationist Dr. Kurt Hahn, the United World Colleges are devoted to international peace and understanding. It is a tradition that Waterford-Kamhlaba has faithfully maintained.

### 3.3.2. Maru a Pula.

Following a period of thirteen years spent as headmaster of St John's College in Johannesburg, Mr. Deane Yates O.B.E. also looked outwards to neighbouring countries for a host within whose boundaries to establish a non-racial school (Yates,Dec.1987). Yates had been profoundly influenced by World War II experiences that had included the liberation of a concentration camp in Europe, as well as a period in Malaya and India during which he came into close contact with widespread suffering and poverty. As a committed Christian, he became involved in social services in South Africa. During the period 1954 - 61 he was associated with the Young Mens' Club in Sophiatown. He was sensitive to the

inequalities attendant on Bantu Education and aware of what Michael Stern was achieving in Swaziland (ibid.). Motivated by the desire to establish a school that would accommodate persons of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds in harmony, he began to focus on Botswana as the potential host. A motivating factor was the fact that Botswana was led by Sir Seretse Khama, an African married to a white woman. Yates thus felt secure in the knowledge that official sanction was achievable. He contacted the Secretariat of the South African Council of Churches in 1967 and held discussions with Rev. W. Burnett. He also approached Z.K. Mathews, who had settled in Botswana and become its ambassador to the United Nations. At first Yates met furious opposition to the venture from within Botswana. It was obvious that he needed an intermediary. Mathews was encouraging and felt that the endeavour should be followed through. He spoke to Sir Seretse about Yates's vision (ibid.). In 1968 Yates visited Botswana with his wife, enlisting the aid of the American Charge d' Affaires and submitting a memorandum outlining his intentions. Aided by the Rev. F. Butler, who assisted in a secretarial capacity, he corresponded with the Director of Education of Botswana. A formal letter approving the venture in principle was received in December 1968 (Director of Education, Botswana, 12 Dec, 1968). By 1969 the establishment of a non-racial school became possible. Yates resigned from St John's College, giving a year's notice. During the final year as headmaster of that school, in 1970 he established committees in South Africa and Gaborone to promote the Botswana venture. The Maru a Pula School Council was accordingly established and a constitution was developed. Minutes of meetings of the new council, dating from 1970 - 1973 (Maru a Pula, 1970-3), show a preoccupation in the early years with fund-raising, securing and clearing suitable ground and the construction of basic facilities. Yates and his wife were



joined by David Mathews, second master, and his family. Despite vigorous fund-raising it was necessary to operate on reduced salaries, while a core of volunteer teachers was invited to participate. Of the first intake of fifty-three students, nine were South Africans (Holland, 1985, p. 33). A quarter were bursars who attended free of charge owing to their limited financial resources. Yates worked industriously to establish an environment in which class and economic position were not intrusive factors, and a strong service ethic was nurtured. Community service was vigorously pursued from the start, despite pressure of work. Service developed tremendously in scope to become a major distinctive feature of the school. Despite the fostering of an egalitarian ethos, problems arose.

Correspondence in the journal Kutlwano dated March 1971 (Kutlwano, 1971) reveals the extent of opposition mounted against the venture. The President of Botswana received a number of petitions critical of the school. The March, 1971 issue of Kutlwano carried a letter dated 30 September 1970, written by sixty "Interested Citizens" who viewed the school as elitist. They feared that the school would separate a select group of Botswana citizens from their contemporaries and develop in them a level of arrogance and conceit that would prove unacceptable. It would be a centre of privilege for civil servants, the writers charged. It would become an unnecessary luxury that would accommodate South African and Rhodesian racists, most of whom would be white. It was further alleged that the school would be contrary to the Botswana nation's concept of unity. The school was seen to have little credibility in promoting non-racialism and was viewed as a potential source of disharmony. Several letters critical of the new school were also received from students (ibid., p. 9). The President's reply complimented the authors of these petitions for adhering to Botswana's principles.

He nevertheless pointed out that a quarter of the school's enrolment would be reserved for bursars from Botswana, selected strictly on academic merit. Remediation of deficiencies would be undertaken and testing would focus on latent ability. Sir Seretse concluded by expressing faith in the endeavour, which he characterised as free from racism (*ibid.*, p. 12). The school nevertheless remained controversial for some years, although there was a gradual acceptance of its mixture of leadership training and service of a practical nature (Lawrence, 1973, pp. 4-8).

It was clearly Yates's hope that the school would serve as a model that would later be adopted in South Africa. Founded by a generous grant from Mr H. Oppenheimer, the first phase was built in 1971. It is of interest to note that, like the Uthongathi school, the venture was established and initially funded by South Africans with the sole motive of fomenting evolutionary social change in South African education (Yates, Dec. 1987). Community service was expanded in Gabane, a village situated fifteen kilometres from Gaborone. Poverty-stricken at the time, the villagers benefitted from regular projects undertaken by the pupils and staff of Maru a Pula. Projects included the manufacture of earth bricks, the provision of food for the indigent, and teaching in the local school (*ibid.*).

The school journal Maru a Pula shows the steady growth of the institution during the seventies, both in numbers and in recognition (Maru a Pula, No. 4, Dec. 1975). The teaching staff was expanded, new residential accommodation was built and the school acquired a library, laboratory and swimming pool. Much of the work was done by pupils, while finance and the salaries of an increasing staff were provided for by a vigorous fund-raising campaign. The school continued to be managed by a multi-racial council that ordered its

affairs and determined policy, while a growing network of supporters promoted its interests. A letter to potential donors in Botswana, signed by the Bishop of Botswana, reads in part:

"As far as I am aware, Maru a Pula is the only secondary school in all Botswana that provides the following invaluable qualities which indeed make it unique in the nation today:

- it is the only secondary school where the principle and practice of staff-help is an integral part of the curriculum on a day-to-day basis,

- it is the only secondary school in which a non-racial student body is constitutionally established, ensured and maintained;

-it is the only secondary school in the country where instruction is offered through the Academic level, thus enabling students to go directly into university education without an intermediate period of further preparation,

-it is unique in that it is constitutionally established and maintained as a Christian school, yet non-denominational, and where Hindus, Muslims and Jews are welcome and accepted;

it can provide all of these unique advantages at a cost per students which I believe is substantially less than what Government is spending for secondary school education in the country today" (Mallory, 1978, p.1).

He went on to characterise the school as "decidedly not an extravagant or elite institution . . ." (ibid., p.3).

During the year of the Soweto uprising in 1976, Maru a Pula boasted seven first-class passes, eight seconds and eight thirds in the Cambridge School Certificate examination, while the six remaining candidates of the twenty-nine entries gained subject passes at the G.C.E.ordinary level (Maru a Pula, No.6, Dec.1977). Results for 1977 were equally impressive, with eleven first-class passes (Maru a Pula, No.7, Dec.1979).

By 1980 Yates felt that he had accomplished the task that had occupied him since 1968; namely to establish an independent, non-racial secondary school in Botswana. Consumed by the idea of pursuing non-racial schooling in South Africa itself, he submitted his resignation to the Council of the school in June 1980. A letter explaining his decision was sent to parents and friends of the school by a member of the Council a few months later (Whyte,1980).

Many of Yates's ideas were expressed in the Constitution of Maru a Pula; many were to be later adopted as principles to guide the N.E.S.T. schooling system, of which Yates was to become Director and subsequently Vice Chairman of the Board.

"Maru a Pula is established as a school to which boys and girls of all races, classes, nationalities and faiths shall be eligible for admission. It will be the object of the school to promote the highest degree of intellectual, cultural, spiritual and physical development of which each pupil is capable. It will encourage the development of the qualities of tolerance, compassion, humility, initiative, self-discipline, moral and intellectual integrity and leadership for their own sake and because they are essential for the creating of understanding and respect between individuals of different races, nationalities,

classes, faiths and cultures. The school will foster the ideals of citizenship, social responsibility and a lasting commitment to service, both by encouraging an understanding of international, national and community issues, and by involving the pupils in practical acts of service to the community in which the school is situated" (Maru a Pula : Constitution, p. 1).

### 3.3.3. Woodmead.

Steyn Krige, founder of Woodmead School near Bryanston in Johannesburg and subsequently Deputy Director and then Director of the New Era Schools Trust, was born into a strongly Nationalist family. His father was a close personal friend of Prime Ministers J.B.M. Hertzog and D.F. Malan (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988). During his university years in Cape Town his viewpoint shifted away from the Nationalist philosophy. He joined the Progressive Federal Party, but became disillusioned when he perceived "expediency being given priority over principle". A powerful religious conviction convinced him that God wanted him to use his gifts in teaching. Following a period teaching at Rondebosch Boys High, he joined the staff of St Stithians in 1953 and assumed the headmastership of the school in 1961. His views on education had evolved in the direction of child-centricity and innovation. He accordingly directed his energies to challenging the many "sacred cows" in education, and in doing so experienced tensions with the Governing Body, whose members favoured a more conservative school (ibid.). Krige, however, pursued a policy of providing a broad, liberal education that would develop the pupils holistically. Sport was viewed as a medium for education rather than for gaining prestige for the school; discipline was focussed on self-responsibility: an endeavour was made to turn St Stithians into a dual-medium language

school; racial barriers were opposed and endeavours were made to bring in integrated studies (ibid.) .

Krige left St Stithians in 1968. Randall (1982, pp. 153-4) records Krige's departure from St Stithians, recounting his "unconventional" and "progressive" approach. A debate against the black Orlando High School caused dissatisfaction amongst the more conservative members of the staff. Krige's dismissal, however, was apparently precipitated by his refusal to give an undertaking to not allow discussion on controversial topics. He was indicted for having supported a teacher who had been summoned before the School Board for permitting a senior pupil to display a birth-control applicance during a discussion on over-population. Another apparent reason for Krige's departure was his dislike of making a showpiece of the school, according to Randall (ibid.). It is significant that eight teachers resigned from St Stithian's over Krige's dismissal, while some parents removed their sons and sent them to Krige's new school, Woodmead. Randall feels that the episode reflects the deepseated conservatism of many private schools that anxiously restrain those of their members seen to flout convention, while seeking to maintain their standards at all costs.

He writes:

"... discussion, even accompanied by visual aids, by senior pupils on birth-control would be unlikely to arouse such violent reaction now, while debates against black schools would probably be regarded as positively desirable" (ibid.).

Steyn Krige took up the post of Headmaster of Woodmead School in 1970. During his years at the school, Krige endeavoured to open an essentially white school to persons

of colour. He showed great courage in pursuance of this objective and was particularly vigorous in his endeavours after the Soweto riots in 1976. Numbers remained small, but the school became co-educational and multi-racial. In Randall's view (*ibid.*, p.154), the school could, to some extent, be regarded as the "prototype" of the private school of the future. Krige (1987, p.8) asserts that, although Woodmead opened in January 1970 as an all-white school, there was present "the firm resolve to start a school with a progressive and liberal ethos which would offer an innovative and non-racial approach to education". Krige explains further:

"Events in South Africa were increasingly pointing to the fact that a serious lack of communication between the races was leading to a steadily deteriorating relationship between the various racial groups. It seemed clear that this could be put right only at school level and that every effort should be made to put children of all races together at school so that they could learn to play, work and live together. While this could not be done under the existing regulations, the founders of Woodmead believed that it should always be a goal of the school to work towards complete non-racialism" (*ibid.*).

After less than six months the school moved from its original site in Rivonia to a new site on the Jukskei River. Progressive methods of teaching were used in the school, incorporating an emphasis on thinking skills rather than a command of facts. Pupil-centricity was central to the endeavour and there as an emphasis on the sanctity of all people. Following discussions held by the school board a year earlier, black pupils were accepted in January 1977. Permission had been sought from the Transvaal Education

Department, and refused. By 1978 over 50% of the enrolment was black. Krige writes:

"In co-operation with the Roman Catholic schools, which accepted pupils of other races soon after we did, other private schools which have opened their doors to all races and organisations such as the New Era Schools Trust, which are largely based on the Woodmead pattern, we must continue to set the pattern for social change and for education as it will be in post-apartheid South Africa" (*ibid.*, p.9).

While Krige and Yates were aware of each other's efforts, their approaches were different in emphasis. Both pursued their ideals singlemindedly, with little apparent regard for the personal cost. Their courses were to converge and become united at the Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses of Private Schools in 1980 (Krige, 1980, pp.46-7). It is clear to the present writer that both Maru a Pula and Woodmead School contributed essentially and uniquely to the N.E.S.T. approach.

#### 3.3.4. Other private schools.

The general tendency that became evident during the period after the Soweto disturbances, for many white private schools to open their doors to black students, is clearly of relevance to the present research. The main features will therefore be broadly sketched to show the general trends. Headmaster of St Barnabas College, Mr Michael Corke (17 Aug. 1987), has pointed out that the Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses (HMC) first began tentative discussions on desegregation of schools at their meeting in Cape Town in 1974. The Catholic and Anglican churches subsequently entered the debate and a resolution of the



South African Catholic Bishops Conference early in 1976 initiated the open school movement (Christie, 1988, p. 15). The resolution stated:

"Realising that the church must give witness to the Gospel in its institutions, the Conference favours a policy of integration in Catholic schools, encourages individual schools and associations of schools to promote the implementation of the policy according to circumstances, and directs that the Department of Schools continue to study the questions with a view to enabling the conference to confirm and concretize the policy".

Since the events of 16 June 1976 in Soweto, many Catholic church schools, supported by Anglicans and Methodists in particular, have adopted a policy of gradually integrating their previously whites-only schools. The initial response of the South African government was to point out that such policy could contravene the Group Areas Act, Bantu Education Act and Bantu (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act (Gaydon, 1987, pp. 33-4). The threat of withdrawal of registration for such schools was made. Although several schools in major cities defied the government on the issue, no legal action was taken against them. Largely spurred on by Mr Michael Corke, headmaster of St Barnabas College, the South African H.M.C. committed itself to a new policy direction at its Annual Conference in 1977. Randall (1982, p. 192) records their clearly stated policy of open admissions, with a commitment to strive for a just and equitable provision of education and opportunity for all South Africans. It is a policy that many have found difficult to implement in practice.

In the following year Government permitted provincial education authorities to use their discretion in granting

exemptions from the law, and a system of permits was introduced in an endeavour to control numbers. Although little use was made of this dispensation in the Transvaal, permits were issued in the Cape and Natal. Woodmead in the Transvaal had already taken in nineteen Indians and eight African pupils (Randall, 1982, p. 192). Steyn Krige stated at the time that he "regarded the admission of blacks as a matter of conscience". This was also doubtless the viewpoint of Bro. Jude Pieterse, foremost of Catholic education reformists, who reported that, despite the refusal of the Transvaal Administration to approve black admissions, two hundred and ninety-seven black pupils had been admitted to Catholic schools in the Transvaal, while two hundred and fifty had been admitted in the Cape and fifty in Natal. By the middle of 1979, approximately one thousand, five hundred blacks attended white Catholic schools, with some school populations as high as a third (*ibid.*, p. 195). It is probable that the South African government did not take action against private schools that subsequently breached the permit system because it might as a consequence have been obliged to accommodate approximately fifty thousand white pupils who could have been affected by widespread closures of defiant private institutions, in state schools (Gaydon, 1987, pp. 33-4).

Despite great strides made towards non-racialism at schools such as St Barnabas, progress during this period appeared to have been slow in many Anglican schools. The Report of the Diocesan Synod Commission of the Anglican Church, appointed to investigate the church's mission role, tended to propagate an elitist education without considering the viewpoints of the "radical blacks" (Randall, 1982, pp. 197-8). Randall clearly views the general approach of some church schools as a rear-guard action that attempted to fend off more radical attacks while not alienating supporters in the

conservative white community. Corke (April 1988) explains that the Report found, inter alia, that church schools in the diocese had a primary fiduciary responsibility to the ethnic communities for which they were said to have been founded. He writes of the initial tentative moves towards desegregation:

"But some white Anglican schools continued to hold out against the admission of black children on the grounds that it would be immoral to flout laws - even unjust laws - which circumscribed the admission of black people to amenities for the enjoyment of the white community. But the majority capitulated, so that the slow progress of selective desegregation and the era of nominal non-racialism was to begin" (ibid.).

A further development occurred in 1981 with the Financial Relations Amendment Act which permitted Provincial Councils to subsidise black children in private schools, provided such schools placed a ceiling on their numbers. The number of black children increased considerably during the period 1980 to 1984, with approximately ten percent of the enrolment in Catholic schools being black (Gaydon, 1987, pp.32-5). In the Cape the unwieldy permit system was replaced by a quota system which permitted a third of pupils in Cape private schools to be black. By the end of 1985, according to Gaydon, it was clear that the government's attempt to curb the integration of private schools was failing. In March 1986 Mr P. Clase, Hon. Minister of Education and Culture in the House of Assembly, announced a more liberal subsidy formula for those schools that had limited their number of black pupils. Gaydon writes:

"This proposal was unanimously rejected by the private schools and many warned that they would rather forego registration than limit black enrolment". (ibid., p.35).

Many South African schools have for long accommodated minority cultural groups including Greek, Jewish, Portuguese and Chinese, while dual medium schools incorporating English and Afrikaans pupils have been a common feature of the state education system (Staples, 1987, p. 36). Yet the process of fully opening private schools to all pupils has clearly been traumatic and contentious. In some cases schools have been understandably reluctant to operate in direct defiance of the law. While Catholic schools have tended to act with Christian courage in the matter, according to Dugard (1978, p. 34), during the seventies a number of schools, mainly Anglican, invoked legal technicalities to remain exclusive and elite. The events of Soweto in 1976 undoubtedly brought shockwaves rippling through the white private school system. Since the State Cabinet decision of December 1977 granted some initiative in the matter to provincial education departments, many of the private schools have taken advantage of the dispensation to afford entry to a steadily increasing number of black pupils. Staples feels that the criteria laid down by provincial departments have been well-intentioned, and are "an attempt to protect the ethos of the individual private school" (Staples, ibid.).

Compatibility is sought in academic, socio-economic and religious matters. Staples reports the view of many headmasters of private schools in South Africa who regard their schools as multi-cultural, but states:

"it is only since 1977 that the numbers of Black, Indian and Coloured pupils have been exceeding 1% in many private schools" (ibid., p. 37).

Research undertaken by Staples into private schools in Natal in 1987 reveals a modest shift towards non-racial schooling

in most (ibid., pp.149-53). Many schools appear to prefer a gradual increase in numbers and, in some cases tokenism is apparent. Yet, as Staples writes:

"It would seem that the majority of Heads feel that their schools are contributing significantly to the 'reforming' Republic of South Africa by giving opportunities for pupils of various cultural and ethnic groups to mix in their schools (ibid., p.153).

Christie (1986, p.90) is less sanguine in her appraisal of the efforts made by private schools. She points to the limitations placed on entry by the fee structure and considers the prejudices of white parents to be a major factor hampering the entry of blacks. White parents make threats of withdrawal if the number of black pupils becomes substantial. Further, she contends, school practices such as entrance exams mitigate against the entry of blacks who have experienced Bantu Education. Some screening is also done in order to establish whether black applicants will fit in with a white cultural and social milieu. Little effort is made to adapt curricula or practices. Christie tends to exonerate the Catholic schools from the syndrome and lauds their substantial efforts to accommodate their schooling to the needs of all. The Sacred Heart College (Mc Gurk, 16-21 Aug. 1988) is a noteworthy example of a Catholic school that has integrated fully. It is non-racial and co-educational. During the Soweto riots in 1976 it received its first applications from black South Africans. The College accepted them for 1977 and broke the apartheid laws to become one of the pioneers of the open school movement in South Africa. From an all-white enrolment of four hundred in 1976 the school has grown to nearly twelve hundred, of whom only half are white. The predominantly Catholic ethos of the school has shifted to a more ecumenical stance and

the school has clearly eschewed its former role of innocently reproducing the relations of alienation and domination. Yet, as headmaster Neil Mc Gurk points out, the school, "still has to be a place with which whites, Roman Catholics and relatively conservative political opinion can identify" (*ibid.*).

Amongst Anglican schools, St Barnabas College stands out as a school that has adapted in depth. The principle objective of the school, according to headmaster Michael Corke (Sept. 1988) is to provide education leading to university entrance, coupled with a strong programme of community service. It serves many students from poor homes. Situated in Johannesburg not far from Soweto, the school has been completely desegregated since 1978. It pursues a stated policy of not discriminating on the grounds of race, gender or religious affiliation in the appointment of staff and the admission of students. No records are kept of racial classifications.

The open schools appear, in summary, to have experienced three phases relating to their opening: each phase being a reaction to evolving state legislation (Christie, 1988). In the first phase, the state endeavoured to prevent the admission of any black pupils. Schools that did not comply were threatened with closure but the threats were never implemented. By allowing the black intake to remain, the state conceded in principle the possibility of racially mixed schools. During the second phase, the state tried to control numbers by means of its insistence that schools make individual applications to provincial education authorities. The measure was met with defiance. In the third phase, according to Christie, broad quotas were applied and linked to subsidies. The schools again tended to stand firm. More recently, private schools have been left to decide on their

admission criteria. The result has been a wide variety of reactions with varying percentages of blacks on the roll, and different levels of internal adjustment.

The introduction of black pupils to white private schools was described in 1982 by Neil Jardine, a private school principal himself, as "a steady trickle of Blacks into formerly all-white schools - and more than a trickle in most" (Jardine, 1982, p. 128). Jardine predicted that most private schools would not allow their pupil populations to "go Black", although most were committed to a non-racial open school system. History and tradition have tended to mitigate against drastic change. Jardine pointed to the New Era Schools Trust, which by 1982 was well established, as a possible solution:

"Perhaps the efforts of Deane Yates, formerly Headmaster of St John's College and Maru a Pula in Gaborone, and the New Era Schools Trust programme designed to establish genuinely open schools, in the racial and cultural sense, within South Africa's borders, will provide a part of the answer. It is a move in the right direction for it will stress from each school's inception the non-racial character of its identity. People can then make their choice of school for their children accordingly. One hopes that Government will acknowledge the urgent need for schools in private education to act as "models for integration" (ibid.).

### 3.4. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST

#### 3.4.1. The establishment of N.E.S.T.

During July 1980, Deane Yates and Steyn Krige attended the Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses of Private Schools of South Africa held at Kearsney College in Natal. There was speculation at the time that the forthcoming Report on Education in the R.S.A., to be published by the Human Sciences Research Council, would produce recommendations for quite considerable changes in educational legislation in South Africa. It was anticipated that the South African government might be disposed to accept the recommendations.

At the conference Deane Yates presented a paper entitled Open schools and their problems (Yates, Jul. 1980, pp.41-6) and praised the courage of those schools in South Africa that had admitted black pupils. The accommodation of these pupils, he pointed out, had been evolutionary and peaceful. He outlined the circumstances surrounding the establishment and development of Maru a Pula, pointing to the intention to establish a school that would be totally multi-racial (sic) while achieving high standards. The preamble to the school constitution had been arrived at after long discussions with men of letters in Southern Africa, Europe and the United States of America. A present enrolment of two hundred and seventy pupils was composed of whites, Indians, blacks and coloureds in proportions fairly reflecting the population of the sub-continent. He is reported in these words:

"Problems of race had never been an issue. Boys and girls of every race and nationality had mixed naturally and lived together happily, and in so doing forged a society in which quite unconsciously they had come to learn more and more about each other in a way that had



Yates urged the assembly to press ahead with efforts to create change so that the present legal restraints in education could be eroded, and stated his view that a token enrolment would have dangerous side-effects since it would increase rather than diminish the frustrations of the newcomers. The isolation of the minority child from his own group would lead to a loss of identification with his own community.

"Having thus warned us of the dangers of trying to mould children of other races into the mould of the white man, Mr Yates emphasised that a non-racial community should consist of a reasonable proportion of all races, so that no race had less than an articulate minority, and in a school this principle should be reflected each year in the annual intake to the first form" (ibid., p. 44).

Yates predicted opposition to the suggested approach and mentioned the very serious tests to which governing bodies in schools could be put. An act of faith was needed in order to make the private schools instruments of change. He went on to propose that schools be planned for construction at strategic places in South Africa. These would be multi-racial (sic) from their inception.

At the meeting, headmasters Michael Corke and Steyn Krige spoke of the need to press ahead undeterred by opposition. Krige outlined his experiences at Woodmead, stressing that there had been no serious social problems other than the initial difficulty of some whites in adapting to the multi-racial milieu. He conceded, however, that some academic problems had been experienced by black entrants, and attributed these to a deprived cultural background and poor primary school education. Extra lessons in English had been arranged for certain pupils in the lower school.

The minutes read:

"From his entirely different viewpoint he had come to the same conclusions as Mr. Yates. He said there were four things that we should do:

1. Make our voices and viewpoints heard, first by means of a publicised resolution.
2. Persuade the Government to allow us to open our schools to all races.
3. Embark on academic bridging programmes along the lines which Mr. Corke had advocated.
4. Begin to create non-racial institutions.

We had the opportunity to affect the course of history. In all our decision making, however, we should consult with blacks. It was not for us in a predominantly white conference to tell the blacks what was good for them. He urged the formation of a committee to move forward boldly and quickly" (ibid. p.47).

Headmaster of St Barnabas College Mr. M. Corke expressed his view that the discussion would prove to be prophetic. Waterford, St Barnabas and Woodmead had shown that non-racial schools could succeed in Southern Africa, and desperate speed was needed. Concluding the session, Chairman Dr Rae pointed to the difficulties ahead, the probable disagreements on a course of action; yet the great promise that the move could bear fruit. As representative of the H.M.C. in Britain, he would support the move in every possible way.

Within three weeks of the conference a committee under chairmanship of Mr Steyn Krige met at Woodmead School to investigate a move towards non-racial private schools.

Present were Mr M. Corke, Mr A. Jennings, Mr W. Macfarlane and Mr D. Yates (N.E.S.T., 26 Jul., 1980).

Due to the exploratory nature of the committee's brief, the discussions were not expected to lead to formal resolutions. Although there was apparent agreement on some issues, there was little unanimity on others. The urgency of the need to start new, non-racial schools was affirmed, also the uncertainty attendant on merely absorbing a minority of black children into white schools that might have a long, well-established tradition of English education. The minutes reflect the views that both St Barnabas and Woodmead were operating on a fully non-racial basis, although it was accepted that:

"the efforts of existing schools to become non-racial is highly desirable and commendable, but cannot be seen as a substitute for the suggested new schools. The long-established English tradition and ethos are too well established: nor was it necessarily seen as desirable to try and change such ethos" (*ibid.*).

The committee anticipated that only in the case of new schools was the full support of the governing body, staff, parents and pupils likely. Tokenism should be eschewed. Schools might be established in the Western Province, Eastern Cape and Natal. The nature of the relationship of St Barnabas and Woodmead to the proposed new schools was not clear; since these were apparently already operating on a fully non-racial basis in the Johannesburg area. It was agreed that there be further investigation of costing, a bursary system, teaching methods, curricula and philosophies. Black educationists and leaders should be consulted. Mr Krige was given the brief to pursue interviews with as many influential persons of all races as

feasible, while black educationists and leaders were not to be excluded. It was further agreed that a new committee of influential men and women from all races be set up at an early date, to take up the matter with the South African government and raise funds. The possibility of Mr D. Yates being employed to direct the venture in a full-time capacity was considered (ibid.).

A steering committee was subsequently established (Yates, Dec. 1987) and Deane Yates resigned from Maru a Pula to become the future Director of the new venture, with effect from 1 May 1981. Steyn Krige became Director of Woodmead after resigning its headmastership. Krige pressed on vigorously with the proposed interviews, including amongst those with whom meetings were held, leaders in the fields of education, industry, the Church, politics and civil life. The response was overwhelmingly positive : the urgency of the matter being clearly seen by most of those approached (ibid.).

A growing awareness emerges of the inappropriateness of the Headmasters Conference and Association of Private Schools as agents through which to work in establishing the proposed new schools. In a memorandum On establishing new non-racial schools, Krige expressed the view that the new committee should not be held accountable to these bodies for its actions, while constant consultation at every step was likely to delay progress (Krige, 1980). Although he wished to work in sympathy with the H.M.C., he could not countenance the need to constantly seek approval. Krige cited cases such as St Stithians, St Albans and Treverton being founded with the full knowledge and sympathy of the Headmasters' Conference, but not seeking its approval. He was convinced that the same conditions should apply to the establishment of the envisaged new schools. Krige

accordingly recommended that the Steering Committee be set up as a Board of Governors. It should be non-racial, comprised of persons drawn from all walks of life (ibid.).

Prof. G.R. Bozzoli, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand, was approached and invited to chair meetings of the proposed Board. This he agreed to do (Bozzoli, 6 Dec. 1987).

The founding meeting of the New Era Education Development Foundation, as the group was now known, was held under chairmanship of Prof. G.R. Bozzoli in the Council Chamber of the University of the Witwatersrand (N.E.S.T., 6 Apr. 1981). The Chairman moved that the Governing Body be constituted of fifteen members drawn from a representative sample of racial communities, and this proposal was unanimously accepted. Office-bearers comprised Prof. G.R. Bozzoli as Chairman, Prof. P.H. Mohanoe as Deputy Chairman and Mr M.T.S. Krige as Secretary. Mr D. Yates was confirmed as full-time Director, to assume office in May 1981. An ad.hoc. committee was appointed to draft the constitution. In a letter dated 7 Apr. 1981, Krige described the meeting as enthusiastic and constructive (Krige, 7 Apr. 1981). The intention was to launch the first school in 1983.

A further meeting was held on 24 May 1981, involving the Development Committee of five office-bearers. At this meeting it was suggested that the new body be named the "New Era Schools Trust", and certain principles were reaffirmed, including inter alia the fair representation of all races, provision of as many bursaries as possible, and development of both primary and secondary schools. Much debate ensued on the topic of a new constitution, and a proposed constitution was drawn up (N.E.S.T., 24 May 1981). At the subsequent meeting of the Board, held at the University of

the Witwatersrand on 14 June 1981 (N.E.S.T., 14 Jun. 1981) the new name of the foundation was confirmed. Following some alterations, the constitution was formally and unanimously accepted. A Trust Deed was approved, with initial Trustees in the persons of Prof. G.R. Bozzoli, Prof. P.F. Mohanoe, Dr S.C. Naidoo, Mr R. van der Heever, Mr D. Yates and Mr M.T.S. Krige. The Director was authorised to begin fundraising and arrangements were made for an approach to the government.

The Director and Deputy Director of N.E.S.T. were invited to report on the work and progress of the committee established to investigate the need for non-racial schools, at the Headmasters' Conference held at Woodridge in August (H.M.C., Aug. 1981, p.9). Krige reported on the remarkable degree of support given by all races to the new concept. He conceded, however, that during the many interviews held: "one or two Blacks and several of the Coloureds had been hesitant - mainly on the grounds of elitism". Yates then elaborated on the structure of N.E.S.T., and explained its aim as an endeavour to establish schools in South Africa which boys and girls of all races would be able to attend. The minutes read:

"Thanking Mr Krige and Mr Yates for their inspiring report, the chairman congratulated them on the progress and success so far achieved. Conference would look forward to further news of the project with joyous expectations" (ibid.).

Attention was thereafter directed to a reaffirmation by Conference of its belief that non-racial schools had a role to play in providing equal educational opportunities to all South Africans. It would convey its views to the National Council of the Association of Private Schools. They would

then urge Government to facilitate the admission of pupils of all ethnic groups to those schools which elected to operate on a non-racial basis. The private school movement would thus make a further powerful input into the forthcoming Human Sciences Research Council Report on Education in the R.S.A.

The Conference had been a heartwarming experience for the N.E.S.T. representatives (Yates, Dec. 1987). At the final meeting for 1981, of the Board of the New Era Schools Trust (N.E.S.T., 5 Dec. 1981), it was reported that the Minister of National Education had cordially received a deputation from N.E.S.T., but could not give a prompt reaction to their project. The meeting had been followed by a letter to Government seeking a favourable response, in view of the De Lange Commission's Report on Education in the R.S.A., which had been recently published. It was also reported at this meeting that Chairman of the Commission, Prof. J.P. de Lange, had been personally encouraging and supportive of N.E.S.T. when approached for his views. The Director mentioned yet further encouraging contacts with persons of different races. The annual Conference of Private Schools had been attended and a good relationship established. Much depended on the Minister's reply to the N.E.S.T. letter. An air of optimism prevailed.

#### 3.4.2. Reform, and the Human Sciences Research Council Report on Education in the R.S.A.

Many problems confronted the South African government during the 1970's (Davies, 1986, p. 342). Economic recession was rife and 1973 saw strikes in Natal that ushered in a new pattern of industrial unrest. The collapse of the Portuguese African Empire brought heightened anxiety and the Soweto riots in 1976 brought worldwide condemnation of apartheid,

with a renewed call for economic sanctions. While the state response was focussed on the containment of these problems, Davies asserts, Capital took a "more constructive" approach, since it was particularly concerned at the small pool of skilled labour available to industry. It appeared to be increasingly prepared to invest its resources in the development of an educated black middle class. Much of Capital's concern was with the amelioration of oppressive features of the racial hierarchy "in order to secure conditions more favourable to capital accumulation" (*ibid.*, p.344). Further, according to Davies, Capital was obsessed with the fear of industrial turmoil that would erode its legitimate interests, with yet greater power being assumed by the state whose police and military personnel would, of necessity, be summoned to quell dissent. This would be contrary to Capital's traditional liberal views. By 1978 Capital and the state appeared to have agreed on a reform policy which would focus on enhanced opportunities for largely acculturated urban blacks. There was a drastic need for a greater development of skilled manpower coupled with a more peaceful environment within which the economy could be regenerated. This policy had the powerful backing of military strategists.

Supported by the economic power of big business (Oakes, 1988, pp.453-476), the leaders of which had been invited to a meeting at the Carlton Hotel in Johannesburg during 1979, the process of reform was launched by Government and the private sector. During this year the Wiehahn Commission reported on industrial relations, seeking to create an improved labour dispensation. The report of the Riekert Commission which followed introduced greater mobility and choice of workplace for Africans, leading eventually to abolition of the hated Pass Laws. Although much criticism has accompanied the process of reform, its cost to Government is clear, with a breakaway of right wing support



to form the Conservative Party. Nonplussed that so many of the black elites and "petit bourgeoisie" who were expected to support Capital had shown their disaffection during the Soweto riots, the media of Capital began to propose "a new educational era" (Davies, 1986, p. 349). They argued for a new, compulsory system that would foster an achievement ethos. It would include access to certain "open" private schools for the future black middle class. White education would be pared of its fat in order to provide for the increased expenditure. On 1 June 1980, therefore, the H.S.R.C. investigation was announced.

Dr Neville Alexander (1988, p. 12) has written most scathingly of these endeavours, believing that South Africans "are living through many tragi-comic contradictions that arise from this attempt to construct a neo-apartheid system that will successfully co-opt the black middle class and simultaneously make the white minority regime more acceptable to the community of nations". He points to the reactions of the white minority to the events of Soweto in 1976 and generalises these as superficial and even regressive. He writes as follows, of developments leading to the H.S.R.C. Report :

"The liberal antennae of the ruling class in the guise of the south African Institute of Race Relations (S.A.I.R.R.) picked up the signals from the turmoil in the streets. They established the first of a series of reform-orientated ruling-class commissions to investigate the education for blacks. The report of this (Bozzoli) commission was entitled Education for a New Era and was published in 1979. Neither the subsequent De Lange Commission report published in 1981 nor the Buthelezi Commission's report completed in 1982, despite their volume and detail, went beyond the reformist principles established by the S.A.I.R.R.'s Bozzoli Commission" (ibid.)

The committee that produced the Report of the Education Commission of the South African Institute of Race Relations (Bozzoli, 1979) was created under the chairmanship of Prof. G.R. Bozzoli, who capably assumed the chairmanship of the Board of N.E.S.T. a year later. The S.A.I.R.R. Report appears to be a forerunner of the H.S.R.C. Report, in its emphasis on equality of opportunity for all, and its efforts to integrate educational institutions and promote school curricula that would reflect the multi-cultural nature of South African society. It reveals many of the ideas of the man who was to chair the Board of N.E.S.T. for many years.

The Human Sciences Research Council investigation, to which Alexander so critically refers, was initiated by Government in 1980, with the appointment of members who would serve on a committee to undertake an in-depth investigation of education in South Africa. The endeavour became known as the De Lange Commission on Education after the chairman Prof. J.P. de Lange, then Principal of Rand Afrikaans University. After a year of frenetic effort the Commission reported in 1981. Several pages of the report illuminate eleven major principles upon which the future provision of education in South Africa should be based. Influential for N.E.S.T., and encouraging to the N.E.S.T. endeavour, selected, relevant principles follow:

"Principle 1.

Equal opportunity for education, including equal standards in education, for every inhabitant, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex, shall be the purposeful endeavour of the state.

Principle 2.

Education shall afford positive recognition of what is common as well as what is diverse in the religious and cultural way of life and the languages of the inhabitants.

Principle 3.

Education shall give positive recognition to the freedom of choice of the individual, parents and organisations in society.

Principle 4.

The provision of education shall be directed in an educationally responsible manner to meet the needs of the individual as well as those of society and economic development, and shall, inter alia, take into consideration the manpower needs of the country".

"Principle 6.

The provision of formal education shall be a responsibility of the State provided that the individual, parents and organised society shall have a shared responsibility, choice and voice in the matter".

"Principle 8.

Provision shall be made for the establishment and state subsidisation of private education within the system of providing education" (H.S.R.C., 1981, pp. 14-16)

The Report goes on to recommend the creation of a single Ministry of Education to meet the need for a national education policy that would create equal opportunities in education, with relevance to the changing educational needs of South Africa (ibid., p. 195). Autonomy should be given to schools in which parents and teachers would have a major share in decision-making (ibid., p. 201), while private schools are accepted as an important innovatory factor (ibid., p. 203).

The Report emanates from a broadly liberal ideology. It provides apparent sanction and encouragement for the

establishment of multi-cultural private schools that offer equal opportunities to all, irrespective of racial or cultural differences amongst pupils. It promotes both the retention of cultures and creation of a common culture and allows parents a great measure of free choice. It takes a wide range of individual and national needs into account and allows for a measure of local autonomy in schooling.

Kallaway (1986,p.32) nevertheless considers the report to be remarkably vague on certain fundamental issues to which it is directed. He contends that the historical origins of the crisis in education in South Africa are neglected and the reasons for production of the report never become clear. He considers the reformist strategy to which the report is aimed to be directed at preserving the status quo during the eighties. Apartheid is accepted without being seriously questioned and the rural areas are neglected. Nasson expands on these weaknesses, and contends that the report will serve to magnify inequalities between pupils (1986,p.105). In practice, he asserts, white middle class children will derive most benefit from the proposed system, while working-class, predominantly black, children will be "shunted" into narrow, non-formal work training. The vast mass of pupils will therefore be hurried into their role as part of the labour force after a curtailed period of basic training in which they will learn limited skills. While Christie (Jan.1988,p.164) sees De Lange as a vast improvement over the Eiselen Report, she can foresee the proposed reforms of the eighties as only allowing for mobility of a small sector of the black population. Overall, she contends, apartheid racial barriers would be modified but not eliminated. Davies (1986,pp.362-6) is also critical. He suggests that it will be solely those black pupils who are in private schools who will be sheltered from apartheid. They will form a future elite. The Report is

unlikely to gain the acquiescence of black youth; nor will it dissolve their anger. The essential weakness seems to be the imposition of the system from above (ibid.).

Despite the negative reaction from many writers, Sonn (1982, p.12) believes the Report to have deeply wounded the holy cow of "separate but equal", while Schlemmer & Bot (1986,p.8) consider it to have provided an initial basis for policy changes in education. Niven (1986,p.65) too, feels that implementation of the principles of the report would bring considerable change. Equality of opportunity would imply a massive compensatory effort, if equality is to be created out of a system based on years of inequality. He considers the second principle to specifically advocate a multi-cultural approach, while the third also points to a new flexibility of choice. The present writer considers the Report to have held much potential. It would have created a firm base from which positive change towards a non-discriminatory dispensation could have evolved through further, open negotiation on its provisions with a wide range of grassroots opinion.

Encouraged by the publication of the Human Sciences Research Council Report, the officials of N.E.S.T. continued their endeavours. The year 1982 opened with a meeting of the Board of Governors of the Trust, held at the University of the Witwatersrand on 16 January (N.E.S.T., 16 Jan.1982) with Prof. G.R. Bozzoli in the chair. At the meeting, a letter from the Minister of Education, dated 4 Dec. 1981, was discussed. The Board understood the communication to convey the view that Government did not reject the N.E.S.T. concept outright. It did not however, favour the principle of non-racial schools. The Board therefore agreed that N.E.S.T. should continue its proposed programme and that no thought be given to entering the independent (sic) homelands. The

possibility of establishing a school in Kwazulu should thus be a final measure. The N.E.S.T. concept was believed to be a positive implementation of the major recommendations of the De Lange Report. It was decided not to force the issue. The minutes read:

"The following proposals were unanimously accepted:

1. N.E.S.T. must take all possible steps to become fully informed as to the legal situation re. registration of schools, admission of pupils and all other matters relevant to its function.
2. N.E.S.T. must strengthen its influence and power base by approaching as many influential individuals and funding organisations as possible for support.
3. The Director should prepare a detailed feasibility study of what N.E.S.T. intends to do.
4. The Director should prepare a document for distribution to individuals, funding organisations, etc., setting out clearly what the aims and functions of N.E.S.T. are.
5. The executive committee must prepare a comment on the De Lange Commission's Report for submission to the Minister" (ibid.).

A circular letter to interested parties and colleagues dated 15 February 1982 (N.E.S.T., 15 Feb. 1982) signed by the Chairman and Director, shows their undampened optimism about the progress of educational reform in South Africa, which was clearly seen to be gathering momentum. It was anticipated that a feasibility study would be initiated to

aid planning. Copies of the preface to the study were thus included with the circular letter for dispatch. Of particular interest is the statement of the purpose of N.E.S.T., which also appears in its Deed of Trust:

"to establish, or assist in establishing, schools to which all pupils, irrespective of race, class, nationality and faith shall be eligible for admission" (ibid.).

Cogent reasons were given for the establishment of N.E.S.T. schools, and the document pointed out the right of parents to have their sons and daughters educated with children of other races, if they so wished. Demographic arguments were also presented, and the close affinity of the N.E.S.T. proposals to the recommendations of the H.S.R.C. Report was stressed. The document urges the establishment of fully non-racial schools. The disadvantage of gradually assimilating a minority of black students into an existing white school was highlighted and the success of certain wholly non-racial schools situated in countries bordering on South Africa was mentioned.

It is clear from correspondence at this time (Jude, 20 Mar. 1982) that a number of educators associated with private schools had begun to feel themselves under pressure from the N.E.S.T. statements, which were seen to have placed their own sincere efforts in a negative light, as inadequate and tokenistic. A measure of uncertainty surrounding the relationship of N.E.S.T. to the Association of Private Schools was to develop and persist for some years. During this time the Director presented the N.E.S.T. viewpoint consistently as an endeavour to move to significant non-racialism, in contrast to a policy of introducing a minority of black children into white private schools. The

significant role played by many Catholic (and some Anglican) schools in particular, in forcing the permit and quota systems in the face of frank disapproval by government and, often, resistance by parents (Gaydon, 1987, pp. 33-37), although inadequate by some standards, represent acts of courage that cannot be dismissed.

At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors held in Johannesburg on 22 May 1982 (N.E.S.T., 22 May 1982), the preface to the Feasibility Study was accepted as the prospectus for N.E.S.T. schools, following a re-drafting to take into account proposals made by Board members. Preparations were made for the drawing of preliminary sketches for the first school and the programme of planning and action forged ahead, encouraged by the motivation and impetus provided by the De Lange report.

In due course, Prof. G.R. Bozzoli (Bozzoli, 5 Aug. 1982) wrote to the Minister of National Education, expressing disappointment at the Minister's letter of 4 December 1981, but pointing out that the uncertain reply was accepted as inevitable in the light of the Government's Interim Memorandum on the H.S.R.C. investigation. Bozzoli informed him of the course of further action undertaken by the Trust. He expressed the strong conviction of the Board members that four or five completely non-racial schools should be established in South Africa. He also informed the Minister that the Board had proceeded to develop the infrastructure of N.E.S.T. The widening of the constituency of N.E.S.T. supporters that had occurred was also mentioned, as was the proposed feasibility study. Bozzoli offered to inform the Minister of further progress and expressed the hope that factors that influenced his initial reaction to N.E.S.T. would no longer constitute difficulties.



The year 1982 was significant for N.E.S.T. because of the quantity of correspondence that passed between the Director and eminent religious leaders, industrialists, administrators, academics, educators and politicians. The purpose was, understandably, to seek out men and women in business, industry, the churches and academic institutions in order to brief them fully on N.E.S.T., with a view to ascertaining the extent of the possible mandate that these persons would comprise (Yates, Dec. 1987). Correspondence was also entered into with persons resident in other countries of the sub-continent, with the intention of engendering widespread interest in the project. This correspondence was in due course carried further afield to the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The correspondence emanating from the office-bearers of the New Era Schools Trust is permeated with enthusiasm and conviction for the principles espoused by the Board. Of particular interest are the approaches made to members of the coloured community and the African and Indian communities. It is clear that the apparently token enrolment of black pupils drawn into many private white schools remains a serious reservation. Yates, in particular, expressed concern at the fact that such pupils tend to be prised away from their own cultures and communities while being assimilated into white schools. In a letter to Mr Randall van den Heever of the Cape Teachers' Professional Association, dated 23 August 1982, Yates writes:

"The white private schools are wholly to be praised for having made the breakthrough - for having introduced children of other colours into their schools, but if there is not to be an ongoing movement by annual pupil enrolment towards the goal of reconciliation, but instead a token enrolment involving +-5% in the schools, as is in most cases the policy at present, I

fear the courageous decision to introduce 'non whites' will boomerang viciously. Surely this is just why Nest is so important! As we showed conclusively in Botswana a school which has a totally non-racial enrolment does not suffer from these defects. Rather it shows with shattering emphasis just how easy it is, comparatively speaking, to build up a non-racial society on the basis of non-racial schools" (Yates, 23 Aug. 1982).

Some of the problems encountered by private schools are explained by Randall (1982, pp. 126-7) who paints them as largely conservative, concerned mainly with white needs. He nevertheless writes with understanding of the difficult position in which the headmaster of a private church school might find himself. Pressures are likely to be exerted by the governing body, drawn in large measure from the business community; also from parents and past pupils who are likely to exert a conservative influence. Care must also be taken to not offend the principles and policies of the central government and local education departments. On the other hand, writes Randall, the church will be likely to exert increasing pressure for the admission of black pupils.

"The outcome of all this is a clearly discernible traditionalist and anti-progressivist attitude among most private school principals, which finds its expression in a distrust of theory and experimentation" (ibid.).

Randall refers back to the experience of Steyn Krige at St Stithians for a graphic example of the scepticism attendant on progressive thinking on the part of individual headmasters. The H.M.C. is overwhelmingly "W.A.S.P." in character, he asserts, and moves to widen its constituency are viewed with great caution (ibid., p. 155).

It was becoming increasingly clear that a measure of uncertainty concerning the nature of non-racial schooling remained in the minds of several of the persons consulted by Yates and Krige, and in October 1982 the Director proposed the appointment of a commission to investigate non-racial education in South Africa. In his motivation he points to the clarity of ideas about truly non-racial schools that is held by those who have experienced such schools, yet the often vague comprehension of others who have not. He views this phenomenon as entirely understandable, yet nevertheless regrettable. It is a matter, he asserts, that should be remedied:

"We in Nest are saying nothing less than the establishment of nonracial schools all over the R.S.A. is the best and possibly the only way of affecting evolutionary rather than revolutionary change in the society of the R.S.A. It is incumbent on us to sell this philosophy as completely as possible. If we don't, we may very well come one step nearer to what we all want to avoid" (Yates, 8 Oct. 1982).

Yates recommends a thorough investigation, with an appraisal of the extent to which the needs of participating sub-societies are met in existing non-racial schools. A survey of the extent to which the wider society would benefit from a proliferation of such schools is proposed.

At the final meeting of the Board for 1982 the Director made a comprehensive report (N.E.S.T., 20 Nov. 1982). Two hundred and fifty persons had received the preface to the Feasibility Study, including members of the Board. The views of Board members who had commented had been taken into account in a revised draft. Although considerable support had been received for the N.E.S.T. programme, including that

from the Consuls of the United States of America and Great Britain, no further approach had been made to Government. A list of eminent persons seen by Messrs Krige and Yates was tabled. At the meeting, plans for the first school were discussed, but these were considered to be too lavish and costly. The expense and apparent ostentation were regarded as contradictory to the philosophy of N.E.S.T. and a most comprehensive reappraisal of the plans was proposed. The Director's proposal that a commission be appointed to investigate non-racial schools in depth was approved, with the proviso that it be viewed rather as a study group, with a non-racial composition.

At a meeting of the N.E.S.T. Board held on 31 May 1983, the plans for the first school were unanimously accepted. They allowed for flexibility and expansion. It was also decided that the proposed study group should proceed immediately with their project, without waiting for the expected White Paper to be published by Government in reaction to the De Lange Report. Subsequent discussion, however, shelved the study group project, in view of the extensive research already undertaken and the urgency to proceed. At this meeting, significantly, Prof. D. Mohanoe, Vice-Chairman of the Board sounded the first of many subsequent warnings. The minutes read:

"Prof. Mohanoe urged the Board to make itself fully aware of black opinion, as there was considerable resistance to any form of elitism in education. Mr van den Heever indicated a similar reaction among the coloured community with reference to existing private schools as opposed to the N.E.S.T. concept"  
(N.E.S.T., 31 May 1983).

At this meeting too, Messrs Yates, Krige and Kane-Berman reported on their further extensive meetings with persons

representative of many shades of opinion. All persons approached had been positive towards N.E.S.T., "the great majority very strongly so". The three felt that N.E.S.T. had been given a mandate to proceed with the establishment of non-racial schools at the earliest opportunity "without asking too many questions which involved ideological matters" (ibid.). At this juncture Yates, Krige and Kane-Berman suggested that N.E.S.T. establish a Natal school in 1984, since the province was served by educational authorities favourably disposed to private schools. It was controlled by a Provincial Council that enjoyed a considerable measure of independent action. Also, the Buthelezi Commission into Education had given the people of Natal a greater awareness of national issues and a great sense of urgency prevailed there. It was decided to set the necessary machinery in motion, with an admonishment from Prof. Mohanoe that all interested parties in Natal be consulted. It was agreed that launching of the Natal venture be followed by similar endeavours in the Eastern Province, Western Province and Transvaal. In conclusion, Sir Richard Luyt said that N.E.S.T. must be prepared to react as soon as the Government White Paper on the De Lange Report was published.

Most of the closing months of 1983 were devoted to the preparation of a detailed and voluminous application to be submitted to the Anglo-American Corporation Chairman's Fund, for funds to establish the first school in Natal. The documentation and covering letter written by Prof. G.R. Bozzoli were submitted on 14 December 1983 (Bozzoli, 14 Dec. 1983) together with a wide variety of supporting documents covering the composition of the National Board and proposed Natal Steering Committee. Other documents included dealt with legal, financial, educational and architectural matters. Although it was intended that the school should

eventually encompass all phases, it was considered necessary to start at the secondary level owing to the urgency of the matter:

"Rather, it is in the interests of the R.S.A for the results of this educational experiment to be assessed as soon as possible. Accordingly, it will be our first priority to found Nest schools at the High School level. The evidence of Waterford-Kamhlaba in Swaziland and Maru a Pula in Botswana has influenced us in reaching this decision. These nonracial schools have shown conclusively that it would not be unsound educationally if N.E.S.T. schools were founded at the High School level" (N.E.S.T., 1983: Support Document No. 4, p.2).

The Design Brief was based on a report by Deane Yates for attention of the New Era Schools Trust, dated July 1982. As early as November 1982, when the Design Brief (van Broembsen, Mallows and Mallows, 1982) was completed, it was clear that the intention was to develop each N.E.S.T. school to include a pre-paratory (nursery) school, preparatory (primary) school and high school. The administrative building was to be centrally situated, to be shared by all three sectors of the school. This would also be the case with the library, hall, dininghall and kitchen. Separate boarding facilities for staff, boys and girls were to be provided, also a comprehensive maintenance facility. The design concept favoured modular units, as was the case at Maru a Pula, with simplicity of construction and a bias towards ease of maintenance. It is evident that a service ethic was to be reflected in the design, with pupils and staff helping in the dining and kitchen areas, which were open to each other. Domestic and manual work were to be done by teachers and pupils, all of whom were to be fully

involved in the life of the school. The site was located in a fringe urban area so that the school would be accessible to black, white and coloured communities. Day pupils would be transported by minibus, to and from their homes.

The entrance of pupils to the school was to be subject to an assessment of character and ability. Bursaries were to be of cardinal importance to obviate the development of a social elite. The formula for enrolment would be decided by the Governing Body of each school, subject to approval by the Board of N.E.S.T. In order to build up a strong community life, two-thirds of staff would be resident on the premises. A degree of idealism was expected from teachers, but they were not anticipated to be financially disadvantaged by their employment in N.E.S.T. schools. They were to be remunerated at levels equal to those enjoyed by colleagues in other comparable schools. Great stress was laid on the importance of effective communication in the school and a knowledge of English, Afrikaans and an African language was stressed. English would, of necessity, be the medium of instruction, with second and third languages introduced early (N.E.S.T. 1983).

The White Paper on the Provision Of Education in the Republic of South Africa proved to be a great disappointment to the Board of N.E.S.T. (Yates, Dec. 1987). In this document, dated 23 November 1983, the government agreed to certain provisions of the H.S.R.C. Report, yet made clear its opposition to particular clauses that were of specific significance to N.E.S.T. It reaffirmed that education for whites would be Christian and national, with mother tongue instruction. Equality was to be achieved by means of separate schools and departments. As pointed out by Christie (1986, p.270), conservative Afrikaners had tended to see the De Lange proposals as a threat, and the influential

Transvaalse Onderwyserunie had opposed the main provisions of the report. Government was obliged to look to their electoral power base for guidance on so important a matter. Christie believes that the changes that can be expected from Government initiatives will be limited, since it cannot distance itself too far from its voter support. Despite the rather conservative reaction of the government, Jarvis (1984, p.62) perceives some rays of hope in the White Paper. He argues that the shortcomings of the system had been acknowledged and a commitment made to change, with the possibility of a more flexible environment resulting.

Bot (1984, p.3) considers the focus of subsequent criticism of the White Paper to have centred on the restrictive ideological parameters of the government's approach and their fundamental rejection of a single education department.

"The question remains whether the commitment to equality can be realised within the ideological framework of separate development, and in the face of the situation of inequality which presently exists, the equal financial resources available to the different racial communities, and the duplication of resources and manpower involved in the maintenance of five separate education departments" (ibid., p.4).

Sonn goes so far as to accuse the government of deliberately and recklessly throwing away the possibilities that the De Lange recommendations offered them to use education in the socialisation of children in a new, liberated South Africa (1986, p.8). Webb (1985, p.121) is equally critical and believes the final outcome to have done little to allay the conflict that had been manifest in the 1976 boycotts and disturbances. Davies (1984, p.345) shares this dismay,



pointing out the government's inability to move quickly on reform because major sections of the white wage-earning and petty bourgeois classes support the state precisely because of its policy of separation. Reform, he contends, is thus hesitant and replete with contradictions.

The H.S.R.C. Report, according to Kallaway (1984,p.14) had in any case been planned to reform education in order to meet the need for better trained manpower in industry. The reformists, he claims, "aimed to defuse the political situation through granting economic concessions to blacks, allowing them to participate more freely in the free enterprise system through educational advancement" (ibid., p.16). Such a dispensation would secure South Africa for capitalism by integrating middle-class blacks securely into society. The harmony that is being sought, he argues, is simply a match between the products of the schools and the needs of monopoly capital. There is a clear consensus between the views of Kallaway expressed above and those of Karier (1976,p.95), who considered liberals in the United States of America to have supported the creation of a mass system of schooling dedicated to filling the needs of society for a citizen capable of adjusting to the demands of an industrial system. In response to the criticisms of Kallaway and Davies, one can point to the wealth-creating potential of a black middle-class. Nevertheless, it can be argued that, if reform is to make a deeper impact on inequalities, the potential to generate wealth must be rendered far more accessible to the urban and rural proletariat, with education that is cognisant of their needs.

Hopeful that the H.S.R.C. Report would provide a firm backing for the N.E.S.T. endeavours, the optimism of N.E.S.T. executives was dashed when the White Paper made its appearance (Yates,Dec.1987). The subsequent moves to

establish the first school were undertaken in an environment of deepening socio-political unrest.

### 3.4.3. Reform of the parliamentary system : further unrest in schooling

In an endeavour to afford more meaningful political rights to Indian and coloured citizens of South Africa, a tricameral parliamentary system was instituted after several years of planning by means of the Constitution Act of 1983 (Oakes, 1985, pp. 466-7). The system made provision for three legislative houses; the House of Assembly for whites, House of Representative for coloureds and House of Delegates for Asians. Legislation is categorised as "general affairs", dealing with matters of common concern to all persons represented in Parliament, and "own affairs", which apply to each group separately. Black rights continued to be exercised in the homelands to which blacks were ethnically linked, without any direct legislative machinery within the central body.

The implementation of the new parliamentary system in July 1984 was met with an explosion of violence by blacks, many of whom felt excluded from the new dispensation. Educational institutions were at the centre of the unrest, which has waxed and waned to the time of writing, despite the declaration of a State of Emergency on several occasions. Acts of unparalleled brutality have occurred as youngsters turned against those seen to be representative of the State. Many persons have died horribly in the spiral of violence. During the period 1983/4 there was a significant escalation of school unrest in urban centres. Children in schools for blacks in Atteridgeville and Saulsville made the usual, now familiar complaints: excessive corporal punishment, age limit restrictions on schooling, poor

marking of scripts, sexual harrassment, shortage of text books and a lack of democratic representation (Bot, 1984, p. 9). The Department of Education and Training responded with several valid counter-arguments, pointing out that third-world pupil growth rates were accompanied by first-world expectations. Possible solutions are proposed by Bot, including a more open debate of problems, greater decentralisation of control, the provision of a good support system for teachers and also more opportunities for students to express their grievances. She lays great stress on the fact that schooling problems cannot be seen in isolation from wider political grievances. The massive wave of school boycotts that at times kept four hundred thousand black pupils out of their schools in 1984 (Schlemmer & Bot, 1984, p. 10) was based on grievances that can be exemplified by the fact that only one in ten African pupils sitting their senior certificate examination gained matriculation passes in that year. The problem is elaborated further by Hartshorne (1986, p. 18) who writes of a deteriorating pass-rate. In 1976, 76.2% of African matric candidates passed their exams, 33% of these pupils having obtained matric exemptions. By 1984 there had been such a decrease in achievement that only 49.1% gained senior certificate, with 11.3% obtaining matric. Schoeman (1984, p. 6) touches on a facet of the problem when he points out that all African matriculants attempt the examination in a second or third language: mainly English. Any child who has not mastered English tends to suffer in the examination, with little possibility of gaining insight. Results in Mathematics and Science are reported by Schoeman to be particularly weak. Schoeman finds a drop in the pass-rates understandable, in the face of greater accessibility to the matriculation examination of an increasing number of black candidates, but also attributes it to the lack of exposure of black candidates to television, books and travel. He does not

believe that the process of evolution within the black education system can be accelerated beyond certain limits. This perception, if accurate, is daunting in view of the rising aspirations of black pupils. In a study of the Quadi area of the Inanda Reserve near Durban, Jarvis (1986, p.13) found the aspirations of high school pupils to be very great indeed. Many expected to proceed to further education. In the face of the conditions he found, including poorly qualified teachers, high teacher-pupil ratios, rote learning, severe shortages of facilities and equipment and poor home conditions, such aspirations are not likely to be realised for the majority.

African education, as presently constituted, has probably led to apathy and defeat at the lower academic levels and deprivation and frustration at high school (Schlemmer & Bot, 1986, p.83). It is probable that, as essential and unavoidable reform proceeds, the frustration of ill-educated high school pupils will be exacerbated, with marked destabilization effects that the present approach to reform will not reduce.

"If African senior pupils could be exposed to exactly the same educational experience as whites, in its formal and informal aspects, that way serious problems of frustration and disadvantage at higher levels could be minimised. This implies integrated schools, although it does not necessarily imply that all white schools should have enforced integration" (*ibid.*).

The frustration of black schoolchildren, of which Schlemmer and Bot write, is explained further by Thembela (1986, p.37), who points out that, although the system of schooling is aimed at Westernisation, the political system counteracts the process. Frustration results. Black children who are

accepted into white schools gain certain advantages, yet become alienated from their historical culture groups without gaining the benefit of assimilation into the white group (*ibid.*, p.41). Dhlomo (1982, p.33) argues that blacks do not want parity for only a few, but rather for all. While he congratulates the few fortunate pupils who gain places in white schools, he does not believe that privileging the few presents a general solution to the problems. His views have been echoed by Hunter (1978, p.24) who asserts that the number of black pupils taken into Catholic institutions, for example, while praiseworthy "as a small step in the right direction", cannot solve the major problems of an appropriate and fairly financed education for the vast majority of the population.

The present era of reform in South Africa is being met with more and more demands for an improved standard of living, while pupil response has become more effectively coordinated and politicised (Jarvis, 1984, p.15). Since the time of the White Paper on the H.S.R.C. Report, Jarvis reminds us, the government has responded with an endeavour to create equality in education in terms of a "separate but equal" framework. Some meaningful reforms have been instigated, with large increases in funding, extensive programmes of classroom construction and the introduction of salary parity for teachers, yet there appears to be a growing climate of mistrust (*ibid.*). That the path taken by reform could place an impossible strain on the economy is suggested by Kane-Berman (1988, p.3). He points out that, in the mid-fifties when Dr H. Verwoerd nationalised black education, he inherited a situation where the state was spending seven times as much on the education of each white child as on each black child. Although the gap had widened drastically to a ratio of 18:1 by the early 1970's, Kane-Berman states, current expenditure is in the ratio of 6:1.

This, he suggests, is an indication of how financial resources are being directed from white to black education. In 1983/4 whites absorbed 53% of total state expenditure on education, but by 1987/8 their share had dropped to 41%. The current commitment is to parity, involving a ten-year programme (ibid.). The present writer reaffirms the view expressed earlier that such attempts at equalisation are most commendable; yet they tend to skirt the main issue of separation and perceived inequality. They are hampered by ideological concerns and are probably unlikely to satisfy demands for an open system of education. A result of such ideology has been the underutilisation of facilities reserved for whites. Despite the huge shortages of facilities and manpower that persist in black schools and their oversupply in the white education system, racially separate educational institutions and departments remain central to South Africa's state education system (Gaydon, 1987, p.33).

These current thrusts of Government in attempting to achieve equality with separate systems has clearly left many blacks unplaced. Vilakazi (1988, p.70) writes of the perceived oppression of the lower classes by the minority white group. He advocates control of education by local communities, on a socialist pattern:

"The essence of the socialist conception of education is the control and design of education by the communities of the masses of working people in an unexploitative society. Through that democratisation, the genuine humanism of the masses of ordinary working people, in urban and rural places, will shine forth in that education. Anything moving in this direction of people's control and design of education, is a move towards 'People's Education', towards 'Alternative Education'" (ibid.).

In recent years, it is clear, social unrest has become multi-faceted and endemic and increasingly politicised (Howe, 1985, p.7), with education merely one of many contested areas. Although Indian schools have remained relatively quiet during the mid-eighties, coloured schooling has continued to be a source of grave discontent. Coloured schooling has nevertheless made rapid progress over the years, when measured by enrolment, number of schools, number of teachers, and capital expenditure. These positive developments have not, however, increased the legitimacy of the coloured's ethnically separate education systems (Herman, 1985, p.18). The educational struggle has become increasingly bound up with the wider political struggle for full citizenship and social and economic equality. Although the De Lange Report raised hopes amongst the coloured community, the White Paper of 1983 dashed them. Own Affairs coloured education has turned the community upon itself, argues van den Berg (1986, p.7), making school staffs divided and suspicious. The placing of the education system under a Coloured Minister in the House of Representatives has not remedied the problems. The boycotts that occurred in 1985, van den Berg believes, will persist in unresolved conflict because the political fundamentals at the heart of the project are apparently not to be changed. As is the case with African schools, coloured schools are hampered by the weak matriculation results of their pupils. Problems include comparatively low per capita expenditure, lack of suitable facilities, high teacher-pupil ratios, and teacher shortages, with few graduates in the profession (Herman, 1985, p. 17).

The curriculum is apparently not geared to "real needs" and the secondary education system remains elitist. The ethnic labels are utterly rejected within the community and there is a yearning for an open and non-discriminatory society.

In response, in 1986 coloured schools were opened to all races. According to coloured Education Minister Ebrahim, there have been no negative responses to the move (Bot and Ebrahim, 1986, p. 12). Parents generally welcomed the move, and white teachers were fully accepted, although the disadvantages that coloured teachers had experienced, by comparison with whites, tended to rankle.

The words of Coombs will serve to place the foregoing in a wider perspective:

"The turbulent political changes that accompanied the world-wide economic changes in the 1970's and early 1980's also left their mark on education. Some of these changes were peaceful and positive, but a distressing number involved tragic military conflicts, both within and between nations. It was a time when established institutions and power alignments were being strongly challenged; when newer nations were striving to achieve political stability and older nations to keep theirs from crumbling; when heightened nationalism, insecurity, economic rivalries and cultural collisions precipitated a rash of internal and external conflicts; and when a rising wave of protests against repression and of popular demands for participation and greater equality swept across the world" (1985, p. 11).

#### 3.4.4. Developing the infrastructure of N.E.S.T.

Against a backdrop of spreading unrest in African and coloured schooling, by July 1984 N.E.S.T. was preparing an approach to Government for permission to establish their first multi-cultural school. It was a year replete with further meetings of the Director and Deputy Director with



academics, industrialists, parliamentarians and religious leaders. The meetings yielded encouraging results. A further encouragement appeared in November 1984 in the form of an article in the Gaborone - based journal Kutlwano (Segobye, 1984, p.4) entitled "Maru a Pula - a star born in controversy". The article focussed attention on the initial furore that had been attendant on the establishment of Maru a Pula.

"Now, thirteen years later, Maru a Pula stands out as one of our nation's most important educational institutions. The school has proved itself to be part and parcel of what our late President, Sir Seretse Khama, visualised as an ideal education system" (ibid., p.6).

The school was notable for having participated actively in the development of Botswana and initial apprehensions had gradually evaporated. Fears about the creation of an academic and cultural elite had proved to be unjustified, while the school had maintained high academic standards. The article lauds the bursary scheme and emphasis on assistance to students in need of extra English, Mathematics and Science. It also mentions various community projects, especially that at Gabane, which has involved building homes and implementing feeding schemes. The academic achievements are given much prominence:

"Most people would no doubt be most interested in the academic reputation of the school. It appears that, out of 56 students who sat their 1983 examinations, 32 of them obtained first class passes. In the 1982 examination, 20 out of 56 students got first class passes" (ibid., p.7).

This article presented a timely and encouraging affirmation of basic principles upon which N.E.S.T. had been founded and was taken as further evidence that the Trust's philosophy could be put into practice in south Africa. Attention became increasingly focused on the establishment of the first school. At the January, 1985 meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T. (N.E.S.T., Jan. 1985) a full report of the situation in Natal was given by the Director and Assistant Director, who explained difficulties experienced in dealing with three Administrators and two Directors of Education. The Natal Provincial Administration had authority to register schools for the white group only, and as a result application had been made for the registration of a private school for whites. Following an uncertain response, the Director of Education for Natal had been visited personally. He had advised the Director of N.E.S.T. to contact the Administrator of Natal, but no interview had materialised. Advice had been sought in government circles, following which it had been possible to open negotiations with Mr F. Martin, Acting Administrator of Natal, and subsequently with the newly appointed Administrator Mr R. Cadman. It appeared possible for registration to be granted, with an application made in terms of Clause 35 of Provincial Ordinance 46 of 1969, for permission to accept a fifty percent enrolment of pupils of "other races". N.E.S.T. could thereafter move to a full and fair representation of all race groups. Subsequent discussions at the Board meeting, however, confirmed the principle that the school should be non-racial from the start (*ibid.*). At this meeting, too, a progress report was made on developments in the Eastern Cape. The Director of N.E.S.T. and Sir Richard Luyt had gained the support of the Director of Education for the Cape Province, in principle, for the establishment of a N.E.S.T. school. Progress had been made in obtaining a site near Grahamstown. A provisional Governing Body had been appointed, initial

applications for registration had been made, and the Director of Education and Administrator asked to pursue the matter further. It was also announced that the Anglo-American and De Beers Chairman's fund would support the first school to be registered.

Prof. P. Mohanoe yet again reminded the Board of the critical importance of N.E.S.T. being conceptualised at all times as a fully non-racial organisation. All races should be part of the decision-making process. The minutes read:

"Prof. Mohanoe's comments were taken in a serious light as the Board realises how sensitive this issue is. Every effort must be made to act in accordance with the wishes expressed" (ibid., p.4).

During the early months of 1985, a quantity of correspondence passed between the Director of N.E.S.T. and office-bearers of the Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses (H.M.C.), whose members represent the Association of Private Schools (A.P.S.). In a letter written in February 1985, Yates (19 Feb. 1985) referred to extracts from a letter received from the Secretary of the H.M.C., sent in November 1984. He expressed the pleasure and gratitude of those at N.E.S.T. for the clear and unambiguous statement of support. He welcomed the desire of the H.M.C. for close liaison, but nevertheless frankly pointed to the essential difference between schools that are "essentially or predominantly white" and the N.E.S.T. schools which were to give full and fair representation to each race. He alluded to potentially divergent loyalties, obligations and responsibilities of headmasters of the two bodies concerned, yet pointed out that there was no intention of making invidious comparisons. He declared himself to be in favour of a continued liaison and search for commonalities. The reply from the Chairman

of the H.M.C. (Silcock, 27 Feb. 1985) pointed out inter alia that the H.M.C. had never in practice been responsible for the establishment of schools. It had only accepted new schools to its corpus once they were established. Yates's reply, written a month later (Yates, 28 Mar. 1985), revealed a measure of continuing uncertainty about the relationship between N.E.S.T. and the H.M.C. and expressed his wish to resolve possible differences by discussion. It is evident from the correspondence that little contact had taken place during the preceding years, during which period certain members of the H.M.C. were themselves engaged in the process of opening their schools to pupils other than whites. A further letter (Yates, 20 May 1985) expressed Yates's concern, not with individuals within the H.M.C., but with the perceived "collective disdain" shown towards the establishment of contact with N.E.S.T. On 10 Jul. 1985 the chairman of the H.M.C. extended a cordial invitation to Yates to attend the Annual Conference to be held in Grahamstown and a new tone of optimism became evident (Turner, 10 Jul. 1985).

The apparent hiatus that had opened between N.E.S.T. and the H.M.C. appeared to have been exacerbated by disparate viewpoints emerging from within the latter organisation itself. While many white private schools have increasingly opened their doors to persons of colour, others have remained committed to preserving the traditional conservative ethos of the private school. Mr F.J.K. Simmons (3 Oct. 1988), Headmaster of St Andrews Girls' School in Johannesburg, believes everyone present at the Annual Meeting of the H.M.C. in 1980, when Yates and Krige expressed their views on open schools, to have been impressed with the ideas. However, as Simmons explains the subsequent developments:

"Traditional schools were concerned about too rapid a development which might not be in keeping with the ethos of the basic philosophy of most H.M.C. schools. They never rejected N.E.S.T. outright, but tended to be indifferent, waiting for Deane Yates to 'get on with it'" (ibid.).

Simmons points out that, although the H.M.C. as a body could have done more, individuals did maintain a measure of contact. He also suggests that Deane Yates, whom he characterises as a man of great personal integrity, might possibly have expected too much from the H.M.C. Kane-Berman (6 Oct. 1988) explains that it took longer to establish N.E.S.T. than was anticipated or desirable. Many a lesser person than Yates, with his deep religious faith, would have quite possibly "thrown in the towel". It is possible to conclude from the analyses of Simmons and Kane-Berman that, despite the vigorous pursuit of its objectives by the N.E.S.T. Board, the delay occasioned by obstacles to the development of the first school exacerbated uncertainties about N.E.S.T. amongst H.M.C. members, leading to a drift in relations. That the H.M.C. has itself been agonising over its approach to open schooling is clear from the speech of P.K. Loveday, Chairman of the Association of Private Schools during September 1988 (Loveday, 8 Sept. 1988). Loveday points to the fine record of the private school system, and remarks on the very wide range of opinion embraced by its organisation. He nevertheless calls for a more united approach to change:

"Nevertheless, in my opinion, many of our schools are not moving with the rapid changes that are taking place and we have a responsibility to assist in education in the underprivileged areas. We must take note of this responsibility and how each school tackles this need is

a matter for discussion with the Head and Governors, and, most important, is for action not just talk. We cannot remain as isolated as we have been in the past and I feel we have an urgent real obligation to share our strengths with the less fortunate. Those of us who fail to meet this challenge could become relics of no future consequence" (ibid.).

Despite the firming of resolve on the part of the A.P.S. Executive to nudge its membership in the direction of open, non-racial education, other leaders in the field of private schooling regard the pace of evolutionary change in such schools as yet too slow, and have endeavoured to act as catalysts for change. In 1987 a new affiliation of schools was created, known as the Southern African Association of Independent Schools (S.A.A.I.S.) (Bauer, 1988, p.9). The major objective of the body was to promote non-racial education throughout South Africa. With a membership of more than twenty schools, it is chaired by Mr Michael Corke, headmaster of St Barnabas. Corke has explained the growth of the association to be the result of the apparent insensitivity of many private schools to the educational crisis of 1985-6 (ibid.). He points out that a growing number of independent (sic). schools within Southern Africa are committed to genuine non-racial education outside the established structures:

"It was out of the need to offer moral and financial support to these schools, and mutual support among the well established non-racial schools, that S.A.A.I.S. was formed" (ibid.).

Also recently established is the Independent Examinations Board (I.E.B.), registered as a Section 21 Company on 21 June 1988 in order to authenticate curricula and conduct

examinations for candidates regardless of their race, ethnic identity, gender, social class and belief (Corke, Aug. 1988, p.3). It is essentially a private initiative in the field of testing and certification, that is to operate independently of A.P.S. endeavours.

Loveday (6 Oct. 1988) has pointed out that the A.P.S. is a loose association of well over a hundred members who use the conferences and contacts organised by the body as a forum for the interchange of ideas and learning about other people's hopes and aspirations. He explains the outlook of the A.P.S. thus:

"The view of the Association's executive is that the A.P.S. should be tolerant of a wide diversity of philosophies and thinking; with a view to being a forum for the interchange of such divergent views. The main objective would be to thereby facilitate Heads and Governors of schools improving education in their own schools. This implies that this is a depoliticised body of people, who are not concerned with the implementation of extreme political or economic ideologies" (ibid.).

It is clear that in recent years the move towards open, non-racial schooling among many private schools has gained momentum, and that the more insular approach of the sixties and early seventies has shattered. The New Era Schools Trust had found itself immersed in a stream of private schools endeavouring to implement policies of non-racialism. A few have adopted programmes as apparently enlightened as its own.

In July 1985, Prof. G.R. Bozzoli sent a circular letter to interested parties outlining progress made thus far with the

Natal school Uthongathi, and received a spate of congratulatory letters in reply. The N.E.S.T. endeavour was clearly seen as a beacon of hope in a whelter of spreading unrest and violence. The Board meeting held during the same month (N.E.S.T., 20 Jul. 1985) served to welcome Mr Bryce Biggs as Chairman of the Natal Committee. It was reported by the Assistant Director that the Administrator had given approval for building to proceed, and registration was expected to be a mere technicality following completion of the work. Following a series of meetings held with the Director of Education for Natal, authority had been granted for the establishment of a white school. At a later date, it was reported, an application could be made for the acceptance of a given quota of pupils of other races. The Natal Committee clearly viewed these restraints as unacceptable. It prepared to pursue the matter further.

A site of 20 hectares at Westbrook, near Tongaat, had been negotiated by Mr Steyn Krige. The Tongaat-Hulett Group was prepared to sell the site for a comparatively modest sum. The proximity of the site to the town of Tongaat was opportune. Originating as a development surrounding the Tongaat Sugar Estate, Tongaat has a history of endeavours to create a multi-racial society. The Town Board has in the past made efforts to cultivate the interests of all residents, bridge gaps and encourage non-European(sic) capitalism (Watson, 1960, p. 234):

"Tongaathad long since sealed its adherence to a charter for the upliftment of the underprivileged, irrespective of race, had dedicated itself as a community to the amelioration of racial conflict, the betterment of housing and economic opportunity, the building of conditions that spelled food, family, life and freedom from fear".



The general environs were thus congenial to a non-racial school, although as the community service programme at Uthongathi was to reveal, poverty was massively present despite past efforts to alleviate it.

From the minutes of the meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T. of 20 July 1985, it is apparent that the delays experienced thus far were perceived as largely bureaucratic rather than political, with influential government figures much in support. Reports were also made on progress in the Eastern Cape, but the situation remained uncertain and was unlikely to be resolved until the middle of 1986 (N.E.S.T., 20 Jul. 1985).

A vigorous debate ensued at this meeting over the advisability of making a press release about the proposed new schools. Black members of the Natal Committee were apprehensive about their personal safety if such release was made, in view of their agreement to a white headmaster and fifty percent quota of white pupils, if such measures were essential to gain registration. They could lose credibility and would not willingly submit to the pressures of an in-depth probe by the press. An intensive discussion consequently followed on the best means to be pursued in ensuring full registration for a school that would not be white-dominated. It was agreed that a delegation from N.E.S.T. meet Prof. J.P. de Lange, and that no press statement be made. A discrepancy is discernible between the agonising of the Board at this time, and the receipt of many letters of congratulations and optimism from supporters not party to the deliberations.

The final Board meeting of 1985, held on 9 November (N.E.S.T., 9 Nov. 1985), revealed the uncertainty that

surrounded the selection of a suitable site near Grahamstown for the second N.E.S.T. school. Although some local support was forthcoming, doubts remained concerning the probable support of white parents for the school, as well as questions about its financial viability. African, Indian and coloured parents appeared to be enthusiastic. Anticipated changes in policy regarding private schooling had made impossible an early reply by Government to a recent approach by N.E.S.T. for registration of the Grahamstown school. The matter was nevertheless reported to be receiving attention by Government. The registration of the Natal school clearly remained a vexacious problem. Following progress reports by the architects as well as a discussion of fund-raising in Natal, the minutes read:

"A letter from the Director of Education in Natal was tabled in which he granted temporary registration from January to June for 15 Std. 6 pupils in a school for white pupils only" (ibid.).

With regret, the Natal Committee decided unanimously that the school be not opened in 1986. The Director of N.E.S.T. tabled a number of documents confirming the failure of approaches to the authorities over the years in order to gain registration for a non-racial school. The Director of Education's letter granting temporary and provisional registration was unacceptable to the Board. The minutes reveal the shift to a somewhat more intractable approach:

"A new and bold strategy had become necessary. The future of South Africa was unpredictable and N.E.S.T. must not be out-manoeuvred and become irrelevant. We must not be seen to be following the government's line. The point had been reached where we must take positive steps to establish our schools in 1987. If, in so

doing, the government destroys us, then the message is clear that there is no room in South Africa for our concept. It is no longer either possible or acceptable to contrive to seek registration on the government's terms. It was therefore decided to risk the ire of the government and State President and to proceed as follows:

- i) To constitute the fund-raising committee and to proceed with fund-raising.
- ii) To proceed immediately to establish the schools in Natal and Grahamstown in 1987.
- iii) To set the machinery in motion in January to establish the Transvaal school in 1987.
- iv) To send letters to all those seen informing them of our course of action.
- v) To send a telex to the five Ministers involved and to the State President informing them of our intentions.
- vi) To hold a press conference at the end of January at which we state that we intend to open our schools at the beginning of 1987.

While this is a confrontational approach, it is not our desire to hold the government to ransom. We do believe that this approach will enable N.E.S.T. to take the lead in educational reform in accord with the first aim of government educational policy as set out in the White Paper on Education in response to the De Lange Commission" (ibid.).

The minutes continue with the contention that the quota constraint imposed by the authorities could not be accepted as a pre-condition for registration:

"We must return to our basic philosophy of non-racialism and be seen to be essentially different" (ibid.).

These issues were pursued further at a meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T. held during February 1986 (N.E.S.T., 8 Feb. 1986). Problems relating to delays in opening the Grahamstown school were discussed and the socio-political unrest was cited as one of several factors causing delay. The urgent need for completion of the N.E.S.T. project emerges with the argument that a model of non-racial schooling be created before the level of social stability in the country deteriorated yet further. Black pupils in the Eastern Cape had been intimidated. It was decided that the opening of the Grahamstown school be delayed to 1988. Considerable progress was reported with the building of the Natal school Uthongathi and a Board of Governors would soon be elected by the Natal Committee. A letter from the Director of Education in Natal was tabled at the meeting. Reasons were given in his letter for affording temporary registration. The Director of Education expected the problems of registration to disappear once permanent accommodation had been erected according to approved plans.

It was also reported that, although unrest in the Transvaal had delayed the development of a further N.E.S.T. school, the establishment of a school there should be promoted since the infrastructure already existed. Further efforts were to be made regarding the selection and purchase of a site. The civil unrest raging in certain parts of South Africa at this time is clearly reflected in these minutes and there is a bold determination on the part of the Board to forge ahead. A measure of sympathy had clearly been received from persons in government circles. It was accordingly decided to make known the intentions of the N.E.S.T. Board to Government, with the explanation that positive steps were necessary if N.E.S.T. was to retain the momentum it had developed (ibid.).

A publicity campaign subsequently mounted by the N.E.S.T. Board in February 1986 resulted in the publication of many positive newspaper articles during the ensuing weeks; inter alia in the Sunday Times, Grocott's Mail, Eastern Province Herald, Business Day, Star, Citizen, Daily Despatch, Evening Post, Daily News, Rapport, Sunday Tribune and Natal Mercury. Most gave a synopsis of the philosophy and policies of N.E.S.T., its underlying rationale and plans for the future. There was also a spate of correspondence from national figures and interested persons, as well as several editorials. On March 3 1986, the Sowetan carried a prominent article that began:

"A major stride forward in non-racial education in South Africa is about to be taken, the New Era Schools Trust announced last week.

A series of schools that could herald a new era in promoting peaceful social change are to be established over the next few years. The first is already being built in Tongaat, Natal".

As a result of the correspondence emanating from the publicity campaign, uncertainty arose concerning the status of Uthongathi as the first fully non-racial school in South Africa. The Chairman of the Board of Governors of Woodmead School responded to an article in the Star dated 28 February 1986, which described the N.E.S.T. school Uthongathi as "the first fully non-racial school" in South Africa. He pointed out that Woodmead was proud to have been "the first high school to have opened its doors to pupils of all races" (Brigish, 1986). The Times Educational Supplement served to clarify the issue when a correspondent noted that "many private schools in South Africa have become multiracial, but the New Era Schools Trust (N.E.S.T.) schools will be the first to be non-racial from the outset" (Pleming, 1986). In

a subsequent article published in the Sunday Times Magazine Supplement dated 20 April 1986, the Director of N.E.S.T. traced the origins of the N.E.S.T. philosophy back to his experiences at Maru a Pula in Botswana. Clearly, the experiences of Deane Yates in Botswana and Steyn Krige at Woodmead (and doubtless also the experience of many others with whom they came in contact), had served to mould and shape the concepts upon which the system became founded.

During 1986, problems experienced in gaining approval for registration as well as full title deeds for Uthongathi persisted, although on 22 May of that year, during the Budget Debate in the House of Assembly, Hon. Minister of Education and Culture: Administration Mr P.J. Clase spoke on a change in regulations governing the future registration of private schools. He stated that the Constitution made provision for an institution to render service to persons who are not part of the relevant race groups for which the institution was primarily founded. Private schools would thus be accorded a rightful place in accommodating particular needs.

The regulations tended to shift emphasis from race alone to the incorporation of educational and professional criteria. Encouraged by this development, N.E.S.T. arranged a press release dated 25 July 1986, acknowledging inter alia the financial generosity of Anglo-American and the De Beers Chairman's fund in bearing the entire cost of Uthongathi, and the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Group of Companies in funding the N.E.S.T. school Phuthing in the Transvaal. The positive response to the N.E.S.T. programme on the part of a wide spectrum of South Africans was also mentioned. The statement was significant too, because it served both to present the Director's final word on the origins of N.E.S.T. as well as to comment on the new regulations promulgated by the Minister of Education:

"Mr Yates says that the New Era Schools Trust was founded five years ago after he had spent more than 10 years establishing and developing the Maru a Pula School in Botswana. What he did there was being done no less successfully at Waterford-Kamhlaba School in Swaziland by Mr Michael Stern and at Woodmead School near Randburg by Mr M.T.S. Krige, who is now the Assistant Director of N.E.S.T. The way in which the N.E.S.T. philosophy might be spelt out in South Africa after five years of protracted and sometimes difficult negotiations with Government was provided in May this year when, in a speech in the House, Mr P.J. Clase, the Minister of Education and Culture, House of Assembly, noted that the Constitution made provision for the rendering of service to persons who are not members of the relevant race groups for which the institution was primarily founded and announced that the private schools themselves will decide on the admission of pupils" (N.E.S.T., 25 Jul. 1986).

Many newspapers and journals responded to the press release, including Grocott's, Sunday Tribune, Sunday Star, Sunday Times, Beeld and Die Vaderland, invariably with full and positive articles.

The buildings at Uthongathi were being constructed at remarkable speed to meet a November 1986 completion deadline. The site had been carefully selected under the unflagging guidance of Mr. Steyn Krige. Uthongathi was to be accessible to all communities to be accommodated. It was nevertheless sufficiently far from Durban to foster a strong sense of community. Development and design reflected the cardinal principles of N.E.S.T. (Mallows, 1987, pp. 173-5), and facilities had indeed been created, as planned in the design brief, to foster a sense of community.

By the end of July, after months of intensive effort devoted to establishment of the school infrastructure, Krige was able to announce that about two hundred and fifty applicants had registered for the anticipated eighty places, although more white applicants would have been welcome (Krige, 1986). Some hesitance was clearly evident on the part of white parents. It was hoped that an easing of restrictive government legislation would facilitate a shift in white attitudes to a more positive view of racial mixing. Indeed, in an interview reported in Leadership, Minister F.W. de Klerk was asked to comment on government policy towards white schools being opened to all races. In reply, he reiterated the government viewpoint that education was to remain an "Own Affair" in government schools, but that a new policy had been adopted regarding the subsidisation of private schools in view of the strong feelings prevalent in these institutions about integrated education..

"A large degree of autonomy is afforded to private schools with regard to their admission policy", Minister de Klerk is quoted as saying. "I'm all in favour of interaction between youngsters. They need to get to know each other, and it applies across the board" (Murray, 1986).

### 3.5. UTHONGATHI : THE FIRST N.E.S.T. SCHOOL.

In August 1986 Mr Richard Thompson was appointed Principal of the Uhtongathi School. He possessed experience of non-racial education, having been joint Deputy Headmaster of St Martin's School in Johannesburg. He had served in that school since 1972, during which time he had also been involved in making the school co-educational. In 1978 St Martin's had been opened to all races. One of Thompson's first communications with parents presents a concise re-



statement of the philosophy of N.E.S.T. (Thompson, 17 Nov. 1986). A balanced education is stressed, with attention to academic, physical, cultural and spiritual facets. An endeavour would be made to create a tolerant ethos, with the fostering of compassion and understanding amongst the pupils. There would be an open-handed approach to parents and "full co-operation and open communications between home and school is sought".

At the Board Meeting of N.E.S.T. held during November 1986 (N.E.S.T., 8 Nov. 1986), a great many matters were aired. Uthongathi was reported to be progressing well, with the appointment of excellent staff. Eighty-four pupils had been accepted, with "very fair" representation of the major racial groups. Places had been offered to a further twenty-three pupils. No less than seventy-four percent of the fee income was covered by bursaries: a policy necessary during the first year, but not expected to be sustained in the long term. Good progress was also being made in the Eastern Cape and the constitution for that school was in the hands of the provisional Governing Body. On the other hand, adverse political factors in the Western Cape had delayed operations there. The Board was again reminded to take into account changing political and social patterns. At this meeting, as in previous years, Prof. Mohanoe warned against elitism, and gave an outstanding analysis of the situation in South Africa. Mohanoe is reported as follows:

"The involvement of Blacks must be meaningful so that we are not perceived as a non-racial organisation dominated by whites. N.E.S.T. must be accepted as part of an alternative to the present educational system. We must be relevant in the context of what we would like to achieve in a future democratic non-racial country. N.E.S.T. must look for Black leadership so that there

may be meaningful participation at every level. The Uthongathi staff is not sufficiently non-racial. More effort must be made to appoint Black teachers, as one of the most serious criticisms of private schools is the 'whiteness' of their staff. We must make every effort not to be categorised with them. So much non-racialism is tokenistic and condescending. N.E.S.T. must be quite sure what non-racialism really means and (we) must be seen to be realistic and sincere in our approach" (ibid.).

It is clear that at this stage the registration of Uthongathi was not yet complete for 1987; yet in the face of this difficulty it was decided that the Board would proceed with its programme.

At the meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T. held on 10 January 1987, several resignations from its membership were accepted, in accordance with the requirement that a third of the members retire from office every three years. No whites were nominated to fill the gaps created and the Board was, at that time, to be represented by eight whites, eight blacks, four coloured and four Indian members (N.E.S.T., 10 Jan. 1987). Prof. G.R. Bozzoli was re-elected Chairman and Prof. P.F. Mohanoe Vice-Chairman.

After several months of frenetic activity on site, the Uthongathi school was opened in January 1987, with an enrolment of one hundred and five boys and girls from various cultural backgrounds. There was a single standard five class, two standard six classes and a standard seven class. The principal, Richard Thompson, commented on the remarkable response to their new milieu of the teaching staff and pupils. He remarked on the well-adjusted pupil corps who were socialising freely (Meijer, 25 Feb. 1987). The

first half-year to the official opening in July was evidently productive and rewarding to those concerned and the Visitors' Book recorded many positive comments. The official opening of the school was held on 3 July 1987, on which occasion the headmaster noted difficulties experienced by many pupils for whom English was a second language. A joint report presented by the Chairman of the Board and headmaster of Uthongathi (Biggs & Thompson, 1987, p. 1) declared their confidence that the standard of English would be vastly improved prior to the pupils writing their university entrance examinations. The opening ceremony was a celebration of confidence in the future and there was tangible goodwill amongst the multi-racial gathering.

Early in 1987 many newspaper reports on Uthongathi carried article headings and editorials such as "Extraordinarily normal" (Sunday Times, 11 Jan. 1987), "Learning in harmony" (Sunday Times, 18 Jan. 1987) and "A multiracial paradise for the fortunate few in South Africa" (Independent, 28 Feb. 1987). Letters of support were also received at this time.

On 15 April 1987, Deane Yates reported that N.E.S.T. had already received four hundred and fifty applications for enrolment for Standards five and six in January 1988, and nine applications for enrolment in the year 2000.

"The most exciting impression was not whether integration had been successfully achieved but the positive, dynamic ethos of the community. All that we have hoped for, all that we have believed in and all that we have said is manifested here in this school for all to see and many people are seeing" (Yates, 15 Apr. 1987).

At a workshop held on 5 and 6 September 1987 the philosophy of N.E.S.T. was subjected to reappraisal and was largely reaffirmed, six years after its formulation in 1981 (Yates, 8 Sept. 1987). A report written subsequently by the Director states:

"None of the discussion on the philosophy of N.E.S.T. as it was enunciated contradicted the principles which were originally enunciated in 1981".

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T. on 19 March 1988 (N.E.S.T., 19 Mar. 1988) record an enrolment of one hundred and seventy-four pupils at Uthongathi. The school was reported to be running smoothly and several community projects were under way.

Reports were also given of progress at Phuthing, with a steady stream of (mainly black) pupil applications. The Grahamstown school was reported to not be ready for opening in 1988, while it was decided by the Cape Town representatives that their school should be developed piecemeal as a community endeavour.

The Phuthing school was opened in Johannesburg during January 1989 with a roll of seventy-five students under the Headmastership of Prof. P. Mohanoe and Deputy Headmastership of Mr B. Butler, previously Head of the Department of English at Uthongathi. Mr T. Molete was nominated to the position of Chairman of the Board.

At the time of the opening of Phuthing, Uthongathi had not yet obtained registration despite protracted negotiation with the Natal Education Department (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Apr. 1986; 20 Nov. 1986; 20 Aug. 1987; 20 Oct. 1987; 18 Feb. 1988; 5 May 1988; 24 Aug. 1988). The record shows the

refusal of the Board of Uthongathi to comply with racial restrictions necessary for registration, and the Headmaster accordingly enrolled the standard nine pupils to write the Joint Matriculation Board examination in 1990 (Board of Uthongathi, 20 Oct. 1988).

Subsequent developments in the life of Uthongathi are incorporated in the empirical section in Chapter 4.

### 3.6. CONCLUDING SUMMARY.

In this chapter the birth of N.E.S.T. and its subsequent development are seen against a broad backdrop of socio-political events in South Africa. The chapter sketches the development of separate state education systems for the four main "racial groups". Growing perception amongst black schoolchildren that their education was inadequate culminated in riots in Soweto in June 1976. Although the system of Bantu Education for black youngsters was clearly the focus of the unrest, educational issues became increasingly interwoven with wider concerns. The programme of government reforms initiated in the late 1970's to address such issues has included major proposals in the field of education. The H.S.R.C. Report is one such endeavour. Many reformist proposals have subsequently become stalled or diluted owing to conservative pressures from the white electorate, while radical demands have accelerated. The process of reform as a whole has been attacked as inadequate and South African society has become increasingly fractured by boycotts, unrest, brutality and violence.

N.E.S.T. originated from the experience in non-racial education of Steyn Krige and Deane Yates during the 1960's and 1970's. Their combined visions were instrumental in the

birth of N.E.S.T. during 1980, at the height of intense reformist zeal. Several grinding years of planning and development have followed, against a backdrop of faltering reform initiatives, culminating in the establishment of Uthongathi, the first of four N.E.S.T. schools. Autonomous from other initiatives, the Trust project has been accompanied by a growing flood of private schools intent on bearing witness to the Gospels by opening to all races. A few of these, mainly Catholic, have made substantial adaptations to their entrance requirements and curricula.

The New Era Schools Trust can be characterised as operating within the parameters of the process of non-violent reform. Consequently, despite the comprehensive mandate enjoyed by N.E.S.T., there is always present the possibility of scepticism and even hostility towards the project from the Left and Right poles of the political spectrum. Yet it must be acknowledged that, in its vision of open, non-racial, multi-cultural schooling that encompasses action to aid the socio-economically disadvantaged, N.E.S.T.'s endeavours exceed the present scope of reform. While the process is linked to the concept of peaceful reformist change, the product reflects a quite radical, alternative view of society that is very different to that which has become part of the collective conscience in South Africa. It is a view of society in which justice and social cohesion are sought by a primary emphasis on the essential worth and dignity of individuals living and learning in close proximity, irrespective of apparently divisive characteristics such as race or cultural heritage.

In Chapter Three, much discussion has revolved around the concept non-racial schooling, owing to the frequent use of the term in the documentation studied. In Chapter Four, Uthongathi will be portrayed as both a non-racial and

consciously multi-cultural endeavour. This broadening of focus is valid, since the school is guided by a powerful and sophisticated philosophy that has evolved to increasingly take the issues of culture as well as race (and class) into account. The philosophy is discussed under 4.4.3. It has been presented in the present research as Appendix A.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST UTHONGATHI SCHOOL, AS AN EXAMPLE OF MULTI-CULTURAL SCHOOLING.

## 4.1. INTRODUCTION.

This chapter comprises an empirical study of the Uthongathi School near Tongaat, as it evolved and developed during the period January 1987 to July 1989. The study was undertaken by means of the illuminative mode of research within the ethnographic tradition, in order to explore and describe the school's structure and dynamics. Emphasis has been laid on an analysis of possibilities and problematics integral to the school, which is viewed as an institution inextricably embedded in the wider society, and therefore subject to its tensions.

## 4.2. METHODS USED IN THE EMPIRICAL STUDY.

## 4.2.1. Problems with the natural science mode of enquiry.

In view of the complexity of the educational milieu characteristic of multi-cultural schooling, the writer eschewed use of the natural-scientific mode of enquiry. The problem, as Van den Berg (1985, p.163) has expressed it, is that some phenomena are not susceptible to natural science methods of investigation. Buckland (1986, p.372) too, is critical of the positivism that accompanies assumptions that social science theory can be truly objective, and asserts that the relationship between theory and practice in the social sciences is a purely technical one. Buckland does not condemn the natural science, technicist mode of enquiry out of hand, but points out that it cannot be used exclusively to research educational issues, since it



presents a too-narrow focus. Since the 1970's, indeed, increasing numbers of investigators have used a hermeneutic-idiographic paradigm (Mac Donald and Perry, 1984, p. 165) to conceptualise certain research problems, and in doing so have used participant observation, interviews and the analysis of video.

#### 4.2.2. The illuminative approach.

Parlett & Hamilton (1976, p. 84) focus on the study of innovatory projects in education, and express their scepticism of the classical, agricultural-botany approach of experiment and testing, used in exploring many educational problems. They regard efforts to simulate laboratory conditions by "manipulating educational personnel" as ethically dubious, as well as being particularly inconvenient (Parlett & Hamilton, 1977, pp. 8-9). Further drawbacks are the artificiality of such endeavours and the difficulty experienced in deriving accurate and tidy results from an "untidy reality". Salient data is often disregarded, while many relevant influences and variables are ignored.

They explain:

"For instance, there are numerous constraints (legal, administrative, occupational, architectural and financial) on the organisation of teaching in schools; there are pervasive operating assumptions (about the arrangement of subjects, curricula, teaching methods and student evaluation) held by faculty; there are the individual teacher's characteristics (teaching-style, experience, professional orientation and private goals); and there are student perspectives and preoccupations. Acknowledging the diversity and complexity of learning milieux is an essential prerequisite for the serious study of educational programmes" (ibid.).

The approach that they originated and promoted, known as illuminative evaluation, seeks to describe and interpret innovatory projects, while taking into account the context within which the innovation must function. A three-stage framework of observation, further enquiry and explanation is used and the focus of the investigation is progressively reduced to centre on major issues that arise. They study how the innovatory project operates, how it is influenced by the various school situations in which it is applied, and the views of participants on its advantages and disadvantages. The life-world of the participants in the programme is thus a central focus.

Parlett and Hamilton describe the purpose more clearly as follows:

"The task is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex reality (or realities) surrounding the project : in short, to 'illuminate'. In his report, therefore, the evaluator aims to sharpen discussion, disentangle complexities, isolate the significant from the trivial, and raise the level of sophistication of debate" (1976, p.99).

The authors stress that illuminative evaluation is a general research strategy that aims to be adaptable and eclectic. It makes use of qualitative methodology, which Filstead (1970, p.6) has stressed will allow the researcher to get close to the data, to avoid rigid, quantification procedures. The research would thus be rooted in the reality of the situation in action, writes Dachs (1982, pp.33-37), rather than in contrived experiments, would reveal the diversity of opinions rather than consensus, and would produce useful and readable reports. The evaluation would be holistic and portray the education programme in its

entirety, opening it to intelligent criticism and appraisal (*ibid.*). By avoiding the use of measures of efficiency alone, the proponents of illuminative evaluation endeavour to reflect the vision of reality as perceived by the participants. Dachs concludes by listing Parlett's stages of illuminative evaluation. They are summarised from Dachs as follows:

- (a) to clarify a general strategy,
- (b) familiarise oneself with realities of the programme,
- (c) pinpoint areas of particular concern,
- (d) undertake description, interpretation and explanation, and,
- (e) present a written report that neither conceals nor evangelises personal views.

#### 4.2.3. The ethnographic tradition.

The general approach of the present research utilizes the illuminative approach as a refinement of methodology emanating from the ethnographic tradition. Yates describes ethnography simply as "the study of the world of a people" (1986, p.61). Beals & Hoijer (1972, p.149) clarify the concept further, viewing ethnography as the study of the cultures of living peoples through the observation of their behaviour. Ethnographic method relies heavily on participant observation during which relevant behaviour is recorded and observed; as well as participation in as many activities as opportunity permits. The focus of ethnographic concern tends to be on the holistic interrelationship between manifold variables. The ethnographer himself, according to Yates (1986, p.62) can be thought of as "an organising focal consciousness". He attempts the reconstruction of an observed total reality; selecting, translating and interpreting. Data collection and analysis tend to be inextricably linked as the research

progresses and data is analysed throughout the course of the project. Indeed, theoretical frameworks, selection strategies and data collection methods are all linked in order to produce a broad, integrated picture of the society under study as a complex whole.

It can be clearly seen how the illuminative approach can be welded to the ethnographic tradition, with a gradual focus on critical issues and the pursuit of general principles rather than an attempt "to record virtually everything that occurs in the setting studied" (Borg & Gall, 1979, p. 347), that is characteristic of ethnographic research. Mc Donald & Perry (1984, p. 166) emphasise the search for common, recurring incidents, further enquiry into selected topics and, finally, the uncovering of general principles underlying the programme.

#### 4.2.4. Verifying the information gathered.

Goetz & le Compte (1984, p. 167) point to an appropriate means by which to ensure the optimum accuracy of data collected:

"Just as a surveyor locates points on a map by triangulation on several sights", they write, "so an ethnographer pinpoints the accuracy of conclusions drawn by triangulation with several sources of data. Triangulation prevents the investigator from accepting too readily the validity of initial impressions; it enhances the scope, density and clarity of constructs developed during the course of investigation".

The power of multiple methods, when systematically used, is also emphasised by Walker (1985, p. 83). Walker argues in favour of the flexible use of a variety of methods as the project under study progresses. He shows diagrammatically

how the processes involved in action research tend to progress in a series of cycles (*ibid.*, p.196). Each cycle incorporates the creation of a general plan, followed by purposeful action that will include monitoring, reflection, evaluation and replanning. Such repeated appraisal of methods and findings should also enhance relevance and accuracy of procedures. The cyclical approach characterises the present research.

#### 4.2.5. Questionnaires.

During March, April and May 1989, questionnaires were used in the study in order to gain information about the staff, pupils and parents at Uthongathi, as well as to ascertain their perceptions of various aspects of the school. Responses were rated on an adapted Likert scale similar to that used by Staples (1986) in his research into multi-cultural education. Open, written responses were also elicited. The questionnaires were discussed with the principal and were implemented with professional colleagues and selected teachers on the staff prior to use.

20 members of the staff at Uthongathi with professional teaching duties completed the staff questionnaire (100%). No problems were reported.

208 students completed the student questionnaire out of a roll of 216 (96.3%).

146 parents completed the parents' questionnaire out of a total of 211 household units (69.2%).

The results have been tabulated and displayed in the appendices together with a selection of appropriate, representative comments relating to each question. Appropriate references occur throughout the main text.

Readers are referred to:

- Appendix C : Staff questionnaire,
- Appendix D : Students' questionnaire,
- Appendix E : Parents' questionnaire.

#### 4.2.6. An integrated picture.

Bearing in mind the warning of Blackledge & Hunt (1985,p.318) that some studies tend to be pursued solely on the "micro" level, becoming preoccupied with details of school and classroom life without considering their wider setting, or of studying the system of schooling in theory without ensuring contact with the "real world", the present writer has taken care to synchronise macro and micro elements. Working in the Weberian tradition, he has embedded the subject in its wider context in order to achieve an integrated picture. The "smallest interactional encounter" experienced has, where relevant, been integrated into the constellation of events, incidents, views and behaviours recorded, in order to reveal the underlying principles.

The study is not aimed to produce comprehensive solutions. The present writer shares the reservations of Parlett & Hamilton (1977,p.18) when they write:

"Indeed by discarding a spurious 'technological' simplification of reality, and by acknowledging the complexity of educational progress, the illuminative evaluator is likely to increase rather than lessen the sense of uncertainty in education. On the other hand, unless studies such as these are vigorously pursued there is little hope of ever moving beyond helpless indecision or doctrinaire assertions in the conduct of instructional affairs".

#### 4.3. PROGRESS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY AND COURSE OF THE RESEARCH.

The empirical study lasted from January 1987 to July 1989, during which time the researcher was in frequent contact with Uthongathi. The period July 1988 to July 1989 was spent engaged in full-time study while on leave. During this period regular visits were made to the school, frequently on two days weekly. Major events attended or activities pursued as part of the empirical research are listed below.

3 July 1987 : attendance at the formal opening ceremony of Uthongathi.

7 September 1987 : arranged a visit to Uthongathi for staff and seventy academic colleagues from the Edgewood College of Education.

2 - 11 October 1987 : undertook a pilot study of Uthongathi, with daily attendance. Interviews were conducted, lessons observed and a general orientation experienced. An initial study was made of internal dynamics.

3 - 6 December 1987 : first visit to the N.E.S.T. headquarters in Johannesburg. Discussions were held with the Director of N.E.S.T., Mr Deane Yates, O.B.E.; also with Chairman of the Board Prof. G.R. Bozzoli, who is also past Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand. Soweto was visited at this time to broaden understanding of wider social issues.

January to July 1988 : occasional visits to the Uthongathi campus, followed by a period of intensive visits during July and August 1988 in order to begin illuminating significant possibilities and problematics of the school.

30 - 31 July 1988 : attendance at a two-day workshop organised by Uthongathi to debate problems encountered during the previous year.

13 August 1988 : school play : Royal hunt of the sun.

21 August 1988 : Youth Weekend at the school, organised by Natal-Kwazulu Indaba.

August 1988 : attendance at staff meetings.

12 - 15 September 1988 : visit to Waterford - Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa. Interviews were held with the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, selected academic staff, support staff and students in order to gain further insight into open schooling. The researcher ate meals with the students, at his request.

27 September - 8 October 1988 : visits to N.E.S.T. headquarters in Johannesburg and to various open schools in South Africa. Maru a Pula was visited in Botswana. Interviews were carried out in Johannesburg with several members of the N.E.S.T. Board, including Prof. G.R. Bozzoli, Mr D. Yates, Mr M.T.S. Krige, Mr J.S. Kane-Berman and Mr T.S. Molete. Interviews were also held inter alia with Mr A. Graham, Headmaster of Woodmead; Mr D. Matthews, Headmaster of Maru a Pula, Mr M. Corke, Headmaster of St Barnabas and Bro. N. McGurk, Headmaster of Sacred Heart College. Their disparate views on open, non-racial schooling were ascertained. Alexandra Township was visited at this time.

October 1988 and regularly thereafter : attendance at Uthongathi Board meetings.



2 December 1988 : attendance at Speech Day at Uthongathi.

January - May 1989 : Development and implementation of questionnaire for parents, students and staff at Uthongathi.

Permission was sought and freely given, to use material gathered by means of interviews. In the case of pupils, only initials are displayed.

#### 4.4. FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH.

##### 4.4.1. Display of findings.

Findings are displayed as follows:

(a) A descriptive, factual presentation of findings is made under appropriate headings.

(b) The description of each major issue is invariably set in an appropriate time context. Its recent status is presented by the integration of information from various sources, including individual and group interviews, observations, documents and questionnaires.

(c) Where the source of information is a document, questionnaire or interview, references to the source are given in the text. Observations necessarily remain unreferenced.

(d) An endeavour has been made to ensure that the findings are woven into a readable text without prejudicing their veracity.

(e) Wider implications of the findings for practice and further research are reserved for Chapter Five.

#### 4.4.2. The Central Administration of N.E.S.T.

The origins, composition, powers and activities of the Board of the New Era Schools Trust have been described in Chapter Three.

N.E.S.T. Central incorporates a Board of Trustees, who comprise the holding company of all N.E.S.T. property. Their function, as explained by Mr Steyn Krige (30-31 Jul. 1988), is to provide capital for the building of the schools and to also provide the initial deficit funding. They provided the impetus and initiative during the early years of the N.E.S.T. project. They have a watchdog role to ensure that the philosophy of N.E.S.T. is upheld without alteration. Indeed, the philosophy had been a prime determinant of the composition of the Board itself. Krige explains that N.E.S.T.'s primary aim is to prepare pupils living in a fragmented South Africa to function effectively in a post-apartheid society. The intention was thus to establish schools in which a balance is maintained between the races of staff and pupils, in order to create a rich mix that would facilitate the growth of an understanding that could breach racial barriers.

"Membership of N.E.S.T. Central, the Trustees and the Board of the individual schools would also be divided between the various races," he explains, "to ensure input at every level of the different cultures" (ibid.).

It was the Board's hope that the Euro-centric influence prevailing in so many schools would be replaced by a Afro one, which would be relevant to preparing citizens to live in Africa. The Board of Trustees is accordingly comprised of members drawn from all major racial groupings in South

Africa. It is chaired by Prof. G.R. Bozzoli and incorporates the two founding members of N.E.S.T., Messrs D. Yates as Director of N.E.S.T. (and from January 1989, Vice Chairman of the Board) and M.T.S. Krige as Associate Director (from January 1989, Director).

The full Board of N.E.S.T. comprises twenty-four members under chairmanship of Prof. Bozzoli (and the Deputy Chairmanship of Prof. P.F. Mohanoe, an African who is presently Headmaster of the second N.E.S.T. school, Phuthing, situated in the Transvaal). The membership list reveals a scattering of racial origins, no major racial group being denied substantial representation on the Board. Prof Bozzoli explains that the Board was constructed of members personally known to the founders of N.E.S.T. An endeavour was made to incorporate the best people available from each racial group in order to assemble a wide range of viewpoints. Bozzoli explains that the term group is used "simply because it helps to convey the meaning of what we are trying to do" (Bozzoli, 3 Oct. 1988). Recent membership lists of the Board of Trustees and full Board of N.E.S.T. are included under Appendix A. Many members are national figures. The lists suggest the presence of persons representing a wide variety of backgrounds.

As a governing body the Board of N.E.S.T. has wide powers, amongst which are: the raising and management of funds at national level, control of certain moneys, budgets and bank accounts, appointment of auditors, control and maintenance of properties, and the authorisation of trusts, bursaries and scholarships (N.E.S.T.: Constitution). The Board meets regularly. Its central offices are situated in Johannesburg, being staffed for many years by a Director and Associate Director, as well as a full-time secretary. The post of Associate Director was dissolved in 1989.

Deane Yates and Steyn Krige are members of the Board of Uthongathi. They have been in regular attendance at board meetings, and Krige in particular has filled the role of adviser to Uthongathi during the years of site selection, planning, building and opening of the school. Mr B. Biggs, Chairman of the Uthongathi Board, is a member of the N.E.S.T. Board. There are thus several avenues for an exchange of views. Selected members of N.E.S.T. Central have attended meetings to review the school (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Dec. 1987) and to participate in a workshop at Uthongathi to discuss contentious issues (Uthongathi, 30 - 31 July 1988), or to clarify the philosophy (N.E.S.T., 8-9 Sept. 1987). The present writer is conscious of the very open and vigorous exchange of viewpoints that occurs at such meetings. The impression is gained of a rich interchange of ideas between the Board of N.E.S.T. on the one hand, and the Board and administration of Uthongathi on the other. A perusal of the above documentation reveals the philosophy as a recurring central issue, which often forms the focus of interchange between:

- (a) The Board of N.E.S.T., heterogeneous in its composition and composed of several persons immersed in the philosophy N.E.S.T. from its early years. They have a prime responsibility of ensuring that the schools established under their trusteeship reflect the purpose of creating a model for the post-apartheid society.
- (b) The Board and administration of Uthongathi, cognisant of the principles and philosophy espoused by the N.E.S.T Central Board, yet also enmeshed and immersed in the daily pressures of translating a most challenging body of theory into practice in a "real world" (Uthongathi, 30-31 Jul. 1988) of high parental expectations, scarce financial resources and a community living with the daily experience of apartheid.

A growing concern has become evident, on the part of the N.E.S.T. directorate, at the "upmarket" image of Uthongathi. Such image appears to have formed as a result of moves within the school to compete successfully for a satisfactory balance of pupils while operating in an open, private-school market.

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T., dated 3 December 1988 (N.E.S.T., 3 Dec. 1988) carries an item on the relationship between the N.E.S.T. Trustees, N.E.S.T. Board and N.E.S.T. Schools. It is evident from these minutes that legal opinion had been sought from the Attorney of N.E.S.T. in order to clarify the fiduciary responsibility of the N.E.S.T. Trustees, and the need for the objects of the Deed of Trust to be fully and fairly reflected in the constitution of each N.E.S.T. school. Although sensitively worded, the clauses for inclusion in the preamble of the Constitution of each school effectively acknowledge the overriding authority of the Deed of Trust. It is evident that all N.E.S.T. schools have legal obligations to conduct their affairs in accordance with the objects of the Trust. Trustees have the right, within their discretion, to ensure that all N.E.S.T. schools operate in accordance with the philosophy of N.E.S.T., although it is obvious from the minutes that the Trustees will not involve themselves in the day to day running of the school.

The relationship between the Board of Uthongathi and N.E.S.T. Central has always been very cordial (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Apr. 1989), yet the constraints placed on the school by the central body have remained contentious. Certain aspects of the philosophy are clearly seen to impinge on the practical viability of the school, while expected funding from N.E.S.T. Central has not materialised to the level expected.

Chairman of the Board of Uthongathi Mr Bryce Biggs comments:

"In composition the National Board of N.E.S.T. comprises a non-racial group, several of whom have direct experience of these schools, with strong views based on experience. Parallels are drawn between Uthongathi and Woodmead or Maru a Pula. However, socio-political events and people's expectations about education have moved rapidly since Maru a Pula and Woodmead were opened. Many parents expect this school to provide a matric pass for every child. The primary drive for every parent is for a good matric pass. In 1971 if a pupil left school with a senior certificate, it was not the end of the world. Now, without a senior certificate career prospects could be in jeopardy" (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989).

Certain tensions are clearly evident between those who serve to formulate and project the N.E.S.T. philosophy, with a fundamental legislative function, and those who serve an executive function in implementing it under functionalist local pressures that serve to realign the endeavour towards the status quo. N.E.S.T. Central has sought to guide Uthongathi to become a more modest enterprise than the Board of N.E.S.T. clearly perceives it to be. The Board of Uthongathi has tended to concede the validity of the argument and has given practical effect to it where possible, yet argues that there is a limit to which the school can implement the egalitarian thrust of the philosophy. Particularly contentious have been the initial running costs of the school, staff-pupil ratio, level of bursary support and apparent initial tardiness in establishing the community service programme. These matters are dealt with later in the present chapter. A further issue of recent concern has been the definition of national

and regional access to fundraising. It had raised uncertainties between N.E.S.T. Central and its regional organisations, but it is clear from recent correspondence that a suitable arrangement has been agreed (N.E.S.T., 5 Mar. 1989). The frankness, openness and democratic exposure of all relevant views is a great strength of the system.

It appears that, as the N.E.S.T. schooling system develops and evolves to comprise several fully functioning and increasingly autonomous institutions, the central structures will diminish in importance. Prof. G.R. Bozzoli explains:

"The Board will gradually diminish in importance and will disappear, to be replaced by a Central Committee, including a part-time Chairman and Secretary. Their main job will be to raise funds. The Council will consist of Headmasters and Bursars of schools"  
(Bozzoli, 3 Oct. 1988).

#### 4.4.3. The philosophy of N.E.S.T.

The gradual evolution of the philosophy of the New Era Schools Trust can be traced back to the experiences of Messrs Deane Yates and Steyn Krige in Southern Africa over a period of thirty or more years. Krige explains:

"The philosophy arose as a result of the fragmented nature of South Africa, with apartheid as the prime cause. There was a drift to chaos and violence, and it was our wish to work towards a post-apartheid South Africa by bringing children together in schooling in which they could play and live and work. This was achieved successfully at Waterford, then at Maru a Pula and Woodmead together, where healthy societies were produced. These were social rather than educational experiments, in which were created in micro-cosm the projected, post-apartheid society" (Krige, 30-31 Jul.

Socio-political events with a bearing on the development of the philosophy of N.E.S.T. are recorded and discussed in Chapter Three. In their endeavour to ameliorate the divisions within South African society, N.E.S.T. has identified and challenged an impressive range of social forces that tend to perpetuate privilege, elitism and hegemony. Their philosophy, stated at various times and in various documents since 1981, was subjected to an intensive reappraisal at a workshop held at Uthongathi school during September 1987, after Uthongathi had been in operation for nine months. The resulting document (N.E.S.T., Sept. 1987) reaffirmed in essence the principles upon which N.E.S.T. had been founded several years previously. The aim of N.E.S.T. was expressed as follows:

"The aim of N.E.S.T. is 'to establish schools (in the Republic of South Africa) in which each of the race groups is fully and fairly represented' - extract from the Deed of Trust. This aim is amplified further by a definition given by Professor Es'kia Mphahlele, 'multiracialism is but a physical mixture of equals and unequals, singulars and plurals, but non-racialism evolves as a state of mind that must be seen to express itself on the concourse where races meet and work together. Nonracialism only evolves as inequalities diminish, when we can face each other as equals: not equals in a philosophical or religious sense but as a social reality'. Accordingly, participation in N.E.S.T. at all levels of executive control from the Central Board to each of the school's Governing Bodies is marked by a fair representation of the community's racial mix. The same principle is aimed at in the composition of each school's teaching and administrative staff, as well as pupil membership. Thus N.E.S.T. seeks to provide a fusion of all races,



so that no one group can claim the school as its own; rather the school is established for the mutual benefit of all its members. In this, N.E.S.T. schools, by their example, are seeking to influence schools, both Private and Government, within the education system of South Africa to do the same thing. They are seen as a catalyst for social change. The contribution of N.E.S.T. is seen not in the quantity, but in the quality of its products" (ibid.).

The document of September 1987 reflects principles that are embedded in the Constitution of N.E.S.T. As such, the philosophy exerts a strong determination on the theory and practice of N.E.S.T. schools. The Uthongathi Constitution, as shown in the previous section, has to be in accord with that of N.E.S.T. Indeed, the Constitution of Uthongathi was ratified by an Executive Committee meeting of N.E.S.T. in 1986 (Board of Uthongathi, 26 Jun. 1986). In that year, too, the Chairman of the Board of Uthongathi, Secretary of the Board and Headmaster of the school visited Maru a Pula to experience the ethos of one of the schools that had been a crucible for the N.E.S.T. philosophy (Board of Uthongathi, 23 Oct. 1986; 20 Nov. 1986). It became evident in December 1987, however, following the first major reappraisal of the philosophy in September of that year, that not all persons identified closely with Uthongathi were fully cognisant of the philosophy. The Board minutes read:

"Mr Dorkin commented that the meeting held that day had been a revelation to him and he urged that parents of pupils already at the school, and those of future pupils, should receive copies of the NEST philosophy so that there could be no doubt as to the nature of the school to which they were committing their children" (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Dec. 1987).

N.E.S.T. Central reacted promptly. In the following month a revised statement of philosophy was published (Appendix A). It systematised and rephrased the decisions of September 1987. In the preamble to the document, the Chairman of the Board of N.E.S.T. explained that it did not add to, nor subtract from, the principles originally formulated in 1981. It tended rather to shift emphasis in order to accord with the evolving social realities of South Africa. He pointed out that the philosophy would be subject to periodic reviews (Bozzoli, 25 Apr. 1988).

The Board of Uthongathi expressed reservations about this further revision of the philosophy (Board of Uthongathi, 18 Feb. 1988), and their apprehensions were promptly conveyed to the Board of N.E.S.T. by their Chairman. The following extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T. serves to clarify its response:

"The Chairman said that he believed that the parents of Uthongathi had not been fully informed of the philosophy and that was one of the reasons why the document was updated" (N.E.S.T., 19 Feb. 1988).

It was agreed that the issue be resolved by the provision to parents and other concerned parties of the revised statement of the N.E.S.T. philosophy (Board of Uthongathi, 23 Jun 1988). This was subsequently done. A further reaffirmation of the basic tenets of the philosophy was published by Deane Yates on 11 March 1989. It is significant in its unambiguous emphasis on simplicity and its anti-elitist stance. It forms the content of Appendix B. The reader is expressly referred to Appendices A and B, in which the statements of philosophy are to be found. In order to render their complexities most coherent in the space available to the writer, important concepts have been extracted and

clustered under appropriate headings. The reader is also reminded of the earlier analysis in Chapter 2.3.

(a) Non-racialism.

The N.E.S.T philosophy strongly affirms a policy of non-racialism, with profound implications for the membership of its Boards, teaching staff and student corps. These are in practice characterised by a complex racial mix, orchestrated to ensure a significant physical presence of each major racial group. Indeed, as Appendix A will show, the primary aim of the Trust is declared to be "the establishment of schools which shall be free of racism," while the communities formed in each school shall be "non-racial in their way of life and in their ethos". The manner in which Uthongathi has given effect to this principle is explored in several later sections of the present chapter.

(b) Multi-cultural schooling.

The heritages of all sections of the South African population are to be harnessed. The contribution to the whole that is to come from the richness of each child's heritage is acknowledged. There is to be respect for world faiths and the creation of understanding and respect between individuals of different cultures. In essence, the schools are to be multi-cultural.

(c) Social responsibility.

Students are to be drawn from all sections of the community and N.E.S.T. schools are to be made affordable to all by the award of bursaries. Simplicity will characterise the buildings and way of life of students and staff members. The dignity of labour is emphasised, as is self-help and

community service. Schools are to be used as community centres. Elitism is to be countered in every possible way. This policy is stated with particular vigour in Appendix B.

(d) A broad education of quality.

The philosophy provides for applicants to be selected on the basis of "educability" although the creaming off of academic talent is eschewed. High standards are to be pursued in N.E.S.T. schools, leading to the equivalent of a university entrance pass. A high degree of intellectual, cultural, spiritual and physical development will be promoted, and education of an academic nature will be balanced by sport and other extra-curricular activities. The non-formal or hidden curriculum will include development of a range of desirable personal qualities. There will be a focus on creating understanding and respect between individuals from different races and backgrounds.

It is suggested that all following sections of the present chapter be read with the context and imperatives of the philosophy in mind.

The philosophy embodied in the Constitution of N.E.S.T. has clearly been of considerable influence on the policies and practices of Uthongathi. Having become increasingly promulgated (and therefore better known) the philosophy is well supported by teachers and students of the school. It has very obvious implications for the type of education offered, for the student intake, bursary support and way of life.

A questionnaire survey of teaching staff at Uthongathi, that was implemented in February 1989, revealed them to be strongly supportive of the social philosophy of the school

(Appendix C,ques.B 13). Some members believed the Uthongathi model to be the only feasible form of schooling for a future, non-racial South Africa. They tended to support a single, open system of education as a desirable future dispensation (ibid.,ques.B25), while the multi-cultural approach of the school was seen to be a more desirable mode of schooling than the separate education of groups with differing cultural heritages (ibid.,ques.B24). Uthongathi was thought by a significant number of staff members to give priority to the assimilation of pupils into the wider South African society, with its dominant Western industrial culture (ibid.,ques.B3). The results of the Staff survey suggest a sound insight into the N.E.S.T. philosophy as well as a positive view of its basic tenets. In response to a questionnaire sent to parents, they professed themselves to be well informed about the social and educational aims of Uthongathi (App.E,ques.A 1). Several parents remarked on the unequivocal direction that the philosophy gave to the school. Uthongathi's non-racial nature and multi-cultural orientation were prime motives for many parents sending their children there. The students, too, have reflected strong support for most elements of the philosophy, as shown by their responses to questions posed in the questionnaire comprising Appendix D. In many interviews held with groups of students, their support for non-racialism in particular, also the mixing of persons from different backgrounds, permeated the interchanges time and again. The following discussion, held with Standard 6 pupils on 10 March 1989, is typical:

- A.C. : "Can you say something about the philosophy of the school; the main aims of the school?"
- S. : "Its very good . . . the mixing. We learn more about what others are doing. We learn about different cultures and we mix quite freely with

each other".

- N. : "It brings people together".  
 P. : "We learn to respect others".  
 Z. : "There are no outcasts and everyone feels at home".  
 A.C. : "What would be the result if many more South African schools were like this one?"  
 P. : "Racial discrimination would be less".  
 K. : "You see . . . people are so ignorant of each other. Why can't everyone just like everyone else?"

Despite the apparent success achieved through implementing the philosophy in practice, it has been subject to criticism on a theoretical level, especially with regard to the orchestrated balance of races that is an integral feature. Owing to the importance of this concept, the criticisms are discussed in some detail.

Mr M.A.S. Corke, Headmaster of St Barnabas, has expressed his concern at the concept of a racial balance. In conversation with the present writer he argued the case:

"What right does anyone have to use the Population Registration Act as a means to measure someone's identity . . . and, by implication, his worth?"

Mr Corke questioned the apparent hegemony (sic) between race and culture, and queried the application of racial quotas in being non-racial. He believes the proportion of black students to thus not reflect the proportions in society, and suggested that a form of multi-racialism was being created that echoed the sentiments of the Tricameral Parliament (Corke, 6 Oct. 1988).

Corke's criticisms are important, for they touch on essential divisive factors in South Africa that have been directly challenged by N.E.S.T. Several are highly contentious issues. The use by N.E.S.T. of the Population Registration Act can be construed as an anti-racist statement in the sense that it serves to bring the persons identified by the act in close physical proximity in their everyday lives, rather than to divide them. It tends therefore to show the weakness of the Act's rationale. Further, the pervasive perception of staff, students and parents at Uthongathi is that all races are, in everyday practice, treated as intrinsically equal in worth and dignity (App.C,ques.B7; App.D,ques.B8; App.E,ques.A6). During the course of the present research no evidence was uncovered of the use of racial categories to regulate any facet of the daily social intercourse at the school. Nor could one rationally equate daily practice there with the "Own and General Affairs" dispensation, separate structures and lack of black presence that characterises the Tricameral parliamentary systems. Nor has the school enjoyed government funding. Corke's criticism of the balance of races and the implementation of measures to gain 'quotas' perhaps has more substance. While it is clearly a means to encourage all "groups" to merge, in the knowledge that none will become a significant minority, the question of turning away persons once a balance is reached holds serious ethical import, since children might then be excluded on the grounds of race.

Mr Allen Graham, Headmaster of Woodmead school expresses his uncertainty :

"I would have personal reservations about applying the policy, on principle. Pupils are suitable or they are not. I do understand why it is done. It is clearly an

attempt to bring races together rather than be uniracial. But it will be difficult, even in the short term, to maintain quotas in open schools" (Graham, 5 Oct. 1988).

Neither has Waterford implemented a racial balance, according to Headmaster Mr R.G. Eyeington (14 Sept. 1988).

"We have never had a quota on racial grounds. The school has never been consciously segmented. It just happens. It is random, and provides a very good mix."

The lack of any legal constraints restricting such mixing in Swaziland must be borne in mind.

It is clear that N.E.S.T. is attempting to avoid the development of a "ghetto mentality" by a too small representation of any racial group, and the substantial presence of black children in the school represents a form of affirmative action that avoids the criticism of tokenism:

"Small numbers of black students mean that opportunities for racial mixing are often limited, and some white students may have no opportunities for cross-race friendships" (Christie, 1988, p. 53).

Molete (6 Oct. 1988) has frankly explained the balance as an endeavour to ensure that no cultural group will be overwhelmed, while G.R. Bozzoli, Chairman of the Board of N.E.S.T. explained further during an interview with the researcher:

"The present scheme of balancing races is an essential way of starting. It helps to ensure that there is no great domination. We may not maintain it and will



undoubtedly evolve into a system reflective of the proportion of local communities with each group fully and fairly represented, roughly proportional to the local population" (Bozzoli, 3 Oct. 1988).

N.E.S.T. could therefore be set to gradually adapt its policy as the mixing of races becomes more normal and natural in South African society. It is a path that the Waterford School in Swaziland initially took, according to Mr Eyeington (14 Sept. 1988). Eyeington discerns a gradual shift in philosophy at Waterford from an initial policy in which a racial balance was present to one in which non-racialism applied, with an orientation towards the wider world. Board of Uthongathi member Dr D. Bagwandeem (2 Mar. 1989) asserts that the present policy of N.E.S.T. is essentially non-racial, standing in firm contrast to the multi-racialism that entrenches apartheid. Although unconsciously conflating the concepts of culture and race, Chairman of the Board of Uthongathi Mr Bryce Biggs explains the policy in more detail:

"Essentially what we are doing would be unacceptable for people of the far Left or the far Right, but probably for different reasons. The far Right would criticise us for any form of contact between races that would lead to egalitarianism. They would want to protect their culture from being impacted by the values of other cultures. Their view is exclusivist. The far Left query the apparently arbitrary balance between the races: that's not how things are! My answer is that we can only understand others if we deal as equals and are not threatened. No-one must feel that they have to withdraw into their own cultures because of a lack of confidence. Cultures must not be under threat. We have a 'comfort zone' when there is confidence in

numbers. A 'clique zone' is entered in which pupils will coalesce for protection if there are smaller numbers, and ultimately a further reduction results in flight" (18 Jan. 1989).

In practice, as will be shown, the racial balance is not strictly engineered. There was a student population comprised of 33% Indians, 26% whites, 25% Zulus and 16% coloured children at Uthongathi at the start of the 1989 academic year.

#### 4.4.4. Uthongathi School.

##### 4.4.4.1. Physical facilities.

As shown earlier in the research, simplicity and modesty are key features of the philosophy of N.E.S.T. Accordingly, in investigating the financing of the proposed new school Uthongathi, Mr M.T.S. Krige visited the Natal Education Department in Pietermaritzburg and acquired statistical information on expenditures. He was advised of current endeavours to equalise state expenditure for all pupils irrespective of their race, and took note of the financial norms applied at the time (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988).

The selection of a site, and subsequent design and construction of the school have been traced in Chapter Three. The entire cost of the school was borne by the Anglo American Corporation Chairman's Fund, and the sum of R9 million was spent in a relatively short period of time. The first design brief for the school was considered to be too opulent but the second was accepted. The result was an aesthetically pleasing and functional cluster of buildings that have proved admirably suited to the task, although modifications and expansions have become necessary to cater for a growing population of boarders.

During the first year of its operation, the researcher visited Uthongathi together with academic colleagues and noted their criticism of the school buildings as overly costly and therefore elitist. Similar criticisms had obviously been conveyed to members of the N.E.S.T. organisation by other persons. Speaking at a workshop held at the school in July 1988, Mr Krige pointed out that N.E.S.T. faced constant criticism on the grounds of "elitism". Yet, he asserted, simplicity in all things was a cornerstone of N.E.S.T. philosophy. In the context of South Africa, he further suggested, any school which had quality buildings, provided a good education and catered for only three hundred students would be viewed as elitist. He went on to say :

"Even if the state had erected a school for 300 pupils, half of whom were boarders, they would not have been able to come out under R9 million" (Uthongathi, 30/31 Jul. 1988).

Krige concluded with an appeal for a drastic pruning of the school budget. At the workshop parents responded to Krige's statement with a reaffirmation of the need for high standards to be maintained, with an emphasis on good matriculation results. There appeared to be little sympathy at the time for a more modest approach. The minutes subsequently pose the question whether Uthongathi would be relevant in a post-apartheid society. It is clear that the initial costs might represent an obstacle to extrapolating the school as a model for post-apartheid society. Responding to the charges of elitism, Mr Bryce Biggs has suggested that such charges arise from public ignorance about the cost of establishing a new school (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989). He has pointed out that the school is not the usual box shape, but is aesthetically appealing. It

looks expensive, yet the architects had assured him that the cost of the administrative and teaching areas for Uthongathi were directly comparable with day schools planned for government departments. There was said to be an established financial norm for all new schools.

Biggs concludes:

"The school does not look like a Government school. Its aesthetically pleasing looks make it appear elitist. If we had built an ugly school, we would have run less risk of being described as elitist" (ibid.).

Uthongathi Board member Dr D. Bagwandeem has suggested that the architecture of the school is equivalent in costs to a white state secondary school; less than other private schools. He believes the term elitism to be loosely used. It shows ignorance of what the school stands for (Bagwandeem, 2 Mar. 1989).

Another Board member, Mr D. Kemp, has argued that the Anglo American Corporation would never allow something to emerge that was not a model of excellence that others could emulate:

"Excellence, not extravagance! It must be appropriate to the task" (Kemp, 17 Jan. 1989).

Mr Bryce Biggs has suggested that the initial charges might have arisen because of the small intake of students in the first year. In the early stages, he explains, an appropriate balance of students and staff was the first preoccupation. In the totally new situation facing the Board, it had been intended to keep major variables manageable (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989). He has affirmed the current policy of the school of sharing its facilities with the community, but concedes that it is not a community school:

"We were in a grey location and not close to a single, cohesive, monolithic community. The school was deliberately placed in a neutral area. It could not thus grow out of a set community such as Kwa Mashu, and had no specific racial characteristics. The isolation was necessary to create autonomy and an own identity. It is community-based rather than a community school. Our initial small staff could not easily drive the first community programme. We never had the resources" (ibid.).

The researcher notes that projections of student enrolment for the future anticipate a corps of four hundred and fifty by the year 1993 (Kemp, 13 Oct. 1988). By January 1989 it had also become clear that the buildings were being more intensively utilised than was the case in the early years, while community use of the school had noticeably increased.

Several examples can be cited of past efforts by the Natal Committee of N.E.S.T., as well as the Board of Uthongathi, to keep expenditure on buildings modest during the construction phase. The Natal Committee minutes read:

"The Committee felt that, while it was desirable to incorporate as many facilities as could be accommodated within the available budget, these should be built as cheaply as possible and any suggestion of ostentation avoided. It was further felt that, wherever possible, such facilities should be shared with the community" (Natal Committee of N.E.S.T., 1 Mar. 1986).

During the building phase, savings were effected at Uthongathi by, inter alia, using cement tiles in place of clay tiles and vinyl flooring for quarry tiles (Board of

Uthongathi, 22 May 1986), although it is evident that quality was not to be neglected. Nevertheless, Uthongathi might prove to be the best-appointed of the four N.E.S.T. schools. The second school, Phuthing, is without certain facilities provided at Uthongathi, while the proposed N.E.S.T. school in Cape Town is likely to be yet more modest. Speaking of the Cape Town school, Krige has suggested that it might develop as a project deeply rooted in meeting the needs of the community:

"The Cape Town school is not fully financed and might start as a community service centre. The community project might include soccer facilities, a swimming pool, hall, creche, and junior school: the intention being to create a school out of such a beginning. This might be a lot closer to what the future will hold! The site is in Rondebosch East, near Crawford Station" (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988).

It has become clear that an expanding pupil population at Uthongathi, with a renewed emphasis on the presence of boarders, will necessitate a further expansion of the facilities initially provided by the Anglo American Corporation. Indeed, it had already become clear during the second year of operation that more boarding accommodation was needed to cater for a greater student roll. Several utility rooms have therefore already been converted for use by boarders (Board of Uthongathi, 5 May 1988, 20 Oct. 1988).

In the headmasters' report delivered in December 1988, Mr Richard Thompson outlined projected building development for the expanding school:

"The Board had a very close look at the future needs of the school and next year is likely to see the commencement of a major building phase to ensure the provision of additional teaching space. The long-range master plan will also eventually provide for the addition of another boarding campus and additional staff accommodation. Also, we continue to investigate all possibilities which, I hope, will eventually result in the building of our primary school in the not too distant future" (Thompson, 2 Dec. 1988).

The idea of developing a primary school has for long been debated at Uthongathi. Chairman of the N.E.S.T. Board Prof. G.R. Bozzoli confirmed to the researcher the need for a primary school. He argued that it should include agricultural and technical courses "so that technology and agriculture can be possible future careers" (Bozzoli, 3 Oct. 1988). Many other sound reasons based on educational concerns could be advanced to support the establishment of a primary school at Uthongathi, although plans have been shelved for some time owing to the costs (Board of Uthongathi 21 May 1987; 20 Aug. 1987; 16 Sept. 1987; 22 Oct. 1987).

In view of the need for the ongoing planning of further infrastructure, a Building and Grounds Committee was established in 1988. It reported to the Board of Uthongathi on 23 February 1989. Having overseen the conversion of the utility rooms to provide additional student accommodation, the Committee was engaged in researching, planning and developing additional teaching space and accommodation for staff.

#### 4.4.4.2. Finances.

There was initial optimism about the schools's financial position. At its birth, Uthongathi had been handsomely financed by the Anglo American Corporation, while during 1986 Mr Deane Yates was able to report on the early success of the central fund-raising campaign (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Jul.1986). It was possible to set quite modest yearly fees of R2 200 for day students and R5 500 for boarders, in accordance with N.E.S.T. philosophy. These fees compared very favourably with those of other private schools, particularly since Uthongathi received no government funding (Board of Uthongathi,20 Nov.1986). Apparently financially secure, and financed by N.E.S.T. Central to the extent of 25% of bursary costs (Board of Uthongathi, 15 Sept. 1986), the school extended generous bursary support to a level of 74% of total fee income during its first year of operation (Board of Uthongathi,23 Oct.1989). There was a growing realisation, however, that this support might have been too generous. Mr Bryce Biggs noted that the scheme of bursary support was in need of more careful appraisal in future:

"The Chairman pointed out that it would probably be necessary to reduce bursary support from 74% of fee income to 50% over the next five years, and it was noted that he and the Principal would be preparing a criteria and rating system for allocating bursaries to students in the future. It was felt that applications should be screened by a representative group of Board members" (ibid.).

As early as July 1986, feasibility studies were tabled, showing that the school would not cover all of its operating expenses before at least five years had passed. Subsequent stringency measures included the curtailment of landscaping,



with students completing the planting of trees (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Jul. 1986). Other expenditure was also substantially reduced, and the raising of student numbers for the first year was given attention. The Natal Committee had recognised in 1986 that student numbers would be crucial to the school's financial viability. The position was expressed as follows:

"It was noted that the initial intake of pupils was critical - the greater the number, the sooner the Board would become viable" (Natal Committee of N.E.S.T., 1 Mar. 1986).

A considerable effort was subsequently mounted to expand the initial intake from sixty standard six pupils, to include standard five and seven pupils as well.

Despite a report that the school's finances were healthy in May 1987 (Board of Uthongathi, 21 May 1987), a draft budget tabled five months later anticipated an operating deficit for 1988 of nearly R380 000 against the original estimate two years before of R85 000 (Board of Uthongathi, 22 Oct. 1987). This disturbing draft budget came at a most inopportune time for N.E.S.T. It had been recently reported that an apparent backlash was being experienced against non-racialism, to the detriment of fund-raising. Mr Biggs pointed out that considerable funds would be needed in future and the problems of finance would have to be addressed with vigour (Board of Uthongathi, 20 Aug. 1987). Local fund-raising was proving successful but funds from overseas were not forthcoming. With finance set to become a major problem, of central concern to the survival of Uthongathi, Biggs expressed the view that bursary support should be pegged, with a rise in fees of 16% for 1988. Further, all boarders should be charged full boarding fees,

whether they elected to remain in residence over weekends or not (ibid.).

At the review of the school's first year of operation, held at Uthongathi in December 1987 under Chairmanship of Prof G.R. Bozzoli, the Chairman of the Board of N.E.S.T. conveyed his concern at the parlous financial situation:

"The Chairman stated that the Trustees of N.E.S.T. were dismayed at the difference between the current Uthongathi budget for 1988 and the revised budget which had been drawn up in the middle of 1986. They felt this budget reflected unacceptably high standards at the school and an unduly low ratio of pupils to teachers. They also questioned the range of subjects being offered. In view of N.E.S.T's many commitments and the serious shortfall in anticipated fundraising returns, the projected deficit figure reflected in the budget was a matter of grave concern to them. It was essential that the school be run as economically as possible, and that every effort be made to adhere to the N.E.S.T. philosophy, which called for simplicity in buildings and in the food, dress and way of life of the school community" (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Dec. 1987).

Mr Deane Yates reported at the meeting that a recent fundraising trip to the United States had proved to be disappointing. There was intense competition for funds, while the withdrawal of many business enterprises from South Africa and the collapse of world stock markets had exacerbated the problem (ibid.).

Board of N.E.S.T. member Mr T. Molete subsequently explained the issues to the present writer:

"Overseas financiers are measuring how N.E.S.T will be positioned relative to their own future position in South Africa. It is an attitude of waiting for events. How do you eliminate oppression and bring in an open society? Nest does not talk with revolutionary rhetoric. Overseas, scenarios are simplistic. There are simply oppressors and the oppressed!" (Moleté, 6 Oct. 1988).

N.E.S.T. Board member Mr John Kane-Berman elaborated:

"Some foreign donor agencies tend to use money as a political lever and they demand that recipient organisations in South Africa toe certain party political lines to get the money" (Kane-Berman, 6 Oct. 1988).

Mr Kane-Berman reaffirmed to the writer the N.E.S.T. approach of not adhering to any part of the political spectrum, but to endeavour to stand outside politics.

Mr Brendon Butler, presently Deputy Headmaster of Phuthing, believes overseas efforts to force change in South Africa by sanctions to have in fact adversely affected the access of underprivileged pupils to Uthongathi:

"The school faces the danger of a dropoff of overseas funding, resulting in a loss of bursary support. The result is a situation where we are forced to market a school for upper income brackets. It was never meant to be a school for rich children" (Butler, 14 Oct. 1988).

In 1987, bursary support was indeed marginally reduced, but it became clear that even the new level remained beyond the

capacity of the school (Kemp, 30-31 Jul. 1988). A new formula to be applied in 1989 would result in an average support of under 30% (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988).

Accepting the need to reduce bursary support, Mr Steyn Krige also pointed to the need for Uthongathi to further trim its budget:

"It was NEST's aim to provide 'affordable' education, and to ensure that no pupil was excluded because of financial considerations. They envisaged bursary support at a level of 25%. Unfortunately, with three other schools coming on stream, it was impossible for N.E.S.T. Central to continue the present level of bursary support at Uthongathi. It was therefore essential that Uthongathi trim its budget drastically in order to meet its financial obligations" Krige, 30/31 Jul. 1988).

In response, members of the Board of Uthongathi defended the need to maintain standards at the school, and it was suggested that fees be raised since bursary funding was easier to motivate than deficit funding. Minutes of meetings of the Board of Uthongathi for the second half of 1988 show a serious endeavour on the part of the school to balance its budget, attack areas of overspending and ensure that no unnecessary outflow of cash occurred (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988; 6 Oct. 1988; 23 Oct. 1988). Financial constraints and the depressing budget tabled in 1987 had obliged the school to raise the fees for day scholars to R4 600 per annum and for boarders to R7 800, with effect from 1989. These fees were described as comparing favourably with the fees of similar schools (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988).

Since early 1988 the policy of substantially increasing the number of students at the school had received determined attention. The Chairman of the Board pointed out that the number of students would have to be increased from a projected total of three hundred to five hundred, if the school was to be a viable proposition (Board of Uthongathi, 18 Feb. 1988).

The hope nevertheless remained alive that N.E.S.T. Central would aid the Board of Uthongathi, with the provision of adequate bursary support as a priority for the two existing schools, before committing itself to further capital expenditure on the other two schools originally planned (Board of Uthongathi, 20 Oct. 1988).

During the latter half of 1988, in particular, a series of detailed financial plans was prepared for Uthongathi by member of the School Board Mr R.D. Kemp. Mr Kemp's professional expertise as Assistant Manager of Sugar Industry Affairs for the Tongaat-Hulett's Group has been brought increasingly into play. He has devised financial plans reflecting a summary of total operating expenses of a two-stream school growing to three hundred and twenty students in 1991 (28 Jul. 1988), and of further growth to a three-stream school of four hundred and fifty students by 1993 (13 Oct. 1988). Total estimates of yearly operating costs were projected to increase from approximately R1 267 100 in 1988 to R4 912 600 in 1993. In an aide memoire prepared for the chairman of the N.E.S.T. Central Finance Committee (Kemp, 19 Oct. 1988), he has stressed the prudence of Uthongathi dramatically reducing its aspirations regarding the level of bursary support offered. Support should be reduced, on average, from 50% to 25% of the fees as a long-term projection. Kemp has pointed to the period of transition through which Uthongathi is going. It is a

period of profound and traumatic adjustment that will render fees in line with those of private schools of similar size unavoidable. Further, the subject curriculum should be attractive enough to bring in 75% of gross budgetted fee income in fees actually paid by parents. Parents would undoubtedly have to contribute a greater percentage of the fees:

"Assuming that enrolments match our budget expectations, the average bursary support across all the pupils, which was reduced from 74% in 1987 to 65% in 1988, will be brought down to 53% in 1989, 45% in 1990, 35% in 1991, 28% in 1992 and 25% in 1993" (ibid., p.2).

The aide memoire was concluded with an appeal to N.E.S.T. Central for an injection of available funds to assist Uthongathi in surviving its painful transition period.

The financial difficulties experienced by N.E.S.T. Central were, however, made explicit to the Board of Uthongathi during April 1989 (Board of Uthongathi, 26 Apr. 1989). It was clear that the burden of fundraising would in future lie with the school itself.

Commenting on the financial management of Uthongathi during its infancy, Kemp (17 Jan. 1989) has clearly affirmed the demand by prospective parents for a quality education for their children:

"Many parents often stressed quality education, with academic standards as a first priority, while others seemed to see it as co-equal with the quality of the physical environment, including boarding facilities. I can recall people expressing reservations prior to the

development of our sports facilities, warning about the need for sporting opportunities equivalent to those available in other government or private schools. I have heard the demand directly from whites, also from some Indians and Africans, that quality is paramount. It seems to be especially true of people with other options available in private schools elsewhere. They would go to other schools if they perceived standards to be lower than elsewhere. Its a matter of common sense. There is not much of a market for educational martyrs to prove a social point in South Africa."

The statement presents a powerful view of the school as an institution in a free market setting, that must at all costs meet the needs of its clientele if it is to survive.

Kemp believes the cost of running the school to have been seriously underestimated initially and points out that inadequate attention was given to someone overseeing catering and grounds costs. He affirmed that the costs of food, electricity usage and fertilizers had since been cut. Turning to bursaries, Kemp explains:

"Initially we set 25% as a bursary target but the attraction of the initial balanced intake was different and our subsequent pattern of generosity became too great as we aimed higher. Our planning did not sufficiently consider affordability in the short or long terms. The low initial fees made our projections look healthy. The bursary shock would have come earlier if our financial estimates had been more accurate, and higher" (ibid.).

He continues:

"Nest initially offered more support than was intended to be maintained as an average level, as a necessary discount to attract pupils to an unknown school. It seemed appropriate to give more in the early years. The policy was correct; the extent perhaps too great" (ibid.).

Many bursaries were consequently awarded without a sufficiently vigorous assessment of parents' incomes. The school now calls for fresh financial information annually in order to ensure continuing equality between bursary holders. Kemp is emphatic:

"We would never have got people in at the beginning, at 25% support" (ibid.).

As a consequence, fees have been substantially raised and the financial viability of the school enjoys constant reappraisal and monitoring. Mr Biggs sounds an optimistic note:

"Parents have generally accepted the need to increase fees dramatically, without demur. This indicates their seeing the benefits of their children being taught in this environment" (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989).

The policy of increasing student numbers is explained by Mr Kemp (17 Jan. 1989):

"The optimum size of the school was not thoroughly investigated at first. Three hundred was appropriate for a social experiment but not necessarily financially viable, if one is to offer a reasonable range of subjects. Growth in numbers offers a strategy to get out of the logjam. The opportunity is there: it must



be proved in the market place. We certainly don't want to lose the egalitarianism. A bigger number of indigents (sic) must be helped. More feepayers would help this."

He concludes:

"Survival is of prime importance. To survive as a private school we must have feepayers. We must attract donors by offering something special. The special thing is that N.E.S.T. can provide a unique opportunity for the meeting of young people of all races who, because of their ability, have a great deal to offer a future South Africa. They gain a unique social preparation at a most formative age" (ibid.).

#### 4.4.4.3. The parent community.

Several principles embodied in the philosophy of N.E.S.T. have exerted a very direct influence on the composition of the parent community at Uthongathi. There is present at the school a rich mixture of races and cultures. Further, the policy of drawing students from all sections of the community and making N.E.S.T. schools affordable to all who pass the entrance tests has resulted in the presence of families representing a quite wide cross-section of economic strata in society.

A histogram showing income distribution derived from the Pursary Sub-Committee Report submitted to the Board of Uthongathi early in 1989 (Kent, et.al., 22 Feb. 1989) appears in Appendix F, to which the reader is referred.

The histogram shows the majority of parents earning in the region of R10 000 to R40 000 declared gross income yearly, with a contingent of modest incomes below R10 000 and a

proportion that might, by contrast, be described as upper middle class. The spread of incomes is quite remarkable for a private school; nor does the white community necessarily have a monopoly on wealth. Vice Principal Mr John Kent notes:

"We feel that a Bursary Support level as low as 25% average is going to make attracting pupils difficult, especially in the white community where, in our area, it seems that salaries are fairly low and commitments high" (ibid.).

To simplify, a majority of parents might be described as middle class, with a contingent of lower income or working class families and a minority of comparatively wealthy professionals. The income distribution renders sweeping allegations of elitism more difficult to substantiate, although the incomes are well above the national average. Several of the incomes in the lowest category of the histogram reflect the poverty exposed in the Report for the Second Carnegie Inquiry into poverty and development in South Africa (Wilson & Ramphele, 1989). An annual income of R1 121 was noted amongst the lowest of the returns to Uthongathi.

This quite wide spread of parents' incomes represents a potentially divisive factor among the parent body. Also, data from the Student Questionnaire in Appendix D shows the range of home languages and religions found amongst families with children at Uthongathi. Such diversity of cultures, coupled with the substantial balance of racial groups, could serve to exacerbate centrifugal tendencies. Yet, despite glimpses and suggestions of widely disparate views, there is a remarkable consensus on important aspects of the philosophy, as shown by returns from a questionnaire sent to parents in 1989.

Parents' perceptions of Uthongathi were revealed by their responses to the questionnaire that comprises Appendix E. Most parents reported themselves to be well informed about the social and educational aims of Uthongathi (ibid.,ques.A 1). A considerable number expressed themselves in favour of the South African government offering non-racial multi-cultural schooling as an option open to all (ibid.,ques.A2). A prime motivation for sending their children to Uthongathi was revealed in the open responses that appeared under Section B of the questionnaire. Many parents pointed to the open, non-racial atmosphere and possibility of mixing with children of other cultures. A clear majority of parents opposed the development at Uthongathi of an elite image. However, a significant minority of approximately 16% supported this possibility, although it would be contrary to the school's philosophy (ibid.,ques.A5). Several parents praised the small class sizes that enabled individual attention to be given to their children, and there was very strong support for sport, both in the open responses and in the itemised questionnaire (ibid.,ques.A11).

Taken in toto, the questionnaire replies reveal a strong identification of parents with the social aims of Uthongathi, coupled with an insistence of a broad education of quality for their children. A reputation for good matriculation results is also seen by parents to be essential, as the following points reflected in the minutes of the Planning Weekend held at Uthongathi on 30-31 July will show (Uthongathi,30-31 Jul.1988):

"(a) Even the most committed parents were primarily interested in good matriculation results. Whatever reservations there were about using these results as a yardstick, the results achieved were perceived to be of the utmost importance.

- (b) If Uthongathi was to attract suitable candidates it was essential that it gained and maintained a reputation for good results.
- (c) The highest standard of education was necessary.
- (d) The staff recognised the need to meet parents' expectations."

High parental expectations were reflected during an interview held by the researcher with Standard 6 students of the school:

- A.C. : "Why did your parents send you to this school?"
- V. : "It is non-racial and sets a high standard. Our parents hear good things about the school and expect a high standard in everything because it is a private school."
- A.C. : "Do parents have high expectations about everything?"
- S. : "Yes. You see, they pay a lot."

(Std. 6 students, 15 Mar. 1989).

In making known their views to the school, parents are afforded a meaningful input through an association known as Friends of Uthongathi, although direct access to the principal is also facilitated. The Friends functions as a parent-teachers body, although membership is open to any persons sympathetic to the school (Board of Uthongathi, 22 Jan. 1987). (A Steering Committee of parents was formed during 1987. They expressed their viewpoints on such matters as staffing and discipline. They sought to ensure the maintenance of firm discipline and the appointment of the most competent staff available. In response, concern was expressed by the Board at the apparent lack of empathy of some members of the Steering Committee with the extraordinary nature and purpose of Uthongathi.

Constructive criticism was nevertheless welcomed (Board of Uthongathi, 16 Sept. 1987; 22 Oct. 1987). Direct representation of the Friends of Uthongathi on the Board was effected in October 1987, and this created a further direct channel of communication.

At the workshop held at Uthongathi during July 1988, Chairman of the Friends of Uthongathi Mr C. Lyall-Watson explained the role and function of the organisation at the school. He pointed out that the body was elected democratically, without thought to the representation of racial groups. It was composed of parents as well as other persons interested in the school. The objectives of the body were to:

- (a) support and promote the school in accordance with its constitution,
- (b) aid communication "by understanding the whole picture",
- (c) seek avenues of finance for small facilities and minor projects.

The goals, he explained, were to be achieved by the operation of an Executive Committee, by the work of a representative on the School Board, by holding open meetings and by engaging in projects. The body also aided the school in its efforts to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Lyall-Watson, 30-31 Jul. 1988).

The Headmaster's Report (Thompson, 2 Dec. 1988) delivered in December 1988 listed a number of issues with which the Friends were engaged, including the contentious question of school uniforms, the raising of funds, conduct of open meetings and a tree-planting project. The issue of school uniforms indeed remained contentious for many months, with parents engaged in vigorous debate on the degree of

formality to be adopted: thereby showing the importance of the symbolic as well as the practiced aspects of the issue. (Board of Uthongathi, 20 Oct. 1988). The Friends have also expressed themselves on the naming of the school sports houses. Several parents challenged the suggestions (Gandhi, Luthuli, Paton) that were finally accepted, on the grounds that each personality was flawed in some way. The minutes of the Board meeting held in November 1988 read:

"The Headmaster expressed surprise that there should be any objections given, and that the three persons were internationally recognised persons with Natal links" (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Nov. 1988).

The minutes reflect the Board's view that it was impossible to satisfy everyone's perceptions. The only recourse open to parents who found it impossible to identify with the N.E.S.T philosophy was thus to remove their child from the school.

Despite the increasing enrolment and visible commitment of a majority of parents to the school, Mr Biggs (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989) concedes that not all parents identify closely with the aims of the school:

"With a widely-based constituency, not everyone is happy. That is self-evident. The experience at Uthongathi shows that the symbolic can't differ too widely from people's expectations. The symbolics include inter alia the range of subjects offered, staff-pupil ratios and range of sports offered. The reduced model favoured by some, including a limited subject choice and few sports is simply not acceptable to the majority of community groups, because government schools offer them. So, why bother to go to

Uthongathi? The ideological component is not the prime driver. The proportion of parents who will go to an experimental school because of an ideological viewpoint is relatively small. Finance has become complicated because N.E.S.T. Central argues that Uthongathi must find excess finance for what they consider to be excessive costs."

Biggs believes that there will be a transition over time as the philosophy becomes better known, for the parent community to shift from a focus on a good private- school type of education, to an education for the children of parents who are more ideologically committed to the idea of a non-racial school (ibid.).

Mr Richard Thompson is also frank about the prime needs of parents:

"All parents want their children to gain a matric certificate and university entrance. All parents, from whatever group, want a good education for their children" (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989).

He continues:

"Parents initially viewed the philosophy as largely theoretical : only as the school evolved as a reality did the parents seem to identify the philosophy with the school. They seemed to have to first experience the atmosphere on campus, to talk to the pupils and staff, or observe in the classroom or at sport. Some prospective pupils spend the day here before entry. Incidentally, the black parents are very supportive of the philosophy. They don't mind the concept of balance. They want to preserve their culture and language, and want others to understand their culture" (ibid.).

Thompson argues that some parents have entertained expectations not met by the school:

"A small minority of parents might be disappointed that their expectations have not been met. Some wanted an elite private school and might have been 'thrown' by the fact that we are not going to develop to that. It probably reflects a conservative view of education. Their viewpoint might gradually change. The majority are now well informed and very supportive" (ibid.).

Expressing the viewpoint of a parent who is an Executive member of the Friends of Uthongathi, Mr A. Wood (7 Mar. 1989) believes his view to be shared by many parents. His wish was for his child to experience an education of quality, with a substantial racial mix that would go beyond tokenism. Uthongathi offered a very good standard, with a strong community service ethic and freedom to mix with other races without prejudice:

"Unless a high standard is maintained", he asserts, "there could be a loss of pupils from all groups. To the best of my understanding, that high standard is being maintained" (ibid.).

Enlarging on his view of the racial balance, Mr Wood continues:

"If there was to not be a maintained balance, I would withdraw my child from the school, as I feel that he cannot be enriched by (mixing with) an overwhelming majority of any one group. A rich mix is very desirable. No person should be ashamed of his culture, but should also respect the cultures of others. Half the problem in South Africa is that there is no respect for other cultures because they are not understood" (ibid.).



Wood expresses several other concerns, mentioning the perception in the early days that there were problems with the teaching of Afrikaans, "but the problems seem to have been resolved". He also points out that the school has offered opportunities to all groups for representation on its management bodies, yet some tend to hold back:

"Its a pity that, at A.G.M.'s the black community seems to be reluctant to stand for nomination to the Friends. Perhaps even more so with the Indian community. They have the highest percentage of pupils too! The Indian representative works like a Trojan. Perhaps its all too new . . . "(ibid.).

At the workshop held at Uthongathi on 30-31 July 1988 to debate issues of importance to Uthongathi, in reply to a query by N.E.S.T. Board member Mr T. Molete at the small number of blacks present, it was suggested that many black parents were reluctant to participate in discussion because of difficulties in communication. Only time would remedy the problem, it was thought, although the lack of black input was regretted.

Mr B. Butler, Head of English at Uthongathi at the time, has expressed the view that many black parents are reluctant to speak as individuals in forums. They are cautious about their language and "saying the wrong thing" (Butler, Oct. 1988).

Many parents of various races who responded to the parents' questionnaire that comprises Appendix E agreed that they were not active in the affairs of Uthongathi, although a considerable number, by contrast, confirmed their involvement (App. E, ques. A14). A number pointed out that they lived too far from the school to become fully involved in school affairs.

#### 4.4.4.4. Entrance policy.

That applicants to Uthongathi will be required to achieve an acceptable standard on an entrance test prior to entry, in order to determine their educability up to matriculation level, is clearly asserted in the N.E.S.T. Statement of Philosophy (App.A ). In order to implement the principle of rendering N.E.S.T. schools affordable, the financial position of applicants has no bearing on the selection of pupils. Indeed, the selection is made on the basis of educability and character, irrespective of knowledge about the parents' socio-economic background.

As explained earlier, an endeavour is made to ensure a reasonable balance of pupils from each major racial group in South Africa that is substantially represented in the local community. Race is therefore taken into account in the entry criteria. Selection within racial categories has an element of affirmative action to it, since an appraisal of the Schedule of Entrance Test Results (Uthongathi, 1988) shows that certain pupils would not otherwise have gained entry.

The Raven Matrice test is extensively used in order to reveal the approximate educability of the pupils. A language test is implemented in order to gain insight into the pupil's competence with the English language. A test of mathematical ability is also applied. Entry is subject to reasonable achievements in all three entry tests, which tend to explore the pupil's capacity to master and understand the world of the symbolic, which Phenix (1964) considers to be a prerequisite for learning in most academic fields.

N.E.S.T. remains open-minded concerning use of the Raven test. As early as September 1986, concern was expressed at

the possibility that the test was biased against black applicants (Board of Uthongathi, 15 Sept. 1986). Mr Deane Yates advised the Board of Uthongathi that the tests in use were being reviewed by Prof Penny of Rhodes University, with a view to rendering them more appropriate. At a further meeting of the Board (ibid., 21 Jan. 1987), concern was again expressed over the entrance tests. Mr Steyn Krige assured the Board that the tests were conducted in a language with which each testee was familiar. Results from applicants of a particular racial group were strictly measured against others from the same group. The policy thus represents an endeavour to ensure that no child should suffer from a history of deprived schooling in comparison with those who have been more privileged.

Mr Richard Thompson has perceived Indian and white pupils to perform well on the Raven test. African and coloured children do not. Mr Thompson suggests that African cultures in particular might possess few abstractions. He points out that, although some differences between pupils' achievements are also evident in the highly symbolic Mathematics testing, within perhaps six months such discrepancies tend to have been ameliorated. It is with the English language that most pervasive and persistent problems are found; the African pupils being most fundamentally affected (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989). Steyn Krige is also sceptical of the Raven Matrices, regarding them as somewhat culture-bound. White pupils generally perform well on the matrices, he asserts, while African urban-dwellers also have a grasp of symbolism decidedly beyond that possessed by the rural-dwellers. He thus considers the rural Africans to be less well represented at Uthongathi than is desirable (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988).

Vice Principal of Uthongathi Mr John Kent also affirms that, although the Raven test is a good indicator of academic success with white, Indian and coloured pupils, it is a rather poor indicator with blacks (Kent, 27 Jan. 1989). He considers the primary school backgrounds of the different groups to be influential, with whites, Indians and coloured children having been exposed to extensive testing. Mr Kent points out that the language used in testing is not a problem, since instructions are given in both English and Zulu. The Raven test, he confirms, had proved to be quite successful at Maru a Pula. The Uthongathi battery has, however, tended to limit pupils from very weak cultural backgrounds. Black children who come from state schooling are at a particular disadvantage. Within a year or two, however, differences in both Mathematics and English tend to vanish. English is of particular importance because it is the medium of instruction.

The question of entrance testing and accessibility was raised with senior students at the school (Std 9, 9 March 1989), with the following result:

- A.C. : "Is the selection process fair?"  
 M. : "I'm not sure of the entrance tests. What does educability really mean?"  
 B. : "This school isn't . . . you haven't only got the brightest pupils . . . although we only take those who pass the entrance tests. Still, we've really got to take more broadly."  
 A.C. : "Well then, is the selection process elitist?"  
 B. : "While we do have entrance tests, there's still a fair range of academic ability. But I suppose some do get left out."

Mr Richard Thompson (27 Jan. 1989) has expressed his particular concern at the lack of local black scholars at

Uthongathi, especially those who applied to the school but did not pass the entrance tests. He has noted the ineffective teaching of Mathematics and English in some black primary schools, and also the fact that prospective pupils tend to be overawed by the strange school environment when writing the entrance tests at Uthongathi. An effort is now made to identify and train the top five boys and girls from each of two local primary schools. These children are regularly transported to Uthongathi for an upgrade of their ability in Mathematics and English during a six-month period. It is perceived by Thompson to be a means of softening the "culture shock" experienced by these pupils. He points out that the project is carried out on a somewhat limited scale because of the existing work-load of school staff. The school therefore only deals with pupils from the immediate catchment area. Although the entrance policy was unashamedly elitist in the early years, facilitating entry of the best academic talent, there has been a perceptible shift to a more egalitarian approach. It is clear from the revised Principles of selection (App. B) that N.E.S.T. has reaffirmed its opposition to selecting only the most outstanding talent. The document reaffirms that applications for admission are dealt with in terms of equality of the sexes, while the priority of early applications within each race group is honoured. There is avoidance of a policy of "creaming off" the best academic talent. The proposal that a Standard Grade stream be introduced is further evidence of a continued move towards a less elitist dispensation.

#### 4.4.4.5. The student community.

Putting the N.E.S.T. philosophy into practical effect at Uthongathi has resulted in the school accommodating the four major racial "groups" of the Population Registration Act.

These are the coloureds, who are largely English-speaking; the Indians (Asians) with Moslem, Hindu and Telugu sub-groups; whites, who are presently mainly English-speaking, and Zulus. Each group comprises approximately one-quarter of the school community. No group is thus so small numerically that its members need feel it is an insignificant minority. The intention is that a ghetto mentality and defensive posture be avoided. Cultures can be reaffirmed and strengthened within each group, as well as be shared by the community as a whole, while the present power realities of race in South Africa are frankly acknowledged yet denied their divisive influence. Krige (30-31 Jul. 1988) has pointed out that race is a reality that cannot be wished away. The N.E.S.T. intention, he affirms, is to ensure a balance of races. Students and parents will thus be deliberately exposed to individuals from other races from the outset, with a view to enabling them to accommodate to each other in a single, unified community. Uthongathi is thus a school with a multi-racial entrance policy that tends to orchestrate entry numbers for positive reasons, while endeavouring to ensure that the internal dynamics remain free of racism, or indeed any recognition of race. It tends thus to differ from many other private schools that have a heritage within white education, yet have opened their doors to an intake of black students. In practice, the racial group structure at Uthongathi falls away after serving the purpose of creating a "balanced" entry. The internal dynamics of the school are patently non-racial; or indeed anti-racist, as will be seen later. The process of ensuring a balance of races and cultures in the school has necessitated careful attention to the intake, while the endeavour to ensure a balance between day scholars and boarders, boys and girls, has further complicated procedures and had caused a measure of anxiety at times. A concern that surfaced in 1986 prior to the opening of the school was

the lack of boarder applications from all but African pupils (Board of Uthongathi, 26 Jun. 1986). Various means were explored to attract more boarders from other communities in order to ensure a more equitable balance. The initial dearth of white boarders was a particular concern (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Jul. 1986), but at the meeting of the Board held in August 1986, Steyn Krige was able to report that seventy students would be accepted for the opening in 1987. "They would be split equally between boys and girls, day students and boarders, and balanced across the major communities" (Board of Uthongathi, 28 Aug. 1986). It was made clear during discussions the following month that N.E.S.T. was wary of any further intake of white day scholars, a policy that would clearly not address the lack of white students in the boarding establishments:

"Mr Yates felt this would tend to dilute the N.E.S.T. effort since boarders were central to the plan to establish an entirely new ethos and character for the schools" (Board of Uthongathi, 15 Sept. 1986).

Following the opening of the school in 1987, there were 109 students, made up of 66 boarders and 43 day pupils. Fifty-eight students were males and fifty-one were females. The preponderance of black boarders remained a problem, as was revealed during discussions by the Board of Uthongathi (20 Aug. 1987) over the admission of a further black boarder. At this meeting, Mr Thompson pointed out that the preponderance of black boarders was frustrating attempts to encourage the girls to speak English, a problem mentioned by students to the researcher at the time. By 1988 a gradual shift towards a preponderance of boarding students became evident, with 109 boarders and 69 day students reported in May of that year (Board of Uthongathi, 5 May 1988).

The small number of white students on the roll remained a persistent source of anxiety at Uthongathi (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988), while the problem of a tardy white intake was also present on the growing roll of the new N.E.S.T. school Phuthing in the Transvaal (ibid.). By the end of 1988, however, Thompson was able to report that there had been an upsurge of interest in Uthongathi by the white community and a total enrolment of two hundred and thirty students therefore seemed feasible for 1989. The figure was reaffirmed in the Headmaster's Report at the end of the year (Thompson, 2 Dec. 1988). At the Board meeting of January 1989 (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Jan. 1989), it was reported that enrolment had proceeded smoothly, with two hundred and sixteen students finally enrolled. The composition of the student enrolment is shown in the diagram that comprises Appendix G, to which the reader is referred.

The Combined Parent-Pupil Listing published by the school on 27 Jan. 1989 shows that the majority of students come from homes in Natal and Kwazulu, with a concentration in a catchment area stretching from the Southern suburbs of Durban to Ballito on the Natal North Coast. A minority are from further afield, including the Transvaal, Cape Province, Transkei and Swaziland. In response to a questionnaire survey (Appendix D), students confirmed that a majority (75,5%) spoke English as a first home language, while 18,3% spoke Zulu and a small number spoke Afrikaans (ibid., ques.A1). A number of religions is represented, including "Christian", Hindu, Catholic, Anglican, Tamil, Methodist, Moslem, Presbyterian and Jewish. Several students are atheists or agnostics (ibid., ques.A2). The range of languages and religions represented in the school has tended to add to the complexity and richness of the socio-cultural environment. Students expressed themselves as strongly approving, in general, of the experience of being educated



together with students of different cultures and races (ibid., ques. B20). In 1989 there was one Afrikaans child in the school, with a cultural background that was Afrikaans, yet fluent in the other official language. Richard Thompson has expressed the hope that more Afrikaans students will be enrolled in future, providing an additional enriching life-perspective. He concedes, however, that the system of private schooling has never had appeal for the Afrikaner community in South Africa (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989).

Mr Thompson has, with hindsight, commented on the initial problems experienced by the school in attracting white students:

"The problem was one of uncertainty by whites : not only that it was to be an open school, but that it was unknown; especially its standards. There was perhaps some hesitation or reserve about the standards, if the staff was not all white. It was a question of fence-sitting to see what would happen. Once white parents perceived that a full balance had been achieved in the intake, also that the headmaster had been appointed and was in residence, they realised the school was functional; a reality" (ibid.).

Board member Mr Dirk Kemp agrees in essence:

"There was a natural scepticism about both the social and educational advisability of the N.E.S.T. endeavour at first. People doubted whether it was a sound idea to integrate black, white, coloured and Indian children on a social level. A prevalent fear was the possible resulting fall in academic standards. Fears about the social mixing have been largely laid to rest, and only the matric results will dismiss the academic

reservations. Some whites might have been concerned at an apparent loss of superiority" (Kemp, 17 Jan. 1989).

Indeed, some students have been withdrawn from the school by their parents, but the number thus affected remains small. Thompson explains:

"One or two students have left because they could not cope with the academic standards, some because of disillusionment that this was not to become an elite private school, while one could not adapt to the co-educational milieu" (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989).

The students, on the other hand, are overwhelmingly positive about most aspects of the school (Appendix D). Their perceptions of positive factors include the high standards and breadth of educational experience that they consider to be characteristic of the school, the ethos of support and helpfulness, rich mix of races and cultures, and policy of responsible freedom (*ibid.*, ques.C1). These points were affirmed and reaffirmed often during the many group discussions held by the researcher. Negative factors listed by the students in response to their questionnaire included the hard work that was though by some to be pursued to extremes. Several also mentioned the overly-strict school rules that had been implemented by a sometimes autocratic administration that had its attentions too closely focused on public opinion. Further, the school was seen to provide too little time for boy-girl socialising, while the way of life was seen to be Spartan (*ibid.*, ques.C2).

#### 4.4.4.6. The Board of Uthongathi.

The composition of the Board of Uthongathi is determined by the implications of the non-racial policy embodied in the

Constitution of N.E.S.T The inaugural meeting of the Board was held in Durban., during March 1986 (Board of Uthongathi, 27 Mar.1986). The Constitution of Uthongathi was finalised at the Board meeting of August 1986 (Board of Uthongathi,28 Aug.1986). At this meeting Mr Steyn Krige and his wife were thanked for the excellent work they had done in "getting Uthongathi off the ground" during the life of the Natal Committee of N.E.S.T.

The minutes of the meeting of the Board during May 1987 (Board of Uthongathi,21 May 1987) record formal appointments to the Board, with Mr B. Biggs as Chairman. From its inception, the Board has proved to be very active, dealing with a host of complexities relating to the school. Vice-Chairman Mr D. Dunn has explained that the prime purpose of the Board is to ensure the good running of the school, with a maximum utilization of physical and human resources. The Board also informs the community about the school and markets it to outsiders (Dunn,30-31 Jul.1988). In view of the steadily expanding activities with which the Board has been engaged, a number of sub-committees have been formed. These include the following:

- (a) Community and public relations.
- (b) Buildings.
- (c) Bursaries and scholarships.
- (d) Conditions of employment.
- (e) Curriculum.
- (f) Marketing.
- (g) Organisational structures.
- (h) Educational upgrade.

(Board of Uthongathi, 20 Oct. 1988).

The observations of the present writer at meetings of the Board have shown it to be a purposeful yet congenial gathering of persons reflecting a broad range of opinion. Its decisions are channelled through the headmaster as executive. His duty is thus to implement decisions of the Board by effective action. Messers Deane Yates and Steyn Krige, representing N.E.S.T. Central, have been in frequent attendance at meetings. Their primary role is to ensure the translation into practice of the guiding principles of the N.E.S.T. Constitution. They bring to the task a wealth of practical experience in open schooling, that serves to illuminate and provide a historical context for many of the issues deliberated by the Board. Although flexible and often understated in their approach, they have proved to be very firm on the basic principles. Also represented on the board are members from the world of business and finance, sympathetic to the central values of the N.E.S.T. philosophy, yet charged with the responsibility of ensuring the financial viability of the school. Their concerns are thus predominantly with financial management, marketing, budgetting and the raising of funds. A further perspective is brought by representatives of the Friends of Uthongathi, whose brief is to voice the views of parents. Other members of the Board are linked to a variety of professions, including education and religion. The wide range of views present is made coherent by the obvious and tangible commitment of Board members to the welfare of the school.

The African, coloured and Indian communities are represented on the Board, although the attendance registers show a predominance of white members arriving for meetings. Mr Tom Molete, member of the Board of N.E.S.T. (Central) has expressed frank reservations on the organisational structures at Uthongathi. He considers them to be elitist, tending to be biased towards white representation. He

points out the somewhat different directions that will be taken at Phuthing, based on the experience gained at Uthongathi during the first two years of its existence:

"Phuthing will be operated strictly in line with Nest philosophy. The Chairman of the Governing Body is black, Vice-chairman white, the Headmaster black and Deputy white. They will avoid Eurocentrism or Africanisation in extremes, and will endeavour to evolve an indigenous cultural milieu. Every endeavour will be made to bring the four groups together; to make them feel at home. Uthongathi tends to be Eurocentric and therefore might be irrelevant to the future. The composition of the Board is contrary to N.E.S.T. It is hegemonic " (Molete, 6 Oct. 1988).

It was indeed noticeable at the workshop of 30-31 July 1988 that over half of those present were whites; a fact to which Mr Tom Molete drew the attention of the assembly. He questioned the reason for the relative absence of blacks at the workshop (Molete, 30-31 Jul. 1988). In reply, it was pointed out that invitations had been issued to all Board members, staff and parents, and that most Board members who had not attended had given reasons for their inability to attend.

There is evidence of endeavours having been made to create a more equitable racial balance on the Board in order to ensure a sharing of power. As early as 1986, Mr S.K. Naidoo pointed out that there was no coloured representative on the body (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Apr. 1986). Mr D. Dunn was accordingly approached to serve, and was nominated to the position of Vice-Chairman. The consciousness of a need for a greater balance again surfaced in August 1988, with the Board expressing itself as follows:

"It was agreed that there was a need for greater involvement from the Black community, and that people prepared for a 'hands on' approach be considered for inclusion on the Board. A committee would be appointed to look into this and other organisational issues and structures" (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988).

A sub-committee of the Board dealing with Organisational Structure, under the chairmanship of Mr A. Cebekulu, was constituted.

Chairman of the Board Mr Bryce Biggs has pointed to a policy of seeking involvement and commitment from all members of the Board (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989). The body is not symbolic. It must play a role as a resource for the school. Mr Biggs points out that he has tried to balance the Board membership and will continue to do so. In this endeavour, Mr Biggs has achieved some success. The researcher has noted an increased involvement of persons of colour at Board meetings, with whites comprising roughly a half of those present.

#### 4.4.4.7. Senior management and staff.

The Headmaster is appointed by the Board of Uthongathi on merit, irrespective of considerations of race, sex, religion or marital status. He is responsible to the Board for the administration and management of the school and has several powers and duties specified in the Constitution of Uthongathi. He must manage the school in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, be a member of all sub-committees of the Board and a full voting member of such body. He is a channel through which all communications from staff, parents, students or other person must be addressed

to the Board, and is afforded considerable protection in his legitimate actions by that body. He appoints all members of staff and is responsible for the good conduct of the members (ibid.).

Mr Steyn Krige has elaborated on the considerable autonomy of the headmaster, with whom representatives of the Board of N.E.S.T. will "talk things over" if there is disagreement with his actions (Krige, 30-31 Jul. 1988). In practice, the executive members of N.E.S.T. Central, whose portfolios include direct liaison with the school, have served to guide the Headmaster in his interpretation of the philosophy, have helped with the practical issues surrounding the building and establishment of Uthongathi and have been a source of access to finance.

The first appointments to Uthongathi were those of the Principal, Vice Principal, Teacher of Science (and Biology) and Teacher of English, all of whom were white (Board of Uthongathi, 15 Sept. 1986). Further staff were duly appointed: a Zulu to teach Zulu language and an Indian to teach Afrikaans. Recruitment proved to be difficult because experienced staff had much to lose financially if they were currently working in state-controlled institutions (Board of Uthongathi, 23 Oct. 1986). It is clear that endeavours have been made subsequently to appoint more black teachers. Regret has been expressed that the school had not been more successful initially in appointing more black staff (Board of Uthongathi, 20 Aug. 1987).

At a meeting of N.E.S.T. Trustees with the Board of Uthongathi to review the first year of operation of the school, Prof. G.R. Bozzoli (who was in the chair) stated the concern of the Trustees about the racial imbalance of the teaching staff. The Principal outlined difficulties

experienced in gaining suitable staff, in reply to a query from a Board member:

"In response to a query from Mr Dlamini he advised that of the 56 applications received from black applicants, over one-third had emanated from persons who were either completely unqualified, or were not qualified to teach the subjects advertised. He had offered two posts, but in one instance it was turned down on demographic grounds, and in the other for political reason. Some teachers had too much to lose financially while others doubted their ability to cope with the standard of teaching they felt was offered at Uthongathi" (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Dec. 1987).

These minutes also record the primary concern of the parents' representatives on the Board, with the calibre of teaching staff rather than with their racial origins. A rejoinder made to the parents by one of the N.E.S.T. Trustees present pointed out that their views on the appointment of teaching staff did not accord with the philosophy of N.E.S.T. It was reaffirmed at the meeting that the students should be exposed to other than Eurocentric cultures, and a variety of strategies was to be explored in order to acquire the services of competent black teachers. The issue of staffing raised at this December meeting also surfaced at the next meeting of the Board of N.E.S.T., the minutes of which read:

"The goal was always that the aim is to have the whole N.E.S.T. set up totally non-racial. It still remains the Principal's prerogative to choose staff and pupils but within the constraints of the N.E.S.T. philosophy. What the Board is saying to the Head is that when employing staff he must remember basic N.E.S.T.



philosophy and to balance must be maintained. The Chairman stated that the whole point of setting up N.E.S.T. schools was to tackle and resolve these sorts of problems" (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Mar. 1988).

Present at this meeting, Mr Bryce Biggs responded that he was confident that two black teachers would soon be appointed to the school staff. It was announced a few months later that the problem had been resolved with the appointment of competent black staff to teach Mathematics and Physical Science, and also Zulu and History (Board of Uthongathi, 5 May 1988). The composition of the full-time teaching staff at the school in 1989 was seven whites, five Indians and four Africans. All were well qualified.

The general policy followed in appointing staff has on several occasions been explained by senior N.E.S.T. officials. At the workshop seminar held at Uthongathi in July 1988, Mr Steyn Krige stressed the need for a high minimum level of competence which, if present in two candidates, could let the policy of a racial balance operate in selection (Uthongathi, 30-31 Jul. 1988). Prof. Bozzoli has more recently affirmed the policy, as follows:

" Professional competence and appropriateness are important in staffing, then race to balance" (Bozzoli, 3 Oct. 1988).

Parents' responses to the questionnaire survey show much uncertainty on the part of parents at Uthongathi over the issue of a balance of races in the appointment of teaching staff. Considerable support was reflected for, and against, the policy (App. E, ques. A12).

Nevertheless, judging by the achievements recorded by the Headmaster in his Report of December 1988 (Thompson, 2 Dec. 1988), the standard of education had been well served by the staff at Uthongathi. Lessons observed by the present writer were of a generally good standard, although it is possible that the training of some staff had not incorporated the breadth of approaches enjoyed by others. In order that all staff at Uthongathi experience a rich interchange of ideas as well as exposure to innovative approaches, a staff development programme has been instituted to ensure optimum staff orientation within the challenging educational milieu that characterises the school. Mr Brendon Butler, especially, advocates an approach that is far removed from the 'banking system' of pedagogy:

"I feel that, if we are to get away from an assimilatory structure in the school, and if we are to promote student empowerment, we have to expose our teaching staff to so-called alternate teaching methodologies" (24 Nov. 1988).

Mr Thompson (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989) has commented:

"We set high standards, and work hard at developing critical analytical thinking abilities : that is, lateral thinking. We are trying to develop our pupils into problems solvers. We get them to face problems and find solutions. The current education system produces people who can write a matric exam. The focus and emphasis tends to be on that one end-product. Its probably at its worst in the black schooling system where many teachers are not qualified and the pupils are not taught to think for themselves or handle freedom. In a multi-cultural, open school such as our own, it is possible that some staff might not have

experienced the range of teaching strategies and open-ended approaches that have been available in the training of others. Some who have come from the state system have problems adjusting to a private school environment. They need to inculcate thinking skills and life skills in the children. The staff development programme is very beneficial in facilitating a sharing of teaching experiences and strategies. Teachers who have had the advantage of exposure to a wide range of strategies are especially helpful. Staff feel it is worthwhile. They can share expertise in a variety of ways. It is valuable to clear up misconceptions and know what is needed: also to clear up little problems, of which they might not even be aware".

Mr John Kent expounds further on the topic:

"As far as we can tell at present, the standards at Uthongathi are on par with those of any white private school, from both the teaching perspective and the academic standards of the pupils. This is, however, a big generalisation. There is a quite extensive variety of teaching styles : some open-ended and some more traditional. Much depends on the subject. Our children are very bright and confident. Any teacher who does not have mastery would be taken to pieces" (Kent, 27 Jan. 1989).

Responses to the parents' questionnaire tend to confirm Kent's view. A considerable majority of parents agreed that they were generally satisfied with the standard of teaching at Uthongathi, while a small percentage demurred (App.E, ques. A13).

The composition of the staff, and their perceptions of the school, were ascertained inter alia by means of a questionnaire survey.

By means of the questionnaire survey, undertaken in 1989, it was determined that 80% of the staff spoke English as a first language, with a minority speaking Zulu or Xhosa. Other home languages included English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Gujerati, Sotho, Tamil, Telugu or Hindi (Appendix C, ques. A1 and 2). A question on religions showed Christianity and Hinduism to be dominant (ibid., ques. A3).

Qualifications are impressive. 85% of the staff possess degrees. Many members possess honours degrees, while three have acquired Masters degrees. The average period of professional experience in teaching was 10 years (ibid., ques. A4 and A5). Staff members generally reported themselves to be strongly supportive of the social philosophy of Uthongathi (ibid., ques. B13) and considered their interpersonal relations to be free of racial antagonism, although there was an admission that some cliques had formed (ibid., ques. B10). A majority strongly supported merit as the sole criterion for the appointment of staff to the school (ibid., ques. B11); a view that was softened by minority support for a mix of races in accordance with the basic philosophy. Staff wrote approvingly of the relaxed and genial atmosphere, lack of racism in the school, and emphasis on individuality. The courteous and basically honest student corps was lauded by individual members of staff and there was also mention of the students' inquiring minds (ibid., ques. C1). Negative factors reported by staff included the poor educational background of some student entrants, presence of staff and student cliques, negative forms of punishment and rather autocratic centralised decision-making (ibid., C2).

Members of staff at the school were generally favourably regarded by the student corps. A majority of students perceived members of staff to share their own cultural heritages, although a significant minority remained undecided on the issue (App.D,ques.B5). Students generally agreed that teachers were positive about the cultural backgrounds of all their students, although significant indecision was recorded (*ibid.*,ques.B1). Teachers were widely perceived to accept students of different races and cultures as equal in worth (*ibid.*,ques.B8). Students felt that teachers were in the main free of prejudice against students on racial or socio-economic grounds (*ibid.*,ques.B10 and 12), although a very small minority dissented.

A further issue relating to staffing at Uthongathi concerns the ratio of staff to students: a ratio that, if too generous, might have negative effects on the school's finances, while also presenting an elite image. At the review meeting of 19 Dec. 1987, Mr Krige expressed concern at the high ratio of staff to students. The Headmaster of Uthongathi responded that the ratio of 1 : 15 compared favourably with that of other comparable schools, and cited pertinent examples. Although Board of Uthongathi members pointed out that all overhead expenses, including staffing, would be high until the school had its full complement of students, senior officials from N.E.S.T. Central were adamant that a more careful control should be exercised in the appointment of staff members. The use of teacher aides was suggested (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Dec. 1987).

The response of the school has been, *inter alia*, to promote a rapid expansion of student numbers in order to accelerate out of the generous ratio that is sometimes attendant on a small school in its first years. Teacher aides have been used. The programme enables young educators to gain

valuable experience in an environment unusual in South Africa, while simultaneously enabling the school to operate at lesser expense. Mr Biggs has expressed his confidence that the staff-student ratio will in due course become less contentious:

"The staff-student ratio should improve as the numbers increase. Early ratios are inevitably higher than the long-term norm" (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989).

That the comparatively small class sizes are an important element in the attractiveness of the school to certain parents is reaffirmed in this conversation recorded with a Standard Six student:

A.C. : "For what other reasons do your parents like this school?"

S. : "Other schools don't give pupils so much individual attention. Uthongathi has smaller classes. And each class is broken down to sets and sub-sets so that more attention can be given to those who need it" (Std 6: 15 Mar. 1989).

#### 4.4.4.8. The formal curriculum.

The main aim that motivates the curriculum as a whole is that it should be conducive to the production of well educated citizens who are equipped to play a positive role in the future non-racial society that N.E.S.T. has anticipated will emerge in post-apartheid South Africa. The education experienced at N.E.S.T. schools is directed to the promotion of a high degree of intellectual, cultural, spiritual and physical development in the pupils (App.A). Personal qualities of tolerance, compassion, humility, initiative, self-discipline and moral and intellectual

integrity are to be developed. Students will be motivated to be responsible and to make their own decisions. They will be encouraged to achieve a balance between work and recreation. A lasting commitment to service and the ideals of social responsibility will be fostered (ibid.).

A major vehicle through which the education of students at Uthongathi will be experienced comprises the Matriculation Certificate of the Joint Matriculation Board. Attainment of an exemption certificate permitting access to University will be a prime focus.

Mr Krige has pointed out that the design of the curriculum (as well as the subject offerings) are left largely to the Headmaster (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988). Krige favours the incorporation of an African bias within the curriculum at Uthongathi, with the integration of elements of People's Education. He concedes his wariness of the International Baccalaureate followed at Waterford, unless it is Africanised.

From the first, the Board of Uthongathi opted for the development of a wide range of subject choices.

"It was agreed that although a basic syllabus be adopted initially, the Board would be guided by demand, and as wide a range of subjects as was practical would eventually be offered. It was also intended to offer a wide variety of sporting and outdoor activities" (Board of Uthongathi, 28 Aug. 1986).

The policy of offering as many subjects as possible was reaffirmed in July 1988 at the workshop held at Uthongathi (Thompson & Kent, 30-31 July 1988), although the concomitant expense of an expanded teaching staff was noted. There

might also arise financial stress and charges of elitism if the staff-student ratio was kept low. The ensuing discussion (ibid., p.8) revealed the tensions between the constraints of limited finances for staffing, and the need for an expanded range of subjects. The wishes expressed by parents at the meeting suggest the presence of a "market" desirous of a wide range of subject options for the pupils.

English, Afrikaans and Zulu, Physics and Biology, Geography, History and Religious Education were offered during the first year, while during the second year the curriculum of formal subjects was considerably extended. Mr Thompson reported thus on the expansion, during his Headmasters Report of December 1988.

"This year we expanded our subject range with the introduction of five additional subjects, viz. Art, Music, Accountancy, Computer Science and Speech and Drama. This now means that our senior pupils are able to make up their subject packages for matric from a group of no less than 14 subjects, as Additional Mathematics will be offered in 1989. The decision to prepare our pupils for the J.M.B. matric examination has now made it possible for us to offer Zulu as first language as a matric option for our Zulu home-language speakers. Pupils who do not offer Zulu (either at first or third language level) will still be required to attend conversational Zulu classes within the timetable. On the same basis, conversational Afrikaans classes will be timetabled for those who are not offering Afrikaans in their matric package" (Thompson, 2 Dec. 1988).



In his speech, Mr Thompson also announced the inclusion of a Street Law programme for standards 8,9 and 10, as well as Singing for standards 5,6 and 7. He spoke of the emphasis on Life Skills included in the curriculum as well as the development of problem-solving skills. He declared himself satisfied with the standards being achieved in the school and commented on the very high level of productive output by staff and students. Indeed, the achievements reported by the headmaster were extensive, and showed a high level of participation by students in activities designed to extend and enrich their formal academic programme. Tours had been conducted to Swaziland for historical purposes; also to the Drakensberg, Weza Forest, Sea World, Crocodile Creek and Umgeni Bird Park. Many competitions had been entered with success, including the Science Exposition, Verulam Hindu Society Speech Contest, Tongaat Speech and Drama and Art Competition, and T.A.S.A. Mathematics competition. In August, sixty-one students had sat the Afrikaans Taalbond Examination. Nineteen achieved Higher Grade and there were only four failures. Several successful plays had been produced, in each major language. Chess had been established at the school and a comprehensive sports programme had been developed. The report was optimistic and replete with praiseworthy achievements gained by students from all four racial groups represented in the school.

The curriculum at Uthongathi has nevertheless come under intensive review. It has been subject to the critical appraisal of Mr Brendon Butler, Convenor of the Curriculum Development Sub-committee for its vulnerability to a "white hegemony" (Butler, 15 Nov. 1988). In large measure the curriculum of formal studies has been dictated by the demands of the present examination system. The most serious limitations on curriculum content are evident in the senior years. Some adaptations are nevertheless possible in the

lower standards. Butler has contributed a dynamic and innovative perspective on curricular choices open to Uthongathi, in answer to the question of what subject choices and content should be offered. His Committee Report forms the context of the following extract:

"In the year 2 000 South Africa's exploding population will be stretching natural resources to the limits; there will be fewer routine jobs in offices and factories; there will be chronic unemployment; many people will work at home using a computer; people will work shorter hours and have much more leisure; personal skills in self-management and communication will be vital; politics will remain an unsettling factor; independent, active and enterprising people will succeed; things will change all the time. Given such a scenario, we need to be clear about whether it is the function of N.E.S.T. to prepare students for a job or to educate students in the widest possible sense. If the former, we should be concentrating on the sciences and technically-based subjects such as Computer Science - this is certainly what the State, Industry and Parents would like us to do. However, there was a strong feeling in our Committee that, in the long run, our students would best be served by the second option - a skills-based curriculum which recognises the dangers of technocratic 'education' and recognises that there are other areas of human experience which should be given equal attention in the curriculum ; aesthetic, ethical, linguistic, socio-political, physical, spiritual and material. In practical terms, schools with our sort of projected student enrolment are restricted to a fairly narrow range of 'subjects' - choices have to be made and what we are saying is that knowledge and information are changing so rapidly that

we should be teaching students skills in adapting to change rather than have them processing second-hand, outdated knowledge. As a practical example, we should offer Computer Literacy but not Computer Science; Accounting - if at all - in the senior standards only. This implies that a good deal of education of parents would need to take place, especially amongst black parents who in general tend to see schools as places where their children are trained for specific jobs. Our Nest schools would not be student-centred were they not geared to providing students with the necessary certification - the best set of Matric results which each individual is capable of achieving. But at the same time, we must never lose sight of Nest's educational philosophy. These are two very different objectives, but they are not necessarily dysfunctional, particularly in the light of the moves towards a matric examination which would reward creative thought and problem solving skills as opposed to the ability to memorise and regurgitate" (ibid.).

A member of the sub-committee, Mr Steyn Krige has doubtless influenced its deliberations. Mr Krige regards subject divisions as damaging to the integrity of knowledge. Therefore, whilst Headmaster of Woodmead, he integrated English, History, Art, Music and Religious Education. Biology, Physical Science, Mathematics and Afrikaans were dealt with as separate subjects (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988). At Woodmead, students also spent much time on projects in the library, and on mastering research techniques. Independent reasoning was prominent. Emphasis was placed on a syllabus of skills and techniques for gaining knowledge rather than on the mastery of discrete facts. Many students achieved well at University as a result, while matric results were good, if not brilliant. The scheme, concedes Krige (ibid.),

imposed a great drain on staff, the library and other resources. He believes an adapted programme to be most desirable. It is clear that, recognising the antecedents at Woodmead, Uthongathi will carry its innovations forward in original ways.

Mr Butler has explained the intentions behind curriculum innovation at Uthongathi as an endeavour to **empower** the students to cope with the freedom of adulthood (Butler, 24 Nov. 1988). Students, he argues, must be in charge of their own lives, must not be spoonfed or externally (sic) disciplined. New objectives are thus needed, relating to student empowerment. Education is not to be geared solely to preparation for a job, should not be too narrow and fact-based, relying on memorisation. He places faith in the work of the Independent Exam Board and argues for an ongoing process of curriculum in schools.

"No matter what Std 10 examination is pursued, curriculum development is needed in schools, with an independent view, especially at Std 6,7 and 8 level. We must explore the content of a truly South African curriculum" (Butler, 14 Oct. 1988).

Mr Richard Thompson (27 Jan. 1989) favours the Joint Matriculation Board examinations, but concedes that Uthongathi would write the Natal Education Department examination if registration were possible. He explains that the J.M.B. examination is university-orientated, testing critical thought, although few distinctions are awarded and the university points system is against it. The Joint Matriculation Board has experienced financial problems because many persons now write provincial examinations. It will be phased out, to be replaced by the Independent Examination Board who, Thompson predicts, will be required to face a long development phase. He continues:

"Uthongathi will go to two streams at 9 and 10, identifying pupils for whom we will recommend Standard Grade. We must educate parents to the needs of the labour market. We must learn about pupils' aptitudes early and keep as many options open as possible. Pupils must not be trapped, or locked into a single direction too early. In standards 5,6 and 7 we offer fourteen subjects, from which they select eight for standard eight, dropping to the Matric six at 9 and 10 level" (ibid.).

Thompson reaffirms the multi-cultural nature of the school, believing that individuals should be assisted in preserving their cultures and languages (ibid.) while the onus is also put on the individual to share his language and culture with others. He points out that no cultural group feels threatened as a minority, and that the school is not in essence assimilatory:

"We are not making black persons white, although there is much cross-cultural pollination. We are seeing signs of enrichment and greater tolerance" (ibid.).

He continues:

"We try to develop a new South Africanism; not quite a new culture so much as a new set of perceptions relating to understanding, acceptance and mutual respect" (ibid.).

Concluding, Thompson asserts:

"Since the early days, we have emphasised the relevance of the curriculum to South African concerns. History is a good example, in which we avoid Eurocentrism and

view occurrences from many viewpoints. In Geography, we take many South African examples. Our future lies in Africa more than in Europe. We, however, don't want to get too introspective and insular, and endeavour to strike a balance between the concerns of South Africa, Africa and the wider world" (ibid.).

The questionnaire to staff members, however, showed them to perceive the curriculum, with its remaining Eurocentric bias, to be acceptable as such (App.C,ques.B14). There was a hint of general antipathy towards overt Africanisation, and the suggestion was made that students needed a wider, world perspective. A measure of Africanisation was already seen to have occurred.

Although staff members felt that high academic standards were being maintained at the school (ibid.,ques.B15), they conceded that there was a need for subjects to be offered on the Standard Grade as an alternative to Higher Grade in order to accommodate less able students (ibid.,ques.B16). It was also suggested that alternative subjects be offered, some of a more practical nature, to accommodate students experiencing difficulties with strongly academic subjects. Many students were, however, uncertain about the wisdom of the school offering a wider range of subject choices (App. D,ques.B19). Several students expressed concern at the increase in teaching staff and basic fees that such move could bring. Subjects nevertheless suggested by them included Business Economics, Home Economics, Electronics, Technical Drawing, Typing, German and Latin.

In pursuing the matter of curriculum structure and content with the Standard Nine students the following comments were recorded by the researcher (Std 9, 9 Mar.1989):

- A.C. : "What strategies would improve your curriculum further?"
- M. : "Broadening some syllabuses would help, because in some subjects, especially History, we find that the syllabus is based on the text book and some things have been rather bound by it."
- A.C. : "Do you need to accommodate . . .?"
- M. : "New perspectives, and also more relevant."
- K. : "The English syllabus could be improved, because its too English. We don't want to read about coal mining in England! We need more relevance."
- A.C. : "So, should it be pitched more towards South Africa?"
- B. : "Its difficult in this school, because you have to try and accommodate so many viewpoints. You can't concentrate on white literature or something like that . . . I suppose we should seek a sensible balance, really."
- R. : "Some subjects we do, do teach about other cultures . . like Comparative Religion. Perhaps we should emphasise different cultures a bit more."
- B. : "Also, some of the accessory subjects are not taken too seriously : too short a period for them. Personally, I dunno, most people do it as well . . . you don't always concentrate."
- A.C. : "So, are you very directed towards a University pass?"
- General : "Yes!"
- M. : "Everyone here is geared towards 'varsity' and Matric."
- K. : "We're the guinea pigs. You're the first Matrics!"

In their response to the questionnaire sent to parents (App. E, section B), many parents reaffirmed the importance of high

standards at Uthongathi and stressed the pursuit of a Matriculation certificate. There was support for the best teachers to be appointed to the school, irrespective of race, and several parents applauded the small class sizes and individual attention offered. Yet others expressed support for the development of a critical faculty and the nurturing of independent thought. Parents were spread in their views about the wisdom of the school providing Standard Grade for students who could not cope with the Higher Grade requirements for matric (*ibid.*,ques.A3), responses being recorded both for and against the possibility. A wide range of responses was also recorded to the question whether the school curriculum should focus more on South Africa than on Europe (*ibid.*,ques.A20), with a tendency towards agreement. Although a considerable majority of parents felt that their childrens' religion and language were sufficiently encouraged at Uthongathi, a significant minority felt that these elements of culture were not given sufficient encouragement (*ibid.*,ques.A7 and 8). Such matters as the breadth of the curriculum, its bias towards one cultural world or another, and differentiation into operational levels are clearly the subject of ongoing debate in the school.

#### 4.4.4.9. Selected, structured elements of the non-formal curriculum.

The philosophy of N.E.S.T. places great emphasis on the non-formal curriculum in order to achieve its educational objectives. Included as features of the non-formal curriculum are sport, school plays, excursions, participation in symposia and displays, arrangements for meals, religious services and the use of visiting speakers. The intention is to expose students to a wide range of learning experiences in a multi-cultural environment, in



order to facilitate the development of such desirable qualities as compassion, self-discipline, integrity and mutual respect. Several of these facets are explored in the section that follows.

According to the Caterer at Uthongathi, Mr Ian Shuttleworth (8 Oct. 1987), some Hindu, Moslem and Zulu students at the school require quite distinctive diets. Most students, however, tend not to be particular about food. Varying degrees of adherence to religious constraints are evident. Hindus, Moslems, Jews and some Africans at the school will not eat pork, while some Moslems will not eat beef unless it is halaal. The Christian students prove to be the cheapest to feed, while particular diets for minorities tend to raise costs. An endeavour is made to teach all students how to "socialise" in a Western restaurant, also in the homes of each cultural group. Each junior class has an hour weekly of "kitchen practice", with the study of malnutrition forming part of the curriculum. Mr Shuttleworth has observed certain of the black students to be sceptical about ethnic food, insisting rather on a Western diet. They appear thereby to be distancing themselves, by choice, from their ethnic roots (ibid.).

At Uthongathi, great emphasis is placed on the production of school plays to provide a vehicle for the improvement and display of language ability. In August 1988 The Royal Hunt of the Sun was produced, with tangible success. A large number of students of each race participated. The minutes of the August Board of Uthongathi meeting record that over a thousand persons viewed the performances (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988). The production was visibly enriched by the presence of different ethnicities in the cast and was of an exceptional standard.

During the afternoons a vigorous programme of sport is pursued, including some sports that are individualistic and recreational, as well as more competitive team games. An educational bias has been evident in certain activities such as the first school gala. Forty-five of the forty-six students who had not been able to swim prior to the gala had participated (Board of Uthongathi, 26 Mar. 1987). Sport is well supported by parents. A strong majority of parents at Uthongathi consider sport to be an important facet of the education of their children (App. E, ques. A17). This view is shared by a majority of students (App. D, ques. B18), although a significant minority appear to be indifferent or negative.

Students are encouraged to attend their own churches on Sundays and are aided with transport. An inter-denominational service is also held at the school. Since more than half of the students are Christian, the service has tended to assume a Christian orientation. Staff consider the practice of different religions to be encouraged at Uthongathi (App. C, ques. B6) and the students generally support this contention (App. D, ques. B7). Several students have mentioned the value of Comparative Religion in providing an understanding of various faiths. In the main, parents felt that their child's religion was encouraged at the school, yet a significant minority registered their disagreement with this view (App. E, ques. A7).

A further important feature of school life revolves around the concept of self-help. The underlying rationale of self-help practices at the school is explained by Thompson:

"In self-help, they maintain their own dormitories, their own beds, do their washing and ironing. They do cleaning of the kitchen at night and clean the ablution facilities. They have the responsibility of ensuring that the following person is not offended. Its a matter of mutual responsibility" (27 Jan 1989)

The researcher noted the extent to which self-responsibility is fostered in the residences, and observed students undertaking a number of the chores described by the headmaster, on a regular basis. It was also noted that special monitor duties are discharged, and that house committees operate within a democratic framework. Further, each housemaster oversees an "extended family" of twenty-six students.

The questionnaire survey showed that a majority of staff members perceive the self-help programme to be taken seriously by the students at Uthongathi, although great variance in the commitment of individual students was reported (App.C,ques.B17). It also became clear from discussions at staff meetings that consistent reinforcement of rules is required with some students, while the programme itself raised certain problems at its inception. For example, shortly after the school opened it became apparent that students were not able to wash the crockery and cutlery used for lunch in the short time available during the lunch-break (Board of Uthongathi,22 Jan.1987).

Despite the above, it was noted that students generally viewed self-help (and community service) as valuable aspects of their education (App.D,ques.B18). Intent on probing further, the researcher engaged a cross-section of students in discussion:

A.C. : "What do you do for self-help?"

R. : "Ironing, making beds, cleaning showers and toilets; cleaning cubicles."

A.C. : "And do you do the same sort of thing at home?"

R. : "Oh, yes!"

J. : "There are no caretakers, so we have to do things ourselves. We'll carry on with it."

S. : "At home, I wash up dishes and lay the table."

A.C. : "Is it worthwhile? Do you know why you do it?"

A show of hands.

J. : "It helps you to look after yourself when you leave school and go home."

A.C. : "Do most of you think its worthwhile?"

Chorus : "Yes".

(Std 6, 9 Mar. 1989).

The seniors provided a possible explanation for reported lapses amongst students, suggesting that the habituation process tended to take some time :

A.C. : "Does the self-help programme really work?"

R. : "Younger ages do need prompting. Some younger guys say: 'Why clean the toilets?' when they don't do it at home."

M. : "Well, I think we really will carry on. It sometimes seems to be overdone, because its become so natural to us now."

K. (a Zulu) : "Makes you realise the maid-madam relationship is alien."

(Std 9, 10 Mar. 1989).

It is significant that the self-help and community service programmes were also very strongly supported by parents, as an essential part of their children's education (App.E,ques. A15). Some parents mentioned the policy of encouraging self-help as a reason for sending their children to the school.

#### 4.4.4.10. Forms of social control.

Since the inception of the school, students have been encouraged to express their concerns by means of direct

access to the Headmaster. In July 1988, however, a request was made for the institution of an S.R.C. in order to give more formal representation to the student body (Bauer,30-31 July 1988). The request enjoyed general support at the workshop during which it was made. In conversation with the researcher some months later, Mr B. Butler explained that the request was motivated by the perceived need for the spread of democracy in the school, and the fostering of a rich diversity of democratic structures that could give expression to the philosophy of N.E.S.T. (Butler,14 Oct.1988). Butler expressed himself in favour of an S.R.C. as well as the spread of the committee system that already functioned as part of the catering arrangements. He felt that minutes of committee meetings should be published. Students would thereby be given a greater share in the running of the school. This, Butler stressed, would be sound educational practice and a device to avoid alienation. Committees could direct security, entertainments, publications and publicity.

At the speech-day ceremony held at the school on 2 December 1988, the newly-elected S.R.C. President expanded on the processes that had resulted in his election, and it became clear that the request made some months before had received the sympathetic attention of the Headmaster and staff. Richard Thompson observes:

"The students make a very valuable contribution here. They are very perceptive about things they want changed. There is a lot of positive input from the Students' Council" (27 Jan.1989).

Mr Bryce Biggs agrees on the inherent value of an S.R.C.:

"It is my conscious objective at Uthongathi to minimise formalities in relationships. We foster as many channels of communication as possible. Everyone should make an input. Students are now giving input through their Student Council, which is elected and not open to the potential abuses of the prefect system" (18 Jan. 1989).

It is of interest to note that the introduction of an S.R.C. at Uthongathi is consistent with the format implemented at Woodmead under the Headmastership of Mr Steyn Krige. At Woodmead, Krige introduced a School Council of four members of staff and twelve students, all democratically elected. There was no prefect system and the Council made school rules. Decisions were, however, subject to the veto of the headmaster, who was obliged to assume final responsibility. The system worked extremely well and there were no major problems, according to Krige (Krige, 7 Oct. 1988). Further, the school employed a tier system by means of which a student could earn ever greater levels of freedom by good conduct. Such freedom was greatly valued. It is a possible future direction for Uthongathi.

At Uthongathi, a Code of Conduct was drawn up during the first year of operation, with the active participation of the students. It was viewed as an excellent guideline to establish parameters of acceptable behaviour. This ethical code tends to be generalised towards respect for the self, and for other persons and their property. Basic safety rules are enforced (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989). The approach is much favoured by Steyn Krige (7 Oct. 1988), who considers discipline in many private schools to be window-dressing, whereas self-discipline is essential. In the average school, Krige believes, discipline tends to be imposed, and thus of diminished value. At a Board meeting held in

February 1988 (Board of Uthongathi, 18 Feb. 1988), Krige congratulated the headmaster and staff of Uthongathi on their efficient running of the school.

"He found the whole atmosphere reflected in the happy, friendly attitude of the pupils, and the evidence of firm but understated discipline, to be excellent. Mr Yates associated himself with these remarks."

The implementation of self-discipline founded on a Code of Conduct rather than an imposed extrinsic discipline has, however, not always proceeded smoothly at the school and attitudes to such matters seem to be varied amongst members of the parent body. Mr Bryce Biggs (18 Jan. 1989) has conceded that some parents were not able to identify closely with the Code of Conduct at Uthongathi during the first months of the school's life. This was particularly true of black parents. Biggs suggests that the more extreme forms of deference practiced in traditional cultures will wither, while exposure to a range of cultures will raise the relative status of girls. According to Mr Richard Thompson, white parents have also shown initial apprehension at the programme of self-responsibility. He explained to the researcher:

"One or two local whites could not accept the freedom of their own children who were learning to be responsible for their own actions. No incidents have been reported and we have heard many comments on the good behaviour. All the time! Ninety percent of the parents are positive. Their children take responsibility : not waiting to be told. They take the initiative in their own homes. Whatever is happening seems to be right!" (27 Jan. 1989).

Shortly after the above statement was made, however, several students were temporarily suspended from the school owing to a breach of discipline. The incident is recorded in the minutes of the Board:

"The principal informed the meeting that he had suspended 14 pupils from the school until Sunday 12 February 89 because of a misdemeanour. Their parents had been informed accordingly" (Board of Uthongathi, 9 Feb. 1989).

The incident involved the holding of an unauthorised beach party. The unexpected breach resulted in the suspensions recorded above, as well as a loss of privileges for the students implicated for a further month. This event might have influenced student responses to sections dealing with discipline in the student questionnaire (Appendix D). The moral code of the school was revealed as a point of contention (*ibid.*, ques. B16). Although most students appeared to agree that the rules were generally observed, a minority regarded certain rules as cynical or inappropriate, or dictated by concern for public opinion. Rules regulating physical contact between the sexes appeared to especially rankle, while perceived autocratic action by the senior administration was criticised (*ibid.*, ques. C2). This latter reaction in particular appeared to be related to the decisive imposition of sanctions against the transgressors mentioned previously. Intent on learning more about their conceptions on discipline, the researcher engaged senior students in discussion.

The Standard Eights explained their views :

A.C. : "So, where does responsible freedom end and discipline begin?"



- K. : "Well, in the classrooms we're not silent. There's a lot of activity - no passive learning . . . but we really are working!"
- T. : "Some private schools restrict freedom. Here the principle of trust operates."
- B. : "But discipline is slowly getting stricter as the numbers increase."
- T. : "Yes, if people break the rules the discipline tightens."

(Std 8, 9 Mar. 1989)

The Standard Nine students were perceptive:

- A.C. : "What about discipline? Is it really too strict?"
- B. : "Over the years . . . when the school was built, teachers were a bit too idealistic about discipline. They thought : `these are going to be exceptional students` and didn't realise children are children. I suppose that some stiffening of discipline has been necessary. The increase in numbers is a factor too."
- A.C. : "Is some imposed discipline necessary, then?"
- M. : "Yes. It is."
- R. : "We need consistency in punishment, and teachers differ too much. Are they rules, or are they guidelines? We need clarification."
- S. : "We don't always know what to expect."
- M. : "Teachers , pupils and parents should get together and discuss the issue of discipline. My mother thinks there's not enough discipline at the school . . . and she's so wrong!"

(Std 9, 10 Mar. 1989)

In response to the parents' questionnaire, parents showed unambiguous support for the moral code implemented at Uthongathi (App.E,ques.A18). Nevertheless, their additional remarks revealed a quite wide range of views concerning approaches to the issue of control and moral norms. Many approved an open approach with an emphasis on self-responsibility and intrinsic discipline. Others advocated "a very firm line" on discipline; yet others a stress on good manners and etiquette.

Some curtailment of the personal space of students is apparent, with concessions to the conservative values of parents and a functionalist adherence to the norms and middle class values of private schooling. A high level of co-operation and compliance is evident in the daily affairs of the students. There is little obvious manifestation of intransigence, rebellion or even antipathy, although conversations with students gave a hint of occasional chauvinism and macho behaviour. The visitor will see no litter, no graffiti, no earrings, vests or sandals although dress is generally informal. There is no evidence of the appearance of a counter-culture, such as that described by Willis in his research with the working class in England. Uthongathi appears rather to have given effect to the imperative of liberalism mentioned by Gamble (1981,p.219) that "all should be bourgeois". The ethos is pervaded by respectability and industry, shot through on occasions by the boisterousness of youth.

#### 4.4.4.11. Social dynamics and the racial-cultural milieu.

The creation of a rich mix of races and cultures in its schools is a principle of the Constitution of N.E.S.T. Such racial-cultural (ethnic) mixture is intended to serve as a vehicle for the development of tolerance and understanding

among children from diverse backgrounds. A rich social interaction appears to have occurred naturally from the opening day at Uthongathi, although the development of language cliques soon became evident. In the early days of the school in particular, several Zulu girls created a Zulu-speaking clique in the residences. This phenomenon, according to Mr Ian Shuttleworth (8 Oct. 1987), was due to shyness and particular interests. Indeed, where racial groups have formed at Uthongathi, there has been no visible evidence of innate mistrust or hostility directed towards other groups. Group cohesion originates rather in feelings of familiarity based on common language (*ibid.*). In conversation with the researcher, Zulu girls in Standard Six (15 Mar. 1989) explained why the tendency to form cliques had arisen.

N. : "We formed a group because we could not speak English. When you're with people and they all speak English, you feel left out. So we stuck together."

J. : "We were shy."

The students had apparently tended to be unselfconscious about such groupings until staff urged them to ensure that they gained a wider experience of language by mixing socially at every opportunity. Recording the report of student Melissa Bauer, minutes of the Planning Weekend of 30-31 July 1988 read:

"Having spent 18 months at Uthongathi all the pupils were now friends. Although race groups tended to stick together she had been surprised when teachers had pointed this out, because she had simply registered these were people enjoying each others' company. She felt the staff believed that this would not look

good', or desirable because 'we want the world to think that it works'. The community, embracing as it did different cultures and religions, was a great success, and at Uthongathi she had found a truly African culture, to which she and the other students wanted to belong" (Bauer, 30-31 Jul. 1988).

These minutes reflect inter alia the concern of teaching staff at the students forming Zulu-speaking cliques that would hamper their use of English, the medium of instruction. The problem was clearly seen to be educational rather than social.

Richard Thompson has commented on the practical ramifications of the policy of mixing children in a balance of races (Thompson, 27 Jan. 1989). He points out that parents in general are quite comfortable with such balance. It works well in practice despite some criticisms that pertain at the theoretical level. Race fades into insignificance, he asserts, and the white mindset changes:

"Our children are given the opportunity of viewing our country from a more realistic viewpoint. They begin to realise just how complex our society really is, also the complexities within their own and other cultures. It provides a secure base from which they can begin to explore a complex world" (ibid.).

In response to the questionnaire survey, members of the teaching staff reported very favourably on the social climate of the school. They strongly affirmed their personal acceptance of students of different races and cultures, as equal in worth and status (App. C, ques. B7). They perceived the student population, comprised of different races, to be mixing in harmony (ibid., ques. B9).

Several nevertheless conceded that some new arrivals took time to adjust to the non-racial atmosphere and that some racial and language cliques were present.

In response to the parents' questionnaire, parents reported themselves content that their children were treated as equal in dignity and worth to all other students at Uthongathi (App.E,ques.A6). They very strongly supported the policy of maintaining a reasonable balance in numbers between the races at the school (ibid.,ques.A9). A great many asserted that the non-racial nature of the school was a prime reason for sending their children to Uthongathi.

In their responses to the questionnaire survey, students were in general also positive about the social climate of the school. They, too, strongly agreed that students of different races mixed in harmony at the school, although for several the concept "harmony" was too strong a description (App.D,ques.B11). Several also mentioned the necessary period of adjustment for newcomers and referred to the formation of cliques which were most noticeable amongst the Zulu girls. Although a firm majority felt that girls were treated as equal in status to boys, a small minority disagreed (ibid.,ques.B13). A quantity of emphatic comment laced with good humour was collected on the topic, which appeared to have elicited more interest than the question of race.

Most students also felt that their cultures were valued. Most felt confident that their religious beliefs were accepted and encouraged at Uthongathi, despite some feeling that accepted was a more accurate term than encouraged (ibid.,ques.B7) and that the encouragement of all beliefs was difficult to implement in practice. A considerable majority perceived the experience of being educated with

children of different cultures and races as enriching (ibid., ques. B20). The following are representative remarks:

"We are developing a common culture."

"I'll never regret going to this school."

Intent on probing further behind the euphoric **view of racial mixing** revealed in the questionnaire survey, the **researcher** engaged in informal and sometimes intense discussion with students drawn from a wide range of standards. During their brief experience of the school, the Standard Fives (9 Mar. 1989) had evidently not encountered racial tensions:

A.C. : "So, do you think you all get on well?"

Chorus : "Yes."

A.C. : "Have there not been any squabbles between different races?"

S. : "Well, its not to do with race."

L. : "Some students want to be bossman, but its not racial. Some also get cross if you're on the phone too long."

The Standard Eights (9 Mar. 1989) were frank:

A.C. : "Have there been any racial incidents in the school?"

T. : "Only in the first year of the school, when a white guy and a black girl called names."

A.C. : "Oh . . . and have there been any incidents during the past year?"

Chorus : "No."

M. : "New people coming in do take time to mix."

W. : "Blacks are all brought up with brotherhood of other blacks in mind, and it takes time to adjust. There was one minor incident in the

early days . . . its not evident now."

The Standard Nines (10 Mar. 1989) were very open indeed:

- A.C. : "Why do cliques form?"
- R. : "Its with people who have something in common at the time. Especially in this school, **groups** do form, and they stick together because **they** have this idea of an extended family."
- K. : "In their first year or so, the new black girls stuck together, then they started to mix."
- A.C. : "And has there been any racial tension or strife?"
- General : "No . . . no . . ."
- A.C. : "No incidents of a racial nature?"
- M. : "The worst that has ever happened here, in my experience, is insults based on race!"
- B. : "I don't think so . . . no . . . no ."
- M. : "I'm being very honest! I've heard an argument where . . . this is an example . . . calling somebody a kaffir because you disagree with them!"
- R. : "I disagree with that. I've never experienced that!"
- M. : "I have!"

The boys all vigorously disagree.

- A.C. : "So, from the boys' side, do you think you've got a clean slate?"
- Boys : "Yes, its not the guys! And, we don't form cliques either."
- M. : "In the beginning, that happened with the girls."
- A.C. : "The early days of the school, you mean? So it

takes a little while to get accustomed to things?"

B. : "With some people, yes."

Contraventions based on race appear to have been confined to isolated incidents during the initial stages of the students' inter-personal accommodation. The experience of the researcher during frequent visits to Uthongathi has shown a remarkable social cohesion, with a strong corporate spirit and impressive level of social solidarity amongst the students. The questionnaire survey showed the general disposition of staff, students and parents towards the mixing of races at the school to be overwhelmingly positive.

Students were in general agreement that the education experienced at Uthongathi would enable them to feel confident in the wider (Western industrial) South African society (App.D,ques.B6). Several students nevertheless expressed concern at difficulties experienced in adjusting to home life after returning from school (ibid.,ques.B4). One open response read:

"There are two different environments and I have to adjust to township life and another language."

In view of the above, an initial exploration of possible disjunctions between home and school life was conducted by the researcher. Member of the Board of Uthongathi Dr Dowlat Bagwandeem (Bagwandeem,2 Mar.1989) has described Uthongathi as a melting pot for the development of a truly South Africa culture, but nevertheless points to the contradictions experienced, particularly by day students, though effects of the Group Areas Act :



"The ethos of Uthongathi is in engendering a new South Africa. We are all moving inexorably to it and Uthongathi is in the vanguard. Still, at the end of the day our pupils have to go back to their ghetto, township or home and live with their 'own people'."

Day scholars appeared to experience most problems. Problems of adjustment were seen by several such scholars to affect their life at school, as well as their home communities.

The Standard Eights elaborated on some of the problems experienced by day scholars, who tended to feel isolated from their boarder peers.

- D. : "There's a bit of a gap between boarders and day scholars. Its quite a big gap."
- A.C. : "Why?"
- K. : "You see, there's a sense of community amongst the boarders - the day scholars don't always fit in. We're accepted, all right : but we can only really socialise after 4 o'clock so the day scholars 'miss out'."

Other problems experienced by scholars were touched on by the Standard Five class:

- S. (a Zulu) : "Other children might look down on you outside. It feels abnormal."
- A.C. : "And what about home life?"
- S. : "Well . . . its very different from home here."

The Standard Nine pupils laid bare their perceptions of the outside world:

- M. : "I find much racism where I live. Even my family are totally against me mixing, or coming here?"
- A.C. : "Did you insist on coming here?"
- M. : "Yes."
- A.C. : "So, what is the main thing parents look for in sending you here?"
- R. : "Parents have heard that its a good school."
- A.C. : "So the first priority is high standards?"
- B. : "Yes, but also education in the wide sense . . . like the racial mixing."
- K. (a Zulu) : "You see, most of us who come from a government school must adapt to this system of education. Free thinking. My mother has got to adapt to it as well. To her, going to school means strict rules, strict uniform . . . and you learn! And that's it! She can't come to terms with how I learn. To her, its not learning."
- A.C. : "And the opinions of other outsiders: the wider world?"
- K. : "Its not so much the wider world as our immediate community."
- A.C. : "What do you mean?"
- K. : "Well, the local white community. They don't like us anyway."
- A.C. : "Why don't they like you?"
- K. : "They seem to be conservative."
- A.C. : "Is it the racial mixing?"
- All : "Yes."
- R. : "We've `invaded' their area. They want to keep white dominance."
- M. : "We're not accepted by all whites. We feel more comfortable in Hambanathi than in some white areas. They're just not used to our mixing!"
- S. : "Day scholars experience it too, from outsiders."

People think, because of our mixing, our ways are going to change and that we'll all deteriorate in some way."

- M. : "Some are also very condescending."
- A.C. : "And are people also condescending on the school premises?"
- K. : "No . . . I don't think so. We tend to take people for what they are."
- A.C. : "Thank you. Now, are there any further experiences you can relate regarding your adjustments to home or school?"
- D. : "I find it quite hard. There's a different language in the townships. They like different things, and I must be a different person there."
- A.C. : "What is the most serious problem in going home?"
- D. : "Well, some people do mind . . ."
- A.C. : "Are you ostracised in coming to this school . . . do they think you are privileged?"
- D. : "Maybe . . ."
- A.C. : "Are they very cynical?"
- D. : "No. I came to this school in 1987. And when I went home they threw two petrol bombs at our home."
- A.C. : "Oh!"
- M. : "It matures one . . . being here . . . quicker than a state school. Whites are so ignorant of socio-political events."
- A.C. : "Yes . . . I see."

(9 March 1989)

Although these dialogues have been selected to illustrate some of the problems present, it is clear that a majority of pupils at Uthongathi do not experience difficulty in adjusting to home life after returning from school (App.D, ques.B4).

#### 4.4.4.12. Community service.

Community service is a logical, practical expression of N.E.S.T. philosophy. It was highly developed at Maru a Pula during the headmastership of Deane Yates and continues to be a significant and integral feature of that school to the present day. Waterford is also widely respected for its pervasive and effective programmes. Community service has long been a firm foundation of the N.E.S.T. Constitution, and a matter on which N.E.S.T Central is very assertive.

Amongst programmes mounted by Uthongathi during 1987 was a project with the aged at the Hambanathi Clinic in Tongaat. Meals made from high-protein and low-cost soya extract were prepared and demonstrated to pensioners at the clinic. Uthongathi pupils delivered an introductory talk on nutrition, while the follow-up included the provision of enriched soya extract for resale to the community. The present writer, who participated in the endeavour, noted the absence of "handouts". Other service projects in the first year included the monitoring of pollution along the Tongaat River and the clearing of Tongaat Beach of debris and litter.

During a meeting held during December 1987 in order to review the first year of life of the school, Chairman of N.E.S.T. Prof G.R. Bozzoli urged the Board of Uthongathi to greater endeavours in the field of community service, arguing that such service should not be displaced by school sport (Board of Uthongathi, 19 Dec. 1987). Bozzoli made clear his view that community service should be the priority. Mr Richard Thompson responded with a review of the several projects undertaken during the year by his small complement of staff. He also outlined plans for projects to be undertaken in the coming year and explained the preparatory

work already done by the school's Community Liaison Officer, who had already been appointed and would assume formal duties in due course. Thompson conceded that Uthongathi was not yet accepted as part of the local community. He was accordingly urged to make the theme of community involvement a priority so that Uthongathi would not become firmly established as an institution separate from the community. The parents' representative present, however, expressed the contrary view that the main priorities should be the education of the pupils and the financial viability of the school. Prof. Bozzoli responded by pointing out that the unique N.E.S.T. philosophy should be fully implemented. Board member Dr D. Bagwandeem observed that the principal had made every effort to involve the school in the local community, and that even greater involvement was anticipated (ibid.).

During the first half of 1988, such increased involvement was reported in the minutes of the Board of Uthongathi (Board of Uthongathi, 5 May 1988). It was noted that students were helping with the building of a creche at Magwaveni, an informal settlement near Tongaat. An educational upgrade programme had been initiated, toys were being made for distribution, beach sweeps were being done, fund-raising was being undertaken to aid a local school, and Uthongathi was to be utilized for an Indaba Youth Conference. It was clear however, from the report of the school's recently - appointed Community Liaison Officer, Mrs T. Ngidi, at the July 1988 workshop, that the deepseated scepticism of the local community had yet to be overcome. The minutes read:

"Initially she had met with hostility from the local communities who felt Uthongathi already had adequate funds, and that the offer to assist them was only a

gimmick to raise more funds. They also felt that a R9 million school was only for the rich, and that their own children, who had not been able to pass the entrance examinations, would never benefit. They also felt that Uthongathi was diverting funds that would otherwise have gone to them" (Ngidi, 30 -31 Jul. 1988).

Mrs Ngidi proceeded to elaborate on the problems she experienced in involving the entire school in community projects during a single two-hour session weekly, when only a section of the students seemed to be committed. The most successful project undertaken to date was that related to the Magwaveni Creche, in which the buildings were renovated and repaired. The project appeared to have captured the interest of the whole school (*ibid.*). The isolated nature of Uthongathi, with its accompanying transport difficulties, had precluded more intensive use of the school facilities by local communities. Despite these problems, staff representatives at the workshop expressed the view that community service provided a valid educational experience for the students. The aim should be to render aid to local communities in such a way that they could better help themselves.

The first eighteen months of the life of Uthongathi were thus clearly marked by difficulties experienced in immersing the school in the local community; a syndrome that had been initially experienced at Maru a Pula many years previously despite vigorous efforts mounted by Deane Yates and his staff from its inception. In October 1988, Mrs Ngidi expressed her optimism that the situation was improving.

"Originally there appeared to be lots of scepticism about our motives but attitudes seem to be changing now. Partly because of what was done at Magwaveni;

also because of closer working relationships with them, such as getting involved in their projects. Despite our own need for money, we have embarked on fund-raising for deserving projects in the community. For example, selling tickets for a raffle to raise money for a farm school. We have learnt to be very much part of their own projects, such as child welfare, speech and art competitions; also collecting toys for their toy library. We respond to their needs. We play soccer with the squatter children and are just part of their lives. We sometimes transport people to our functions. Too much demand now and transport is a great problem. We are increasingly conscious of the need for all our pupils to engage in community service as an integral part of their education. We like to ensure that every child at Uthongathi gets some experience in helping others. Pupils must take part in two afternoons weekly for sport and one afternoon for community service. They can select their afternoon and project" (Ngidi, 14 Oct. 1988).

A month later a report from the ad.hoc. Public Relations and Community Liaison Committee to the Board of Uthongathi detailed a wide variety of projects being undertaken, including work at a creche, old age home and primary school. On Saturdays an upgrade programme was run for twenty-six local pupils, in English and Mathematics. Other options included offering school facilities to the Outreach Programme of St Albans in Johannesburg, a possible use of Uthongathi as a library centre for P.R.O.T.E.C. and a link with Anglo-Vaal's English Language Centre (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Nov. 1988).

In response to their questionnaire, most members of staff felt that community service was taken seriously by students

of Uthongathi. Some pointed out that attitudes varied greatly. Several conceded that some compulsion was used, while certain members of staff did not themselves get sufficiently involved (App.C,ques.B18). Students saw community service (and self help) as valuable aspects of their education, despite the following blunt comment: "I won't work with the community, so what's the use?" (App.D,ques.B17). Despite such perceptions staff agreed that it was the practice at Uthongathi to encourage the development of a compassionate social conscience in the students (App.C,ques.B19).

In discussion with the researcher, the students commented freely about community service. A group of Standard Eights explained that there was a minimum requirement, often exceeded:

- A.C. : "Are students really committed to it?"  
 T. : "Some people are committed but some can't get to it because of sport."  
 B. : "Everyone has to do at least a minimum level of participation. Some do lots more!"

The development of a deepening commitment often seemed to occur as a result of involvement over time, according the the Standard 9's:

- A.C. : "Is community service really valuable?"  
 E. : "It can help others, and makes you want to do more for others."  
 B. : "The younger ones are not at all sure. You mature into it. Older age groups are now into it."  
 M. : "Yes. It becomes ingrained. If you're involved from the beginning it helps."



One of the younger pupils in Std. 5 responded with disarming insight:

J. : " If you go to Magwaveni . . . the children need love . . . and we give love to them."

A.C. : "Should all schools do something like this?"

General : "Yes!"

(10 Mar. 1989)

The Magwaveni Creche project represents an endeavour on the part of the school to tackle an immense task with resolve and limited resources. It and other projects are under constant pressure from the financial constraints of the school.

#### 4.4.4.13. Approaches to teaching.

The philosophy embraced by the N.E.S.T. Constitution, reflected in the statements of principle that comprise Appendix A, has important implications for pedagogy at Uthongathi:

(a) The requirement that academic standards be set that will enable the students to realise and fulfil their potential, with a focus on gaining a university entrance pass; also that they will be trained in democratic principles so that they will be able to handle freedom, implies the use of open-ended approaches to teaching. These might embrace guided discovery, problem-solving exercises, creativity, research and project work. Approaches would focus on the fostering of critical, analytical thought.

(b) The multi-cultural composition of Uthongathi, the imperative to harness the heritages of all sections of the population, and the requirement that all should learn from

each other so that they might contribute to the whole from the richness of their heritages, implies the use of group discussion and debate.

(c) That Uthongathi shall draw students from all sections of the community, and that bursaries shall make the school affordable to all strata, implies the presence of pupils who, although screened for educability, might be hampered by a history of inferior schooling. The presence of such pupils implies the creation of a supportive learning environment and the use of some direct instructional methods on an individual basis. Academic support strategies will be necessary, with particular attention to those pupils whose home language is not the language of instruction.

It is to be expected that remedial strategies would be more prevalent in the lower standards, the more open-ended strategies in the higher. All would be threaded through by the multi-cultural dimension. Taken as a whole, the demands of the N.E.S.T. philosophy might be expected to result in a stimulating mix of pedagogies that will require exceptional teaching skills to harness fully.

Discussions held with the teaching staff during the first year of operation of the school focused on the approaches implemented in a multi-cultural classroom environment with a school comprised only of junior standards. Discussion was enriched by the observation of lessons. It became clear to the researcher that a wide variety of approaches was evident, with an emphasis on methods that would challenge the more capable pupils, while affording adequate support to the disadvantaged.

English : Mr E. Butler, senior teacher of English at Uthongathi (Butler, 9 Oct. 1987) explained that, of the first

twenty-seven Zulu-speaking students in the 1987 intake, eleven could speak English quite fluently, while sixteen were designated as second-language students. Both Bantu Education and private-school backgrounds were represented in the latter group. Much group work is used in class and the more competent students help others informally during lessons. Much talk and discussion occurs in groups in order to promote lateral thinking and problem-solving. Works of literature are often explored by means of dramatic action. Drama is timetabled for std 5 as a double period weekly. It is intended that the students be increasingly directed towards a comparative study of literature from various authors and various cultures. Mr Butler points out that the school encourages all teachers to teach terminology far more consciously than they otherwise might. The introduction to a subject incorporates a glossary of terms particular to that subject. Oral explanation is often reinforced with written examples. Butler feels that the programme has been very successful, but also points to the wider language policy:

"It is difficult to monitor the influence of our programme, whether improvement occurs in oral or written work. Improvement might be due to boarding at the school. The students are encouraged to speak at every opportunity" (Butler, 24 Nov. 1988).

It is evident to the present writer that English is central to the school curriculum. As the major language of instruction, it is fundamental to all other learning.

Afrikaans : All students take Afrikaans for the Matriculation examinations of the Joint Matriculation Board. Weak students are required to undertake extra work on designated afternoons. Since there is no language

laboratory at the school, much use is made of pre-recorded dialogue and questions by tape recorder. These are developed through a series of progressive lessons. Many interdisciplinary projects are undertaken in Afrikaans, with plays being written, directed and performed by students. Many practical situations are explored, with the use of themes that cross cultural boundaries. Individuals are required to report back on books they have read with the student audience awarding marks for the presentation. A wide range of authors is chosen (Pillay, 10 Oct. 1987).

Zulu : Fluent Zulu-speakers are given extra work on composition, comprehension and novels. Typical second-language approaches are used, with an exploration of topics such as "a visit to the shop" or "a trip through the game reserve". Zulu is utilized as a subject through which all students can be exposed to the Zulu culture (Ngcobo, 9 Oct. 1987).

Mathematics : Teaching a multi-cultural student population is not considered to greatly affect the Mathematics programme, although some mathematical terms tend to be problematic for those not familiar with English. Teaching tends to be quite conventional although the rate of delivery is carefully controlled. Students are encouraged to help each other in the event of need. Computer literacy is an important focus, with experience of logo and use of the word processor. A computer club exists, and the school newspaper is printed on the computers (Kent, 10 Oct. 1987).

Physical Science and Biology : Many sources of reference are used in the teaching of science. Seven science textbooks are consulted so that a variety of perspectives becomes manifest. Both convergent and divergent approaches are utilised, with much creativity engendered via practical

activities. Classes visit biological settings as often as possible. Teaching children from different cultural backgrounds is largely a problem of communication. Great awareness, patience and tolerance are required (Wiggle, 10 Oct. 1987).

Geography : In the teaching of Geography, some language problems are evident. These tend to render the use of complex terminology meaningless. Interpretation is aided by drawing on the students' experience of local phenomena. A practical approach helps. Although most white students tend to generalise from theory to practice, most blacks appear to perform better when extrapolating from practice to theory. They prefer moving from concrete to abstract, from experience to symbolism. An endeavour is made to ensure that the curriculum does not become too Anglo-centric. Some effort is also made to teach thinking skills and research methods. Co-operative endeavour is the basis of the hidden curriculum, rather than competition. In senior years examination strategies will be taught, but the aspect of enjoyment will not be denied (Thompson, 9 Oct. 1987).

History : In the teaching of History, an endeavour is made to approach topics from a variety of perspectives. Groups are thoroughly mixed. Much groupwork is used, in order to study such themes as the development of science, communication, computers and trade. These are all related to worldwide trends. Local topics also form a focus for historical research, such as the history of Tongaat. Visits are paid to local temples, the sugar mill at Tongaat, and several tombs in the vicinity of the school (Amin, 9 Oct. 1987).

Religious Education : Most students have little background, even in their own religions, and these are covered first as

a foundation upon which to develop comparative religion as a study. Included are Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. The religions are studied comparatively, yet not in competition with each other. An endeavour is made to ensure an objective view, and readings are done from each great book. The Moslem students tend to be rather dogmatic and parents have in the past objected to the "questioning of God's word". The aim is nevertheless to engender tolerance and compassion, and to explore themes; for example, creation or the Messiah. Much debate is engendered. At assembly, prayers are derived from different faiths (Amin, 9 Oct. 1987).

A wide range of approaches to the teaching of students from diverse cultures was thus reported from staff at Uthongathi, and in practice a very wide spectrum of lessons was observed during a period of eighteen months. These ranged from the traditional banking model to student-centric approaches encompassing problem-solving and creativity. Further enrichment and an ongoing exchange of ideas is anticipated, since Uthongathi has mounted a scheme to ensure the exposure of all staff to a range of innovative student-centred teaching strategies. Convenor of the Sub-committee for Curriculum, Mr B. Butler observes :

"Relevant, progressive, liberatory syllabi are not, in themselves, 'educational' - they need to be coupled with an appropriately progressive pedagogy. As teachers, we must not set ourselves up as 'expert transmitters of the real facts', but as facilitators who seek to nurture independence and self-empowerment amongst our students. Clearly there are some subjects in which the old-fashioned 'lecture' approach will still be necessary from time to time, but in general we should be thinking more in terms of micro-teaching, debates, skills practice, discussion, panels, fish

bowls, seminars, brainstorming, buzz groups, specific task groups, role-playing, drama, case studies, games, simulators, teaching/learning groups and similar teaching structures and strategies which promote active learning. If we are serious about the value of integrated studies, then training in team-teaching (preferably by someone like Steyn, who has the experience) is a prerequisite. Many of the other student-centred methodologies mentioned above will be alien and perhaps even threatening to staff - a well-structured Professional Development Programme should be an integral element in the school calendar" (Butler, 15 Nov. 1988).

The range of lessons observed by the present researcher included inter alia:

- the use of drama in English,
- the acting out, with debate, of scenarios in History,
- library research on interdisciplinary themes,
- guided discovery in Physical Science,
- the creation of an ecological "world" in Biology,
- plays being written, directed and produced,
- reports-back on books read,
- second language activity lessons,
- interviews held in a practical context, and
- debates on religious issues.

The squarish classrooms with their often informal sprawl of desks and huge glass sliding doors opening to the surrounds give an impression of flexibility and informality. In subjects that lend themselves to verbalisation, it tends to be given free rein during lessons, in view of the need for second-language pupils to exercise their powers of speech. The keynote appears to be student-centricity. Despite exuberance, a co-operative atmosphere prevails in most

classrooms : the researcher only occasionally noting evidence of verbal or non-verbal challenges to the teaching staff. At no time during the years of observation would a war analogy have been appropriate, and there was little evidence on the teaching staff of Hargreaves's lion-tamer stereotypes (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985, p. 242).

Quite typical was the ritual of respect for the staff : the polite knock on the staffroom door and a generally compliant approach. Students appeared to have rationalised the need for co-operation, and the desirability of gaining good qualifications; although, as noted earlier, there was some scepticism and apprehension amongst the seniors at the personal constraints they experienced in the process. Although there appeared to be strong concord on the main thrust of the school's emphasis on quality and standards, the cost in terms of relaxation and socialisation was considered by certain students to be high.

In attempting to gain a clearer idea of the views of parents, staff and pupils on the issue of pedagogy in multi-cultural classrooms, the researcher included appropriate questions in the surveys undertaken during March and April 1989. It was clear from the returns that parents strongly supported their children becoming informed about, and sensitive to, cultural heritages not their own (App. E, ques. A11). A majority felt that enough emphasis was given to their children's cultural heritage in the classroom, although a small minority was undecided or negative (*ibid.*, ques. A10). Several parents mentioned the multi-cultural composition of the school as a reason for sending their children there. As might be expected, the responses show that teachers who fully explored the rich mix of cultural backgrounds in their classrooms do so with the approval of virtually all parents.



In their responses to their questionnaire, a majority of teachers reported taking the cultural backgrounds of their pupils into account during their teaching, although a significant minority reported not doing so (App.C,ques.B1). The nature of the subject taught appeared to have exerted a powerful influence on these responses. There was nevertheless considerable agreement that an effort was made during appropriate lessons to ensure that students were enabled to better understand and respect the cultures of other students, despite a measure of indecision (ibid.,ques. B2). Most teachers agreed that the learning experiences in the classrooms were extended and enriched by the presence of students from different cultures (ibid.,ques.B4). However, it was again mentioned that the teaching of some subjects does not seem to be affected by the diversity. A majority disagreed with the statement that serious instructional problems arise from teaching pupils with different cultural heritages together in the same classroom, despite several teachers conceding that communication could be a hampering factor (ibid.,ques.B5). Controversial topics were reported to be freely discusses in such classrooms in order "to encourage a confrontation with reality" (ibid.,ques.B8) and it was felt by teachers that the school was making sufficient efforts to promote independent, analytical, critical thought (ibid.,ques.21). The results from the staff survey reveal a perception that, in appropriate subjects, a quite open interchange of "cultural perspectives" occurs; that pupils are encouraged to analyse issues critically in an environment enriched by the presence of pupils bearing different heritages. Other than the issue of language, there appeared to be little evidence of serious instructional problems.

In reply to their questionnaire, students tended to affirm the views of their teachers on certain important issues.

They predominantly perceived lessons in appropriate subjects to help other students to better understand their home cultures (App.D,ques.B2) and felt that they were afforded the opportunity to better understand the home cultures of other students (ibid.,ques.B3). Students generally agreed that controversial topics dealing with culture or race could be freely discussed in the classrooms although some dissention was recorded (ibid.,ques.B9).

Uncertain whether a complex concept such as culture would be sufficiently understood by the student respondents to the questionnaire, the researcher queried a Standard Eight group (Std 8, 9 Mar. 1989), who confirmed that the word was quite commonly used in the school. They suggested its meaning to be identified with a person's background, interests and practices, religion and languages. The matter was also pursued with Standard Six pupils (15 Mar. 1989):

A.C. : "What do you mean by the word 'culture'?"

General : "Its people's way of life."

"Its people's backgrounds."

"Its what they do and how they do things."

"Its what people believe in."

"Its their dress and clothing."

"Their language and religion."

A.C. : "And do some subjects help you to learn about other people's cultural backgrounds?"

K. : "History and Comparative Religion do."

A.C. : "Do you feel that you share your home cultures?"

P. : "Everyone can learn about everyone else's culture. They learn about mine."

K. : "All cultures are kept alive."

A.C. : "Will you also perhaps develop a common culture at this school?"

S. : "We're getting there. Some try . . . but it

will take longer."

K. : "It will take time. Its the way everyone's brought up."

The conversation with the Standard Nines on the same day was interesting:

A.C. : "What do you understand by 'culture'?"

M. : "I don't really know. I don't feel I know what my culture really is, as a white person. Do I have a culture? I must develop a shared culture: my own mixed with all others."

A.C. : "Would you say the school is moving towards a 'mixed' South African culture?"

M. : "Yes, perhaps. So why should it worry us to try and promote a home culture?"

General agreement.

A.C. : " Would you all like to share a common culture?"

All : "Yes."

(15 Mar. 1989)

There was a clear perception amongst the seniors, not evident amongst the younger students, of a blurring of distinctions, perhaps a sense of the unreality of the concept culture, and a clearly stated desire to merge their cultural heritages. It could signal the presence of an underlying reality: that pupils who are exposed to a variety of cultures over time will inevitably develop a constellation of shared meanings that form the basis for a new cultural milieu.

#### 4.4.4.14. Academic support.

Problems experienced by many students who use English as a second language were identified early in the life of Uthongathi. A staff meeting was held in order to develop an appropriate support strategy (Board of Uthongathi, 22 Jan. 1987). Lesser difficulties were also noted in the teaching of Afrikaans and Zulu. In the junior standards therefore, English second-language students at Uthongathi experience an hour of extra tuition each morning. They gain much confidence through drama and problem-centred second-language situations such as "planning a trip". The syllabus incorporates oral drama in Term One, reading in Term Two, computer work (word processing) in Term Three and writing in Term Four. This programme, according to Senior Teacher of English Mr Brendon Butler (9 Oct. 1987), has helped to overcome the persistent language-ghetto mentality that became evident amongst some of the Zulu girls in their dormitories. Mr Butler affirms that some students were overawed by the novel environment and became reticent. Cliques formed as an aid to security. The problem was most prevalent amongst the Zulu students, and accordingly no Zulu speech was allowed in the dormitories during the first term of each year. Although there was resistance at first, the rule was adhered to. Butler states the result:

"We now find that English second-language pupils in their second year of study are resisting our encouragement that they speak Zulu. This seems to show a new-found confidence in English (24 Nov. 1988).

A system of "language buddies" is also used, with students aiding each other by providing conversation at meals. Students are also selected at random to say grace in the language of their choice. Of particular interest on these

occasions is the encouragement given by peers to students so chosen. At 12 noon, all pupils in the school are required to spend 20 minutes reading silently in any of the three languages offered at the school. The speaking of English is encouraged on campus at every opportunity, especially in inter-cultural contexts.

Discussions pursued with senior students tended to confirm Butler's description of the support programme in English.

A.C. : "How many of you have had learning problems since Standard Five?"

A few hands are raised.

A.C. : "What was most beneficial? What really helped?"

D. : "Extra English lessons."

A.C. : "And the buddy system?"

D. : "Yes. My buddy helped a lot. Extra reading didn't really."

(Several denials of the second point).

R. : "The restriction on language in the first year helped. One was not allowed to converse in Zulu, so the Zulus had to talk English."

A.C. : "Were you not resentful? Could you see the benefit?"

D. : "We weren't really resentful. Most of us could see benefits."

K. : "The buddy system: it countered racism as well. It brought different language groups together."

(Std 9, 9 Mar. 1989)

Richard Thompson agrees that the greatest problem of remediation is with language; mainly but not exclusively of the Zulus:

"Their main problems are traceable to early education, with little support forthcoming from parents. This problem is also true, to some extent, of other groups. Many parents cannot, or won't, help in the early years. Both parents might be working" (27 Jan. 1989).

Pointing out that remedial problems start in the early childhood years, Thompson affirms that Zulu children study their home language to the end of standard two and only start English in standard three. They are often taught by untrained teachers, which is a great setback. Some have had no Afrikaans: for example, the Swazis. Even the Zulu students have sometimes not experienced Afrikaans in their schools. Also, there might be political resistance to Afrikaans.

He concurs with Butler's perception that language remediation is working very well at Uthongathi. The majority of students with English as second language were improving their language by leaps and bounds, with a dramatic improvement in their content subjects. Although problems of pronunciation remained, these students were now exposed to a wider range of concepts. It represented a vast new world. Students were reading voraciously. The Zulus now had a much wider range of reference material than would be available in the Zulu language. There was a resulting improvement in insight and comprehension in all subjects. Most Zulu youngsters now spoke English more readily and were very proud of it. It is important that they speak English fluently, Thompson asserts, since it is an international language "that can open many doors" (ibid.).

As mentioned previously, some problems have been experienced with the other two languages of the school. It was noted early that five Zulu students from Swaziland had not studied Afrikaans. They were accordingly streamed to undertake groupwork in the workroom adjoining their classroom. At standard six level the streaming included a total of nineteen students who received particular attention because of weak Afrikaans (Pillay, 10 Oct. 1987).

Some whites, Indians and coloured students have experienced difficulty with learning the Zulu language. A partner system is used, although not all Zulu students have accepted responsibility for their partners' language proficiency (Ngcobo, 9 Oct. 1987).

Mathematics is included as a test for entrance, and problems with Mathematics tend to focus mostly on students who have moved from one school to another, or have not covered sections of the basics, rather than being intrinsic. The aim of the Mathematics programme in standards five and six is to develop a satisfactory level of ability by the early remediation of apparent weaknesses. Standard Seven presents a year of consolidation. From standards eight to ten the thrust is to gain a good Mathematics pass (Kent, 10 Oct. 1987).

Thompson confirms that many black students who were incapable of doing simple arithmetic at first, have experienced a surge of capability in Mathematics, aided by improved language comprehension. A minority remain reliant on drilling of the rules, however (27 Jan. 1989).

In Science, language presents a barrier to the use of scientific concepts such as photosynthesis. Some Zulu students tend to experience problems with abstracts, and a

measure of field-dependence is evident. These students prefer to be shown visual images, and to relate examples of phenomena to their personal, experienced environment. Terminology has been a pervasive problem, but the use of group work has tended to ameliorate these difficulties. Since some marks are allocated for cooperative effort on projects, it provides an incentive for students to help colleagues in an endeavour to gain improved marks for all. Enriched and more confident interaction is a desirable concomitant of the strategy (Wiggle, 10 Oct. 1987).

Much teaching of History at Uthongathi is undertaken by means of historical plays, with scenarios created by the students. Constant questioning and feedback accompany the performances, and all students in the class become involved in the cameos. Language is thus intimately integrated into the lessons and a problem-solving orientation is developed (Amin, Oct. 1987).

In their response to the staff questionnaire, teaching staff agreed that the mastery of English by the students whose home language is not English is the most serious 'learning problem' at Uthongathi (App. C, ques. B23), although Mathematics was also reported to be an initial problem for students. Staff reported adjusting their teaching methods and materials to accommodate the English-language deficiencies of certain students. One mentioned the fact that adjustment was imperative : there was no choice in the matter (ibid., ques. B27).

Students were quick to acknowledge the help given those who experienced difficulty with the language of instruction (App. D, ques. B14) and in general learning difficulties were seen to be enjoying the attention of the staff (ibid., ques. B15). Although staff were perceived to be willing to



give tutorials and other help, some students felt that the initiative lay with the students to request such assistance.

Parents expressed the overwhelming view that their children were free of serious and persistent academic problems (App. E, ques. A20). Such unexpectedly positive response suggests their perception that their children were not seriously hampered, or that such problems as existed were minor or under control.

Conscious of the difficulties experienced by local school children in gaining access to Uthongathi, the school has mounted a programme of academic enrichment for selected pupils from Hambanathi near Tongaat. The Board of Uthongathi minutes reflect the programme:

"Fourteen standard 4 and 5 pupils from Hambanathi had been tested and were involved in a six-month upgrade program. Efforts were also being made to assist Hambanathi teachers. It would be possible to offer four places to day scholars from Hambanathi in 1990" (Board of Uthongathi, 24 Aug. 1988).

Bryce Biggs points out the limitations of the Uthongathi endeavour. He recognises that no single school can hope to resolve the entire spectrum of socio-economic problems that the local community faces. He argues that Uthongathi can only hope to identify children with potential, who can be influential as catalysts to the growth and wellbeing of others (Biggs, 18 Jan. 1989). He refers to it as a "potential enhancement task" rather than a remedial task, which he considers to be the best possible use of limited resources.

#### 4.5. CONCLUDING SUMMARY.

Chapter Four has served to present findings on the N.E.S.T. school Uthongathi, situated near Tongaat. The findings were gained during an empirical investigation of the school that lasted two years. The illuminative mode of research within the ethnographic tradition was used in order to explore and reveal the school's structure and internal dynamics. Major possibilities and problematics of the school were exposed and highlighted under appropriate headings. They will be further discussed in Chapter Five, where implications will be derived and recommendations made for further research or appropriate action.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

## 5.1. INTRODUCTION.

In Chapter Five, findings derived from the empirical study and displayed in Chapter Four are further expanded, analysed and discussed in the light of relevant theory. Sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 in particular, are closely interwoven with the content of Chapter Four. Consideration is also given in the present chapter to the implications of the findings for further practice, and the findings are utilised to present a holistic and integrated portrait of Uthongathi during the period of its birth and infancy from January 1987 to July 1989. Social and environmental forces that are likely to effect the future provision of education in South Africa are then analysed. A brief sketch is made of major, contested ideologies bound to exert an influence on the N.E.S.T. system. The chapter concludes with an analysis of appropriate strategies for extrapolation of the N.E.S.T. model and recommendations are made for further action as well as relevant research.

## 5.2. THE ADMINISTRATION OF N.E.S.T.

## 5.2.1. The Board of N.E.S.T.

An appraisal of the socio-political origins of the Board of N.E.S.T. suggests the feasibility of a body of persons representative of different racial groups working constructively towards the realisation of an innovative, strategic vision for education in South Africa. The Board has achieved quite radical objectives by the use of constructive means. Although the course of action adopted

by the Board of N.E.S.T. shows their pragmatic acknowledgement of functionalist realities (including statutory racial classifications), their approach also shows a remarkable level of autonomy and independent thought that is compatible with the interpretive rationale. The interpretive approach to multi-cultural education in South Africa will be recalled as that advocated by Muir. It stands in stark contrast to pervasive technocratic and Marxist traditions. The implication of the approach is that it promotes those initiatives that rely on negotiated, alternative visions achieved by persuasion rather than force to achieve social change.

#### 5.2.2. Devolution of authority, and the local autonomy of N.E.S.T. schools.

The structures and powers of the various bodies that comprise the N.E.S.T. system suggest the division of powers in a federal or consociational democracy. The powers and duties of N.E.S.T. Central have clearly held important implications for Uthongathi. The autonomy of the Board of Uthongathi has been constrained and even curtailed at times by the Constitution and the philosophy that it embodies. The profound experience in open education of members of N.E.S.T. Central, and the breadth of perspective provided by members of the Central Board, have created a valuable corrective, guide and motivation to the programme at the school. The powers of N.E.S.T. Central are nevertheless tempered by the relative autonomy of the Board of Uthongathi. The environment in which the school is set holds a plethora of unique constraints with which the school itself must grapple. It is clear to the researcher that the Board of Uthongathi has found it necessary to leaven the wisdom and idealism embodied in the philosophy with considerable pragmatism during the birth of the school.

Despite the divisive forces present in South Africa, powerful processes of polarisation and multiplicity of ideologies that impinge on N.E.S.T., a positive relationship appears to have been achieved between N.E.S.T. Central and Uthongathi.

Trends in South Africa suggest the need for an appropriate model for national educational structures, upon which to ground the relationships and interactions between a central co-ordinating body and institutions seeking to accommodate a spectrum of needs in a racially and culturally plural society. The N.E.S.T. system might contain elements appropriate to any such future dispensation. There is a prospect of increased power being devolved to N.E.S.T. school boards as time passes, with a diminution of power to N.E.S.T. Central. The significance of this trend is that it is conducive to greater local autonomy. Actors within the setting of each school will increasingly shape their own future. It is a trend that is in accord with the interpretive rationale for multi-cultural education suggested previously.

### 5.3. THE PHILOSOPHY OF N.E.S.T.

#### 5.3.1. Currents of thought in the philosophy.

The philosophy of N.E.S.T. has evolved (and been tested in practice) over two decades, with Maru a Pula and Waterford as prime crucibles. Continuity has been ensured by the presence on the Board of N.E.S.T. of Mr Deane Yates and Mr Steyn Krige, with a significant intellectual and practical input also from Prof. G.R. Bozzoli, Prof. P. Mohanoe, Mr J. Kane-Berman and many others. Embodied within the Constitution of N.E.S.T., the bold statements of philosophy have served as a beacon to Uthongathi in the midst of change

and flux. Although not without contentious elements, the practical realisation of the philosophy has produced a refreshingly innovative and productive schooling community. The philosophy, taken as a whole or in part, could have important implications for other educational institutions seeking to implement a just system of education in South Africa.

#### 5.3.2. Perceptions held by the main actors at Uthongathi.

The evidence suggests that not all participants in the Uthongathi project were sufficiently well informed of the underlying philosophy of the school during its first eighteen months of existence. This apparent hiatus in knowledge might have served to exacerbate fractious tendencies during a most critical phase in the life of the school. Several serious problems relating to finance, staffing and community service were experienced most acutely during this period. The widespread promulgation of the philosophy late in 1988 has presented all participants with a common agenda that is clearly very well supported by staff, pupils and parents. Such dissensions as exist tend to relate more to particulars of practice rather than to fundamentals of the philosophy. The findings suggest the importance of thoroughly disseminating the principles upon which innovatory educational endeavours are founded, at an early stage.

#### 5.3.3. Racial issues.

Those elements of the entry policy that are designed to achieve a balance of racial groups at N.E.S.T. schools emanate directly from the philosophy. The balance itself is a contentious issue. It has even been described as racist, in view of its use of the much-hated Population Registration

Act as a criterion for entrance. The entry policy might, however, be accurately described as multi-racial rather than racist. The socio-political origins of the N.E.S.T. schooling system very clearly show the positive intentions behind the endeavour. In answer to criticisms, the following points might be raised:

(a) N.E.S.T. accepts racial categories and meanings as an undesirable yet real fact of social existence in South Africa. Such categories have been operational for many decades. Racial meanings cannot be summarily excised from peoples' minds by proclamation or decree. The irrationality of racial categorisation must be demonstrated in practice. Racial categories are thus used by N.E.S.T. in order to create a rich racial mix of persons living and working in close proximity. It is an endeavour to show the futility of racial categories as a basis for separation. It thus embodies an anti-racist statement in a structure in which race is accepted as a present reality.

(b) Affirmative action can be offered to those who might not otherwise gain entry to the school, since races whose educational histories have tended to disadvantage them are afforded protection from direct competition by those who have been privileged by their education.

(c) A rich cultural mix is created as a concomitant to the racial mixture, although the two concepts should not be conflated. A multi-cultural school has resulted, to the apparent benefit of the participants.

(d) The racial balance is not rigidly adhered to in practice, and there is an increasing tendency to bias towards demographic representation. The policy will be relaxed as South Africa inexorably shifts away from racial categories into a post-apartheid era.

(e) The social dynamics of the school are non-racial and the general disposition of members of staff is patently anti-racist.

(f) The policy holds powerful implications for communities that are inherently protective of group identity based on racial-cultural and nationalistic factors. It presents an inducement to such groups to identify with others in a system of common schooling. Minorities who desire protection are indeed protected.

#### 5.3.4. Multi-culturalism.

The imperatives of the N.E.S.T. philosophy have held important implications for the creation of a multi-cultural educational and social milieu at Uthongathi. They have affected many aspects such as the curriculum and pedagogy. The philosophy has thus provided principles and guidelines that have steered the school on a course towards a mode of multi-cultural schooling that might hold important implications for South Africa as a whole. An apparently 'foreign' import that defies conventional wisdom, multi-cultural education is vulnerable to criticism and possible rejection in South Africa on ideological grounds. There is a need for the perceptions of the wider South African society to be ascertained, with regard to models of integrated schooling appropriate to a culturally plural population.

#### 5.3.5. Economic factors and social responsibility.

The philosophy of N.E.S.T. embraces many principles that require the development of policies in its schools that will give effect to social responsibility. These principles have exerted an influence on bursary support, the intake policy,



community service, self-help and the academic support programme at Uthongathi. The evolution of these programmes at the school could have profound implications for a country that is characterised by extremes of wealth and poverty, is socially fissionable and faced with dwindling natural resources.

#### 5.3.6. Private schooling in a culturally plural society.

In the past, private schooling in South Africa has tended to provide an education of quality for the white, English-speaking elite, although as shown in Chapter Three many private schools have effected quite profound adaptations. Many Catholic schools in particular have changed fundamentally. The philosophy propounded by N.E.S.T. is directed towards the acquisition of a university entrance pass for Uthongathi students, and the liberal element in the philosophy demands a broad and rich education of quality in the English private school tradition. As a private school operating in an open market, affording an education in accordance with the philosophy has necessitated the provision of well qualified staff, wide subject options and an adequate range of sporting and cultural activities acceptable to the parents. In comparison to the education afforded the majority of South Africans, private schooling offering such concentration of educational resources tends to be construed as elitist. Uthongathi can be spared the harshest of such criticism owing to its programmes of affirmative action, policies directed to a Spartan mode of life, community service and non-racial student population. In the future, private schools offering an education of quality will doubtless find themselves becoming increasing targets of public ire. Yet on the other hand a powerful case can be made for the retention of "centres of excellence" in any future dispensation, in order to enhance the country's leadership potential and highly qualified manpower. The issue is worthy of much further debate.

#### 5.4. UTHONGATHI SCHOOL.

##### 5.4.1. Physical facilities.

###### 5.4.1.1. Initial building costs.

The evidence shows that N.E.S.T. has, on occasion, been charged with elitism for erecting fine buildings which were provided at considerable expense by the Anglo American Corporation. The impressive structures that have been built appear to stand in contrast to the declared egalitarian philosophy of N.E.S.T. Coupled to the small initial student roll, the charges were most often made in the first year. The insistence of parents on an education of quality that would be at least comparable with that available elsewhere in state or private schools has exacerbated the problem, while the school's situation in a grey area has made community use less easy to facilitate. The issue remains contentious, and worthy of further research.

###### 5.4.1.2. The possibilities of extrapolation.

It is clear that the many fleeting visits paid by the public to Uthongathi during its first year could have formed lasting impressions of the school as an ostentatious institution with fine buildings and a small student roll. The evidence showing endeavours to cut building costs, rejection of the initial plans on the grounds of ostentation, increase in student numbers well beyond the first-year roll, increased efforts to offer the school for use by the local community and expanding network of community service projects have presented a persuasive counter-argument that any fair-minded person would acknowledge. Further, the more modest structure at Phuthing as well as the endeavour to create the Cape Town school

piecemeal as a reaction to perceived community needs reveal a trend towards a more frugal approach by N.E.S.T. in the provision of amenities to its schooling communities. Limited finances have doubtless also played a role.

#### 5.4.2. Finances.

##### 5.4.2.1. Bursaries.

The allocation of an exceptionally high level of bursary support at Uthongathi prior to its formal opening was entirely consistent with the egalitarian aims of its philosophy. Such generosity was doubtless primarily motivated by these imperatives. The evidence suggests however, that such support was also offered in order to soften the uncertainties felt by some parents at sending their child to an extraordinary and novel school. It also helped ensure a balance of racial groups so that the policy of racial mixing could be implemented.

Although N.E.S.T. was very conscious of the need to keep costs down, maintain a modest fee structure and combat elitism, their efforts were hampered by the "bursary bulge" that had to be worked through the system over a period of years. At the same time, they faced the acceleration of costs inevitably attendant on the development of a new school. These were exacerbated by a drop in overseas funding at a critical juncture.

The overwhelming bursary support offered initially, and the levels predicted for the future, have made available an education of quality to many comparatively disadvantaged pupils who would otherwise have been denied such opportunities. Such policy is an increasing trend in private schooling. As explained by Mr P.K. Loveday,

Chairman of the Association of Private Schools, bursary support is quite usual in private schools:

"Undoubtedly today most of our private schools are providing financial assistance to an increasing proportion of their pupils and particularly to the underprivileged. In some schools this assistance is rendered by large companies and a number of individuals in the professions and in business: a few of the private schools have foundations that provide this assistance" (Loveday, 6 Oct. 1988).

Loveday's view is however challenged by the assertion of Christie (1988, p.40), who suggests that open schools are offering education predominantly to blacks for whom private school fees are not prohibitive. Uthongathi appears to be exceptional in its level of support. The histogram displayed in Appendix F showing the gross income of Uthongathi parents will reveal the comparative modesty of many incomes, while a scan of the data from which it was derived (Kent, et al., 22 Feb. 1989) will show bursaries to be quite widely spread throughout the school.

#### 5.4.2.2. The cost of maintaining a racial balance.

Many parents at Uthongathi, more particularly those from the white community, can choose between many alternatives in private education. Also, the state system offers their children generous subject alternatives, fine sports facilities and the security of tradition. Uthongathi appears to have been vulnerable to intense pressures from these alternatives. It has been forced to compete in an open market for white pupils, in order to achieve its racial balance. The result has been an expanded range of subject options and a broadened sports programme, with an increase

of staff that permits a staff-student ratio that has averaged 1 to 15. The curriculum has been commendably well served by such moves. However, since the costs of staffing are a major share of total costs in every school budget, expenses have been driven up. It appears therefore that the common-sense expectations entertained by certain parents have created a tension between the policy of maintaining a balance of races, and the egalitarian aims that strengthen the philosophy. The evidence therefore suggests a paradox. It is a fruitful area for further research.

#### 5.4.2.3. The cost of multi-cultural education.

The experience at Uthongathi has shown the need for extremely careful and realistic costing necessary in the early stages of development of a school. Such detailed and careful planning has become increasingly evident at Uthongathi. Initial financial problems were accelerated by the unpredictable and drastic curtailment of overseas funding. It is noted that N.E.S.T. has avoided the use of revolutionary rhetoric in order to garner overseas funds. It has also denied itself financial support from the state in order to remain free from particular ideological influences. In its initial travail, Uthongathi has shared in the experience of many private schools, the general financial problems of which were described by Christie (1988, p.39) during her research into open schools:

"Open schools feel far from secure financially; every school principal without exception expressed concern about the financial viability of the school. A number of schools had foregone state subsidies in becoming open, and were totally dependent on school fees and support from their religious congregations to continue operating."

Of particular interest is the cost of multi-cultural schooling, when compared with "uni-cultural" systems.

#### 5.4.3. The parent community.

##### 5.4.3.1. Economic factors.

In its efforts to make the education offered in its schools affordable to all sections of the community, while nevertheless maintaining standards and quality, N.E.S.T. has aligned its bursary policy with a tradition of affirmative action long pursued in certain other private schools. Waterford in Swaziland is one such school. Headmaster of Waterford Mr R.G. Eyeington (14 Sept. 1988) pointed out to the researcher that no prospective student who was qualified for entry in all appropriate areas had, in practice, ever been denied entry on financial grounds. The selection committee at Waterford know nothing of the economic circumstances of applicants' families. In the main, Mr Eyeington asserted, the school is middle class, with some students from a working class background and a number from professional families. In its profile of parents' incomes, therefore, it is perhaps broadly similar to Uthongathi. In the view of the present writer, such affirmative action as is practiced at Waterford is wholly praiseworthy, in the face of widespread social disadvantages that could bar talented youngsters from gaining an appropriate education. The programme at Uthongathi is also most commendable. The histogram on parents' salaries at Uthongathi suggests that the gross reported incomes of a small minority of parents are, in fact, less than the yearly fees of R7 800 levied at the school in 1989. Bursary support, although very costly to the school, has clearly been essential to the enrolment of a significant number of Uthongathi students.

Conscious of the position of relative privilege enjoyed by students in private schooling, Uthongathi has endeavoured to challenge the effects of economic disadvantage. Data provided by Wilson & Ramphele (1989,p.19) shows the extent of poverty in South Africa. No individual school, or schooling system, is likely to impact sufficiently on such poverty. There is a tremendous moral imperative incumbent on the state and civic society alike to address the problem. The influence of private schools on the well-being of the socio-economically disadvantaged, can perhaps best be rationalised by reference to the needs of the economy for highly trained manpower. Elizabeth Dostal (1988,p.56) has estimated that by the year 2 000 the country will be short of 200 000 highly qualified, degreed or diplomaed persons. The need is no doubt critical, and planning to meet the need cannot be summarily dismissed as technicist reformism. The ripple effect of the underprovision of highly trained personnel could cripple the economy, with widespread economic repercussions also for those who possess little wealth.

Yet the existence of elite private schooling remains contentious. Dostal writes:

"The dual nature of South Africa's economy in terms of the First/Third World as well as urban/rural split would demand some kind of educational pluralism. However, due to the history of an inferior 'Bantu Education' this may be difficult to implement. To succeed, all educational policies will have to avoid the stigma of racialism and elitism" (ibid.,p.54).

In effect, Uthongathi has endeavoured to address the need of the modern economy for highly qualified manpower, while yet endeavouring to afford entry to those from the socio-economically disadvantaged sector. The histogram on

parents' incomes shows the extent to which they have succeeded in drawing persons from different economic strata together, although the data is not comprehensive. A more detailed study of the financial resources and socio-economic circumstances of the parents at Uthongathi is desirable, in order to create a more detailed profile of the community served.

#### 5.4.3.2. The perceptions of parents.

Although several avenues are open to parents who wish to convey constructive criticism to the management of Uthongathi or to participate in decision-making, the basic philosophy of N.E.S.T. is not amenable to drastic reinterpretation. It is a sine qua non. The evidence suggests that some initial uncertainties entertained by parents were due to their lack of insight into the implications of the philosophy, although it will be seen that early in 1989 a majority reported themselves to be well informed on the social and educational aims of the school. Statements and remarks in the questionnaire replies (Appendix E) showed an impressive level of support for the major principles upon which practice at Uthongathi is based. Nevertheless, there appeared to be an influential minority of parents who would welcome a shift to a more "up-market" image for the school. Such approach would doubtless be in line with conventional wisdom amongst the wider population about the status of private schooling in South Africa.

All parents appear to be very supportive of the racial mixing at Uthongathi; a radical contradiction of the perception that Christie found (1985, p.4):

"Many open school principals expressed the view that white parents would not necessarily support moves towards further racial mixing in schools".



The evidence emanating from the parents' questionnaire at Uthongathi tends to lend credence to the view of N.E.S.T. that schools should be established as non-racial from their inception. The perceptions of parents in each of the four major racial groups at Uthongathi is deserving of further research, in order to highlight similarities and differences in their views that might be traced to the present socio-political dispensation. Such study could tend to further justify (or to negate) the concept of a racial balance.

#### 5.4.3.3. Parental participation in school affairs.

The perception that African and Indian parents were not as active as might be desired in the work of the Friends seems to be consistent with the findings reported by Christie:

"At the same time, principals said that black parents were often less involved in school associations than white parents were. This suggests that open schools could do more to work actively with parents to inform them of the aims of the school and involve them in the school activities" (Christie, 1988, p.4).

Christie's research suggests that there exists a most active core of white parents within open schools, but that the relative absence of other parents might be alleviated by a more active policy directed at encouraging the involvement of all. The level of practical and philosophical commitment to Uthongathi of identifiable sectors amongst the parents is worthy of further research, in an endeavour to nurture greater involvement.

#### 5.4.4. Entrance requirements.

##### 5.4.4.1. A policy of affirmative action at entry.

Christie has illuminated some problems of black students entering open private schooling after an experience of state schooling, when faced with the prospect of completing entrance tests.

"Almost all open schools use entrance tests to select black students (and sometimes other students as well). Black students who come from segregated state schools are at a disadvantage. Entrance tests favour white students, and those blacks who are already achieving in their own system. Even children who come in grade 1 enter a schooling system based on a different language and cultural capital to their own. The cultural bias of entrance tests needs to be recognised" (1988, p.2).

Although a battery of tests is used to assess the educability of entrants to Uthongathi, the disadvantages of young black students are to some extent softened by the implementation of a racial balance. A certain proportion of the intake is comprised of Zulu pupils who, having quite possibly experienced an education of dubious quality, are thus aided by the "affirmative action" policy of N.E.S.T. The policy also probably affects the coloured children to a lesser extent. It should be borne in mind that a lower expenditure is made per capita for their primary school education. The policy thus tends to facilitate entry for pupils who might otherwise have been denied access. As a result, academic support programmes have become a central feature of pedagogy in the lower standards. It is possible that the approach used at Uthongathi will hold implications for other schools wrestling with the problems of integrating

entrants from a deprived educational background. It is nevertheless clear to the researcher that the policy of affirmative action in individual schools does not address the problems of schooling for the Third World masses.

There is a need for more data on the personal histories and educational disadvantages of all youngsters from deprived backgrounds who are sufficiently motivated to apply for entry to Uthongathi, in order to ascertain most clearly the particular, dominant "deficiencies" requiring remediation.

#### 5.4.4.2. The Raven Matrices.

The Raven Matrices test used at Uthongathi has been used with success at Maru a Pula. Mr J. O'Brien of Maru a Pula (4 Oct. 1988) explained to the researcher that recent comparative analyses of the Raven Matrices with achievements at O level on the Cambridge Certificate show the Matrices to be quite accurate as a predictor of academic potential. Some amazing oddities have nevertheless been reported. O'Brien points out that tests of English and Mathematics are also used as part of the test programme. Students from English-medium primary schools thus have a great advantage. Mr G. Walker (4 Oct. 1988), a teacher at the school, concedes that although some Botswana students do well on the Raven Matrices, many do not do as well as anticipated because they are not well motivated despite parental sacrifices. Some tend to be too passive and nonchalant, believing achievements to "just happen". They therefore tend to fall back on rote learning, familiar to them from state primary schooling. There is a great need for language enrichment, learning skills and independent thought.

Dr Anita Craig (8 Mar. 1989) of the University of Natal, Durban, roundly condemns the Raven Test:

"The Raven test is non-verbal but not culture-free," she asserts. "It ignores learning histories and especially the problems of illiterates. Remember that the African tradition is embedded in oral tradition and language. These learning histories do not prepare people for the logico-mathematical thought embedded in the Raven matrices."

In conversation with the researcher, Dr Craig pointed to Feuerstein's dynamic testing. Feuerstein, she reminds us, uses his tests to teach children "by extending their zone of proximal development". She strongly condemns tests implemented in a static mould, whereby the test is undertaken and a score gained. She advocates the use of dynamic tasks derived from selected elements of the curriculum. The pupils performance should be scrutinised; how they operate cognitively when encountering school-like tests. The school career should thus be "condensed into an assessment period", with note taken of how the pupils memorise, pay attention and recall. In testing, the tester should thus consider the real demands of schooling and use a dynamic assessment protocol. The Raven test, Dr Craig believes, is dishonest and conceptually unethical. Since one does not teach children by use of the Raven skills, why use the test? She concludes:

"I believe fundamentally that all teachers in South Africa, given the complexity of demands of our heterogeneity, should have a thorough grounding in cognitive psychology, especially Feuerstein (or Vygotsky, who initially wiped out illiteracy in Russia)" (*ibid.*).

There could indeed be much merit in approaching the assessment of cognitive abilities by use of the Learning

Potential Assessment Device. It is enjoying increased support in South Africa. Berthold Cloete appraised it during the S.A.A.L.E.D. National Conference of September 1986 (Cloete, 1986, p.87). Like Craig, Cloete advocates a shift from the use of traditional, static testing that provides a static snapshot of cognitive functions. Cognitive faculties are essentially flexible and structurally modifiable. They are amenable to a more dynamic, interactionist approach that would emphasise cognitive processes. The modification of cognitive structures to enhance learning potential, Cloete asserts, is of relevance to everybody involved in education, and can be implemented successfully in many formal and informal learning and assessment situations. The assertion is doubtless valid. However, to implement such demonstrably superior techniques as part of an initial assessment programme would require the mobilisation of resources of training and time that are quite beyond the capacity of most schools faced with a potential applicants' list of hundreds. The implications for initial teacher education are obvious.

#### 5.4.4.3. Bridging programmes to counter elitism.

At Waterford, a school with a proud record of affirmative action, much use is made of the H.S.R.C. Normal Battery (Eyeington, 14 Sept. 1988). The battery is designed to select black pupils who come from underprivileged backgrounds, yet is not considered by Headmaster Mr R.G. Eyeington to be culture free. Waterford relies on tests of "mental alertness", English comprehension, spelling and vocabulary; also Mathematics and a "domino test" using symbols. An interview is also held and an endeavour made to assess the student's character. Mr M. Linden (12 Sept. 1988), a Head of Department at Waterford, argues that although the entrance tests are not culture free, they do tend to be quite good

predictors of general intelligence. He suggests that the testing tends to make Waterford a school for intellectually gifted children. It can be viewed as elitist solely in that sense. It is a charge that might with some justification have been levelled at Uthongathi too, in its first two years. A recent policy statement of N.E.S.T. (App.B) has stressed its opposition to "creaming academic talent" through the intake policy of its schools. The date of application now plays a greater role. Further, the recent policy of enriching the education of schoolchildren through bridging programmes, to accustom them to the school environment and testing procedures of Uthongathi, is most praiseworthy. This is especially true in view of the poverty of local areas such as Hambanathi, where the average monthly household income in 1983/4 was reported to be R270 (Wilson & Ramphela, 1986, p.68). If private schooling is to survive in a just future dispensation in South Africa, far greater effort will be needed to ensure access to these schools for the underprivileged than would appear to have been the case heretofore. A powerful case can be made in favour of a drastic expansion of bridging programmes to facilitate an integration of pupils from relatively deprived systems into those more privileged.

#### 5.4.5. The student community.

##### 5.4.5.1. An integrated school community.

The most distinctive feature of the student community at Uthongathi is that its composition is orchestrated to include a balance of races, sexes and socio-economic classes. As shown in the previous chapter, the orchestration has been subject to criticism on the theoretical level. It might also have led to an additional administrative burden on the school, while the stress of

trying to balance numbers, coupled with the cost of bursaries to bring minority representation to strength, has added a further load.

In many other respects, however, the balanced intake of races has proved remarkably successful. It can with much justification be described as an anti-racist policy in the tradition of affirmative action. It has made possible a wide range of learning experiences in the field of socialisation. The variety of languages and religions present is indicative of a range of cultural heritages that, although clearly not empirically identifiable with race, hints at a tenuous relationship between race and culture. It is a relationship that is becoming yet more vague, tenuous and ill-defined, as a result of processes of urbanisation as well as the inexorable shift in mind-sets from tribalistic modes to modern, First World patterns. The racial balance has, notwithstanding, laid the ground for the implementation of multi-cultural education. The pupils have clearly responded well to the presence of such diversity. There is an obvious need for the implementation of a more detailed study of the society at Uthongathi than the present research has afforded, in order to map and describe the complex gender, racial, cultural, ideological and class mix present on the campus. An effort might be made to draw a profile of the school, in comparison with wider community profiles. The resulting data could prove useful in attempts to extrapolate the Uthongathi experience more widely. Case studies of individual students might also prove beneficial in order to study the influence on their future development of their unique schooling.

#### 5.4.5.2. A comparative study.

An orchestrated intake similar to that pertaining at Uthongathi has at various times been followed by certain

other schools. A balance of races was created at Maru a Pula during its early years, in order to ensure "that there were no obscure minorities" (O'Brien, 4 Oct. 1988). During a period studying Maru a Pula the researcher noted the very complex mix of students comprising the student body. The presence of over thirty nationalities was noted. There were present a great many expatriates. It is clear that the initial policy of orchestration has now evolved to a more open policy, an approach that Bozzoli (3 Oct. 1988) has also predicted for N.E.S.T. schools, with the demise of apartheid legislation in South Africa. Waterford is another school with a rich racial-cultural mix, yet it has no policy of orchestrated racial balance. Represented are expatriate families from South Africa, Kenya, Zambia and other countries, with over forty nationalities present. Many local Swazi students are at the school, both as day and boarding scholars. Ten to fifteen students are admitted from the United World College organisation yearly. They are usually possessed of marked academic ability. A number of South African black students are also accepted from the P.R.O.T.E.C. organisation. These students have experienced disrupted schooling, are usually young adults, and are all on bursaries. Eyeington (14 Sept. 1988) points out that some positive discrimination is afforded township students. It is evident that Waterford's position in Swaziland (which has a non-racial national schooling policy), as well as the school's links with the United World Colleges, have led to a rich diversity in its student intake.

Woodmead also has no policy of balancing its intake on racial grounds, yet it experiences a fortuitous balance of racial groupings owing to other factors. Headmaster of Woodmead Mr Allen Graham (5 Oct. 1988) explains that his school has a very real non-racial ethos, with an almost equal balance between white and black pupils. Numbers will



not be artificially manipulated. The boarding facilities are nevertheless limited, and since the black pupils must board at the school because their homes are remote from its campus, their number has tended to stabilise naturally. There is, however, no distinct racial admission policy. At St Barnabas, too, an open admissions policy operates. Headmaster Mr Michael Corke (6 Oct. 1988) pointed out to the researcher that he has every race represented in his Johannesburg school, with a steady stream of white applicants from the Northern Suburbs. Yet Mr Corke concedes that the number of white pupils remains very small. It is this centrifugal tendency that N.E.S.T. has sought to challenge by its orchestrated balance. There is a need for research to focus on the intake policies and wider socio-political milieux of open schools such as the above. Such research might explore the appropriateness of diverse intake policies to meet the needs of the communities within which schools are embedded.

#### 5.4.6. The Board of Uthongathi.

##### 5.4.6.1. A spectrum of viewpoints.

In order to better represent the complex web of politico-psychological currents and ideologies present in South Africa, Uthongathi has benefitted by the presence on its Board of persons possessed of a wide range of backgrounds including education, commerce, religion and industry. A wealth of energy and talent is represented. While the diversity of viewpoints on the Board has proved to be a strength in handling the range of issues with which Uthongathi has been confronted, it has also resulted in the sharp conjunction of quite diverse philosophies, albeit in a democratic framework of free debate. A tension has been noted between the views of the "educational philosophers" on

the Board, and those of the "marketing pragmatists" who have been concerned fundamentally with issues of survival. The educationists have been emphatic on the need to establish the philosophy early, in order to ensure that it permeates every aspect of the school. The result has been an impressive racial mix amongst pupils and staff, powerful bursary support, a quite Spartan mode of daily living, strong self-service ethic and burgeoning community service projects. The free market pragmatists have also increasingly succeeded in their objective of making the school viable by meeting the needs of fee-paying parents in a fiercely competitive open market. While the underlying philosophy has remained very strong in the school, the researcher has also noted the revised bursary allocation, increased staff, widened subject choice and development of attractive sporting facilities. These strategies show the strength of the putsch felt by the School Board to be necessary to ease the school past its large bursary bulge and initial expenses, by means of attracting sufficient fee-paying parents. These developments, and the expenditure of personal resources of energy, talent and time that has been necessary to create them, suggest a fundamental problem besetting many innovatory projects: the need to remain self-sustaining in an often indifferent society. It reaffirms the underlying strength of functionalist tendencies.

#### 5.4.6.2. Composition of the Board.

It should be noted that misgivings expressed about the apparent Eurocentricity of the Board appear not to be shared by the parents at Uthongathi. In response to the questionnaire submitted to parents at the school (App.E, ques.A16), many considered all four racial groups to be equally represented on the Board and senior management structure of the school. Others were undecided or would not

commit themselves on the issue, while a minority felt that there was not equal representation. The attendance roll at more recent meetings of the Board (during 1989) shows a clear trend towards greater presence by all races. Also, the Vice Chairman is a coloured, the Secretary an Indian. There would appear to be scope for the appointment of a Zulu to senior office on the school administration or Board. The issue remains uncertain, and the policy of maintaining a balance of races on the Board might itself be held as contentious, if the underlying rationale be not well understood. There is evident a sincere endeavour to achieve a sharing of power among the communities represented. However, in view of the uncertainty of the issue, further research is desirable.

#### 5.4.7. School Staff.

##### 5.4.7.1. A multi-racial, multi-cultural staff.

The presence of a white Headmaster and Deputy are obvious physical realities at Uthongathi, yet the fundamental racial mix achieved in the composition of the teaching and administrative staff reveal the penetration of the philosophy. A contingent of 30% Indian and 25% African teachers in 1989 bears ample testimony to its power. There has been a noticeable trend towards the appointment of persons of colour to the teaching staff, although there appears to be scope for the future appointment of such persons to senior positions within the school hierarchy. In its appointment of a staff representative of many races, Uthongathi has registered a considerable achievement, since parents at the school have made clear their demands for staff capable of teaching at a high standard irrespective of race (Beith, 30 Jul. 1987; Board of Uthongathi, 30 Dec. 1987). The questionnaire survey of parents perceptions also showed

many of them to be but little concerned with the achievement of a balance of races on the staff (App.E,ques.A12). In their accompanying comments, several expressed the view that the best teachers should be appointed, irrespective of race. Parental concern with the competence of staff members rather than their racial origins should be seen in relation to the views of principals of open schools reported by Christie (1988, p.44):

"A number of principals believed that white parents would not support the appointment of black teachers, or too high a black student enrolment, and would certainly withdraw their children if they felt concerned about 'the standard of education' in the school".

The staff composition at Uthongathi is quite remarkable, if viewed in the light of the above extract; also in view of the difficulties experienced in attracting competent black teachers to schooling in the face of the attractive positions opening in industry. Recruiting competent black teachers is a problem that has also been experienced at Waterford by Mr Eyeington (14 Sept.1988):

"We would welcome more South African or Swazi (black) teachers, but most are in better-paid positions if they have acceptable qualifications".

The question of the qualitative and quantitative problems inherent in the supply of black teachers in South Africa are widely acknowledged, and the present research reaffirms the problem. Dostal (1988, p.32) has also pointed to the drastic need for well qualified black teachers in the future. The findings have obvious implications for teacher education.

#### 5.4.7.2. Staff development.

In requiring a high level of competence from all members of the full-time teaching staff, Uthongathi has reacted directly to the expressed expectations of the parents, as well as to the imperatives of the N.E.S.T. philosophy. The establishment of a staff development programme, an accepted feature of many progressive educational institutions, has served to facilitate the dissemination of ideas, strategies and teaching skills at the school. It has served to harness the resources of an already well-qualified staff (over half of whom possess honours or masters degrees), to the exacting task of teaching in a multi-cultural environment. In the view of the researcher such intercourse of ideas and values should be an essential part of the programme in all multi-cultural schools. It is an appropriate response to the call made by Christie (1986,p.6) for an induction programme for new teachers in open schools. She writes:

"There could be regular in-service workshops, seminars and lectures where teachers could meet and work together on areas of common concern".

There is a need for attention to focus more sharply on the future needs of prospective teachers who are presently in training. Many of them will doubtless spend a major part of their careers in a multi-cultural schooling environment and it is imperative that they be equipped to cope with the task.

#### 5.4.7.3. The staff-pupil ratio.

The staff-pupil ratio at Uthongathi is not unusual, when considered in the context of private schooling in general. It holds great advantages for a school faced with such

diverse issues as a wide range of student abilities, unique second-language needs, a powerful drive for university entrance and a pervasive community service ethic. The ratio of 1 : 15 is nevertheless more generous than ratios pertaining in state schools, even for the more privileged communities. It is even farther removed from the staggering ratios prevalent in the least privileged schooling systems. It renders extrapolation of the Uthongathi model to other situations more difficult. There is a need for a further study of teacher-pupil ratios at the school.

#### 5.4.8. The formal curriculum.

##### 5.4.8.1. An education of quality for all students.

The evidence reveals a great striving by N.E.S.T. to offer an education of quality. It is aimed inter alia at developing in the students the resources necessary for them to gain a good university entrance qualification. The general perception of the pupils, staff and parents is that the education offered is indeed of a high standard, with an exceptionally rigorous regimen of study. The small quantity of objective evidence accumulated thus far tends to support these perceptions. Results in public examinations over a period of two or three years are nevertheless necessary to facilitate more reliable judgements. The experience of other schools such as Waterford suggest that a fair scatter of sound achievements can be expected, with achievers representative of all races. As early as 1964, first Headmaster of Waterford Mr Michael Stern exclaimed on the considerable achievement of black students at that school. A coloured pupil from the Cape was at the top of the junior form and an African fifth in a very clever top section of the junior set, whose intelligence quotients ranged from 115 to 154:

"Only in those subjects, or those parts of subjects where the home background of libraries, travel and conversation really counts, are the poorer boys (sic.) at a disadvantage - but that is only a matter of time and, ultimately, opportunity" (Stern, 1964, p. 3).

Uthongathi appears to be poised to make an input into the professions and managerial vocations that Dostal (1988) predicts will be beset by a lack of well qualified manpower by the year 2 000. It has tended to focus on preparing its students for a leadership role in society. In doing so, its influence could be profound.

#### 5.4.8.2. Financial implications of a broad curriculum.

The wide spectrum of subjects offered in the lower standards, coupled with excursions, participation in competitions and symposia, the study of life skills and involvement in sport and community service, suggest the exposure of pupils at Uthongathi to a commendably broad range of curricular experiences. Such breadth in the curriculum is consistent with the educational philosophy of N.E.S.T. The philosophy also implies the mounting of academic support for those students who have gained entry under the affirmative action dispensation of the school. The presence of a wide range of needs amongst students in the same classrooms is accommodated by streaming and smaller class sizes. Small class sizes and a wide range of subject choices are also considered to be essential as a market strategy if fee-paying parents are to be attracted to the school. Such strategies are, however, intrinsically costly. High costs would tend to diminish the extent to which the school can be widely extrapolated as a model for the future.

#### 5.4.8.3. Curriculum development in a complex multi-cultural context.

A dynamic approach to curriculum development is evident at Uthongathi, with curriculum revision an ongoing process that seeks to accommodate a variety of cultural perspectives. Much store is laid on facilitating the self-empowerment of students, and much of the academic curriculum is focussed on challenging them to analyse problems and make decisions for themselves. Such exposure to a complexity of cultural meanings experienced in an exploratory, analytical context also suggests an appropriate preparation for the university environment. It also fosters the adoption of a personal philosophy of life; a necessary stance amidst the maelstrom of conflicting ideologies in South Africa. Their exposure to a multi-cultural milieu in their classrooms, with broad experience of Western, African and Indian themes, should enable all students to better frame their philosophies and clarify their viewpoints.

The complex milieu is yet greater in such schools as Maru a Pula, with its cosmopolitan intake of thirty nationalities. Maru a Pula follows the G.C.E. "O level" system, to which Botswana committed itself at independence. It has been described by Second Master Mr J. O'Brien (4 Oct. 1988) as very academic. It provides a link for Botswana with the outside world, yet its content can be "localised". This is especially true of the humanities. History and Geography have a local emphasis and the African perspective is important. Mr J. Dickson (4 Oct. 1988), Senior Teacher at Maru a Pula, however argues that the school might place too much emphasis on the international element in its society with a relative neglect of indigenous culture. The university orientation, he argues, tends to exacerbate the process of deculturalisation. The pupils who come from



remote Setswana schools tend to find their songs and literature pushed aside, while Setswana history is not taught. Although staff at Uthongathi appear conscious of the need to recognise and reaffirm the cultural heritages of all pupils as far as possible, the evidences suggests that further moves towards an Africanisation of the curriculum would receive a lukewarm reception from some staff and parents. In view of the advent of People's Education and the interesting streams of thought that it has brought, it would appear to be advantageous for Uthongathi to retain great flexibility. There is a need for a more detailed study of the perceptions of staff, parents and pupils at Uthongathi on a curriculum that would take into account the wide range of needs and perspectives characteristic of a culturally diverse society.

#### 5.4.8.4. Streaming.

It is anticipated that a two-stream or three-stream tutoring dispensation will be instituted at Uthongathi to cater for pupils who have gained entry under the affirmative action programme, and to accommodate a wider range of needs in a growing school. Initial costing has already been undertaken by Mr Dirk Kemp (13 Oct. 1988). The evidence suggests that some resistance to the policy might be encountered from parents. It is clear that further research would help to clarify the implications of broader streaming for (a) the intake of needy pupils into the growing school, and (b) the resources of staffing and finance that would be required.

#### 5.4.9. The non-formal curriculum : some structured components.

##### 5.4.9.1. Cross-cultural experience.

Social mixing, religious services, diet, the production of plays, sport, the Code of Conduct, S.R.C. structures and

self-help programmes are all interwoven to reinforce desirable ends of the non-formal curriculum. These many aspects of the non-formal curriculum all have relevance to the students as terrain within which cultural meanings can be explored and shared. They tend thus to reinforce the range of intra-cultural and inter-cultural experiences offered by the school. Some facets such as dietary arrangements, sport and the self-help programme are quite highly structured by members of staff. By comparison, at Waterford with its older students and sophisticated international contingent, a somewhat more laissez faire policy is pursued. Cultural evenings are arranged by a student-staff committee (Eyeington, 14 Sept. 1988), to give students the opportunity to display more visible and spectacular aspects of their cultures. Such events tend to rely largely on organisation by students rather than by staff. It is an approach favoured by the United World Colleges as a whole. Mr Robin Malan, Second Master at the school, explained the policy to the researcher in the following words:

"So much acculturation here is completely informal: we don't have to do it consciously. There is no lecturing or hectoring about cultures: it is just natural, organic and unobtrusive. Overstructuring leads to unreality" (12 Sept. 1988).

Acculturation and socialisation at Waterford are thus very informal, and much of the initiative lies in the students' hands. Self-responsibility tends to be the keynote, as it is with Uthongathi. It is perhaps possible to explain the somewhat more structured approach at Uthongathi (that accords

very well with strategies suggested by Christie in 1988), by reference to the functionalist paradigm. "Common sense" in South Africa dictates that the separation of cultures for schooling is normal. It is an approach that N.E.S.T. has challenged. The apparently more structured approach at Uthongathi is thus an appropriate response to conventional wisdom. It might be viewed as a necessary transitional stage to increased cultural merging in society. There is a need for further research into strategies appropriate to the use of the non-formal curriculum of open schools as a means to facilitate cross-cultural experience.

#### 5.4.9.2. Self-help.

The self-help programme at Uthongathi is a tangible realisation of principles embedded in the philosophy of N.E.S.T., with Maru a Pula as the crucible within which the concept of self-help applied at Uthongathi was largely developed. The self-help programme at Uthongathi appears to be quite widely valued by the campus community. It is well supported by a majority of parents, staff members and students, although pupils new to the school are reported to require time to adjust to the routines. In a country in which a considerable proportion of the population are employed in menial labouring jobs, there appears to be good reason to ensure that children to whom a comparatively privileged education has been extended should identify themselves with manual work and the experience of domestic chores. Serving as a buttress against the "illusion of central position" that so besets humanity, the self-help programme at Uthongathi holds implications for all schooling in South Africa.

#### 5.4.10. Forms of social control.

##### 5.4.10.1. The Student Representative Council.

Had a prefect system been introduced at Uthongathi, it would doubtless have been an inadequate instrument for realising the democratic principles of the school. Such dispensation would not have lent itself particularly well to projecting the needs of individuals living and working in a complex and novel socio-cultural milieu. The creation of a Student Representative Council appears to have been a more appropriate instrument for the management of student affairs. It has provided a democratic vehicle for the accommodation of a wide variety of viewpoints. The Council has enabled the school to engage in a richer dialogue between management and the student body than a prefect system would have afforded, with its ethos of top-down control. The Council is thus in accord with an interpretive rationale for the structuring of social solidarity at the school. The adoption of a similar system would appear to be a necessary consideration for any institution bent on introducing a greater measure of self-responsibility and democracy for students learning in a multi-cultural environment.

##### 5.4.10.2. Discipline and the code of conduct.

The evidence reveals a schooling society whose code of conduct is founded on self-responsibility guided by an ethic that promotes respect for the self and for others. These are principles that have been recently reaffirmed and more unequivocally asserted to meet the need for greater clarity on the code of conduct of a growing student population. The expanse of personal and social freedom of the students, most evident in the first year, has been somewhat circumscribed

by a series of graded sanctions that can, in serious cases, result in expulsion of the transgressor. The mixture of freedom and authority appears to be implemented in a judicious manner. The system still relies (in the main) on the good moral sense of the students. Although some students have expressed their perplexity at varied interpretations of the code, they show frustration rather than resentment. They have not in any sense retreated into a counter-culture such as that described by Paul Willis (1977). It is probable that most pupils too readily perceive valid benefits in working with the school authorities. Willis's lads perceived schooling to be no more than part of an impersonal factory-line of mass production. During several years of observing Uthongathi in action, the present writer has noted the wide range of views held by parents and students on the subject of control and discipline. The task of implementing a code of conduct and approach to discipline acceptable to all has presented a considerable challenge.

#### 5.4.11. Social dynamics among the pupils.

##### 5.4.11.1. Perceptions of race.

The racial balance operating at Uthongathi seems to accord well with the viewpoint of Christie (1988), who stresses the need for open schools to recognise a racial "common sense" operating in schools as well as the wider society. Christie thus advocates the conscious consideration of race as a factor, and recommend the implementation of structured strategies for dealing with race. She has found white pupils to be less in favour of racial mixing than other groups (*ibid.*, p.137). Although attitudes to mixing were not examined by the present researcher in a racial-group context at Uthongathi, observation and discussion at the school

revealed very little evidence of negative bias amongst white pupils. The policy of creating a non-threatening environment appears to have resulted in a rich harvest of better understanding and tolerance across those "racial barriers" that are part of the conventional wisdom of South African society. Despite the presence of language cliques, the generally healthy climate of tolerance (and indeed, social cohesion within the student body) is one of the most significant achievements of the school. During the course of the research, the writer also acquired considerable anecdotal evidence of successful mixing at other open schools, with occasional contradictions or qualifications. A group of students interviewed at Maru a Pula (Joshua, Rajaraman, Marriott and Torsvaldotter, 14 Oct. 1988) expressed themselves as follows:

"When socialising on campus we don't think of colour at all. Its the person who counts. Its the person, not the nationality. You don't notice it. It's normal".

As early as 1963, Barrow wrote as follows of the friendships at Waterford:

"Nor is the harmony of their lives upset by friendships that are racially exclusive. On the contrary, their friendship have grown from love, admiration and common interest and are so genuine and warm that all artificial barriers have evaporated. A young African and a boy who is Oom Paul's descendant have become inseparable" (Barrow, 1963).

And in 1988, Eyeington was able to state:

"I honestly feel we have not experienced any racial conflict during the seventeen years I have been here.

There have been some problems of immaturity; also reserve amongst the younger pupils, especially the black girls. Also, the usual frictions of childhood. But these cannot be traced to concepts such as race" (14 Sept.).

The evident success of Waterford is further highlighted by Miss C. Elam (13 Sept. 1988), an International Baccalaureate student from Sweden, who explained:

"I came to Waterford as a person, not an object or service or function. There is no self-conscious recognition of groups" (Elam, 13 Sept. 1988).

There is a need for the further study of the important issue of racial perceptions at Uthongathi.

#### 5.4.11.2. Cliques, and home-school adjustments.

Despite the generally easy mixing that appears to be typical of many open schools such as Uthongathi, the formation of (often transient) cliques is apparently a quite common occurrence. The phenomenon noted at Uthongathi is reported elsewhere. A student at Maru a Pula, Miss Kahn (14 Oct. 1988) explained:

"There is a shifting to camps. Large groups can mix both ways, within the group and outside it. There are some language problems. The Swedish community remains tight (sic) in the wider society, even having their own schools. Some Tswana will mix, but those from rural or traditional origins outside Gaborone less so because of language and cultural differences."

The formation of cliques appears to occur in response to a need for security. Apart from also originating from common

interests and language, cliques might be the means of rationalising a disjunction between home and school life. A student at Waterford, Miss P. Lofgren, mentions the uncertainties that beset some of her Swazi friends:

"The school does not stereotype: we are known as personalities. We share our cultures. Only the Swazi girls seem a bit uncertain, experiencing a double life" (13 Sept. 1988).

Speaking of his experience of the phenomenon, Waterford Head of Department Mr M. Linden (Linden, 12 Sept. 1988) offers an explanation:

"The Swazi girls kneel to a senior male in traditional society, and may not look an adult in the face. Now she is expected at school to offer an opinion and to look the speaker in the face. She must thus break with the home tradition".

Mr Jock Dickson of Maru a Pula casts a different perspective on the issue:

"Sometimes we accept more buck than Botswana parents would accept. We might thus inadvertently mislead the pupils, who lead a double life, having to readjust to home. The young girls in particular might lose yardsticks for guiding their behaviour. It takes an awful lot of working at understanding cultures! Fortunately, Botswana pupils from traditional rural backgrounds tend to use the boarding establishment where the staff can observe and help them closely. These pupils can thus be aided in their adaptations" (4 Oct. 1988).



As mentioned earlier, although apparently only affecting a small minority, some disjunction between school and home, and school and the wider society, would appear to be an issue of concern in open schools. Such apparent disjunction hearkens back to the motivating rationale for Bantu Education! It is worthy of further detailed investigation.

#### 5.4.12. Community service.

The difficulties experienced in mounting a major community service programme during the first year at Uthongathi were in part traceable to the small number of teaching staff, who had on their shoulders the burden of establishing a new and novel school. A further factor was the constraint created by the initial scepticism and even hostility of persons in the surrounding communities. Motivated by the experience of Deane Yates, the school has nevertheless forged ahead with its programme and appears to be past the most serious problems of credibility that beset it during the first year of operation. Developments at Uthongathi seem to have some features in common with the history of the community service programme at Waterford. In the early day of community service at that school, the Head of Department of Community Service Mr M. Linden (12 Sept. 1988) explained to the writer, the school tended to be isolated from the local community. In view of the reduced salaries at the time and a general paucity of funds, much energy was initially put into fundraising and meeting the basic needs of the school. Community service was viewed as a "luxury" at first. It gradually came to be accepted as an integral part of the curriculum. It developed into an active partnership with the local community because it met genuine needs. In the present day, many needy persons in the school's catchment area of fifteen to twenty kilometres actively seek the help

of the school. In a thesis on community service written in 1983, Mr Linden (1983, pp.99-101) identified several principles upon which the future development of community service projects at Waterford were to be based. In essence, projects should be flexible and adaptable, and undertaken in an active and equal partnership with the community, as an endeavour to meet the community's perception of its own needs. The venture must embrace a growth in understanding between all participants. Linden notes:

"If Waterford learns nothing else from the practice of the United World Colleges, it must surely take this: that service be given a status comparable to subject disciplines, that concern for society be ranked equally with concern for the individual. For service should not be competing with sport or other fundamentally extra-curricular concerns but should be complementing the academic disciplines to help form a fully integrated and wholly educated person" (*ibid.*).

In the face of appalling poverty in South Africa (Wilson & Ramphele, 1989), the community service endeavours at Uthongathi and its predecessors Maru a Pula and Waterford have strong implications for the schooling of the more privileged sections of the population, amongst whose children ignorance of poverty is one outcome of the structure of separate education. It is suggested that a carefully implemented and sensitively monitored programme of community service be an integral feature of the education of every child in the country.

#### 5.4.13. Approaches to teaching.

##### 5.4.13.1. A spectrum of approaches.

There is ample evidence in the classrooms at Uthongathi to show that pupils are challenged by a range of open-ended pedagogies. These are designed to provide an education of quality focused on the development of skills and knowledge appropriate to the achievement of a university entrance qualification. The pervasive use of research methods, debates, reports-back, projects and assignments appears to be an appropriate means to the development of critical thought. The hidden curriculum of achievement and personal initiative fostered by staff would appear to be appropriate to life in a highly competitive capitalist economy. The effect on black students, who Leatt *et al.* (1986, p.39) suggest might not be as culturally orientated to competition as is demanded by capitalist society, has however been impossible to estimate during the present study. The use of streaming, as well as academic support programmes in the lower standards to aid scholastically disadvantaged students, has widened the spectrum of teaching strategies used. Further research is required into the implementation of a variety of approaches to teaching in the classrooms of Uthongathi in order to meet the evident range of needs manifest in an intake of pupils with contrasting educational histories.

##### 5.4.13.2. Pedagogy in the multi-cultural classroom.

The questionnaire surveys suggest a quite positive view of teaching methods used in the multi-cultural classes at Uthongathi, on the part of the parents, staff and students. Free discussion is prevalent. The exploration of culturally-based world-views is also reported from

Waterford. Mr Robin Malan (12 Sept. 1988) points to the pupil-centric bias of pedagogy in that school. By relevant questioning and discussion the staff elicit a range of viewpoints. History, for example, provides a particularly rich field for intense debates, and a conceptual approach is often used. Mr G. Govinjee (13 Sept. 1988), Head of History at the school, asserts that creativity and flexibility are essential in the teaching of History to a multi-cultural class. The unity of mankind is taken as a hidden curriculum and the issues of population growth, health, race and socio-economic class feature prominently. The International Baccalaureate and university orientation of the school help to engender a particularly open-ended approach. Lessons observed at Maru a Pula also revealed a tendency towards an open-ended, child-centric pedagogy, with much personal involvement and discussion on the part of pupils. Group work and streaming were prominent. Such methodologies are most appropriate to teaching a culturally diverse student population.

Uthongathi, Waterford and Maru a Pula are all strongly focused on leading a multi-cultural student population towards university entrance. Despite the move towards a fully open intake at universities such as Natal, Cape Town and Witwatersrand, the structure and content of their fields of study are likely to remain predominantly Western. The writer concludes that secondary schooling with a multi-cultural student population, that remains oriented towards university entrance, will thus reveal an inevitable process of enculturation. This will be increasingly evident in the senior standards. An appropriate reaction to such process would be to gradually place initiative for the reinforcement of constituent cultures in the senior students' own hands, rather than to persist with any structured reaffirmation of cultures. Such approach would accord with the evolving,

common First World mindsets increasingly obvious amongst persons of different races and cultures in South Africa.

#### 5.4.13.3. Professional development.

During the first year of Uthongathi's operation, teaching approaches tended to be the professional responsibility of individual members of staff, with liaison made when necessary. It is the pattern followed at Waterford, where pedagogy and teaching methods tend to be the individual responsibility of teachers (Ayton, 13 Sept. 1988). The creation of the Professional Development Programme at Uthongathi is, in the researchers' view, a sound development for any school that is at the cutting edge of innovation and change. Uthongathi is set in some isolation from other centres of similar innovation. A sharing of innovatory strategies and problems amongst its staff would appear to be essential if they are to facilitate a dynamic interchange of experience to the benefit of all.

#### 5.4.14. Academic support.

##### 5.4.14.1. Academic support in the classrooms.

Uthongathi is implementing an academic support programme that is widely perceived by those identified with the school as appropriate and successful. Particular emphasis is placed on the mastery of English, which is the language of instruction. There is a co-ordinated input from all members of staff. In considering the favourable comments about academic support that have come from the Headmaster, members of the academic staff and students, it is necessary to bear in mind that the most serious cases of learning disadvantage are inexorably screened out by the Raven Matrices. This situation is probably true of most private

schools that use entrance testing. For example, Mr J. Dickson (4 Oct. 1988), a Senior Teacher at Maru a Pula, points out that his school, which uses the Raven Matrices, also does not encounter the most serious linguistic problems experienced in the state schools in Botswana. Nor, he asserts, does Maru a Pula encounter the most drastic problems of "cultural deficiency". The education of children from deprived homes nevertheless presents a complex challenge:

"Children from poor homes have indeed experienced difficulty here. Maru a Pula is upper middle class, by African standards. The lower classes don't fit in so easily. Children with a poor education yet sound intelligence still tend to battle in the classroom. It is a class problem, not a multi-cultural problem. The moneyed group have had an experience of a more international culture, including piano lessons and Shakespearean plays. Wealthier children pick up a wider background at primary level" (*ibid.*).

Mr Dickson has, in effect, returned us to the assertion of Bourdieu that children of the lower economic classes encounter problems with the codes of middle class culture. Note also the words of Coombs:

"... the initial advantage enjoyed by children of more educated parents tends to broaden with each successive school year and level of schooling" (1985, p. 231).

There is thus considerable justification for the powerful academic support given in the lower standards at Uthongathi, with its emphasis on the English language. The stress on the language ability of the Zulu girls also seems to be well directed, in the light of a view expressed to the researcher by senior teacher Mr. G. Walker at Maru a Pula:

"Girls in Malawi achieve poorly", he asserted. "They are usually at the bottom of their classes, with lower expectations and a poor social position in their families and villages. They lack security. More girls receive education in Botswana and their experiences at Maru a Pula are not so bad. In Nigeria the Moslem father is dominant and girls experience problems in going back to a hierarchical society after experiencing questioning and openness in school. Also, there is difficulty in getting away from rote learning and the memorisation of notes" (Walker, 4 Oct. 1988).

The pervasiveness, intensity and apparent success of the Uthongathi language programme in particular, has important implication for open schooling.

#### 5.4.14.2. Bridging programmes.

It is clear that pupils from traditional societies might require a powerful bridging programme of academic support prior to entry to open schools. The programme operated at Uthongathi with Hambanathi pupils is one such endeavour. The demands are complex, implying an emphasis on English and Mathematics; also the use of teaching methods that will provide a bridge between accustomed rote learning and the more problem-orientated, open and creative approaches relevant to a preparation for university. A similar endeavour was mounted by the staff of Waterford amongst primary schools in Swaziland. It was comparable with the programmes of Operation Headstart used in the United States of America, according to Eyeington (14 Sept. 1988). Local school pupils were upgraded over a period of five years. The programme, presented on Saturdays, enjoyed initial success but in due course appeared to become abused. Local primary schools sent pupils who would in any event have

gained access to Waterford, while prominent parents appeared to exert undue pressure on local schools to ensure that their children were included.

The Uthongathi bridging programme is an ambitious project undertaken by an already fully engaged staff. Costly in petrol, it is likely to consume valuable resources of finance, energy and time, yet its existence bears testimony to the significance with which it is viewed. In view of the relative isolation of Uthongathi, there appears to be little possibility of the school heeding the suggestion of Christie (1988,p.2) and combining with other schools. She writes:

"Smaller and poorer open schools would clearly not have the resources to run their own bridging classes. However it would be possible for the open schools in a particular region to cooperate in running a joint bridging programme. The bridging programme would concentrate on building up English language and numeracy skills. It is possible that such bridging programmes could attract external funding".

The Uthongathi programme is worthy of further research.

#### 5.4.14.3. Learning skills.

The importance of academic support for pupils with deprived learning histories has been profoundly recognised at Uthongathi, confronted as it is with learning problems similar to those experienced at Maru a Pula. At Maru a Pula, pupils entering from Setswana medium schools bring with them a background of rote learning and memorisation. The learning in such schools tends to be passive and there is little use of questioning techniques, according to Mr G.Walker (4 Oct.1988), who is a senior member of staff at



the school. Maru a Pula has thus mounted a course entitled Language, Logic, Learning, to overcome the problem. The course is designed to teach learning skills such as "the use of a dictionary and interpreting a diagram", so that the pupils can be integrated into the creative, open-ended learning milieu desirable as a preparation for university entrance. At Uthongathi, similar measures have been taken to ensure the use of pedagogies appropriate to disadvantaged entrants, so that they acquire a sufficient range of learning skills to facilitate the high level of achievement required in the Joint Matriculation Board Examination. It is an approach worthy of widespread future use as the process of integration accelerates.

#### 5.5. A HOLISTIC VIEW OF UTHONGATHI.

##### 5.5.1. Uthongathi school.

The New Era Schools Trust was created and established as a result of the vision of several remarkable men, amongst whom stand Mr Deane Yates, Mr Steyn Krige and Prof G.R. Bozzoli. Their experience in innovatory education projects in Southern Africa led them to believe that the widespread adoption of open schooling in the Republic was essential if children of different groups were to learn and live in a climate of mutual respect and understanding. Chaired by Prof G.R. Bozzoli, the Trust was one of several similar projects launched in parallel to the programme of state reform mounted during the 1980's. In January 1987 it opened its first school Uthongathi.

Uthongathi was built near Tongaat on the Natal North Coast with money provided by the Chairman's Fund of the Anglo American Corporation. The buildings and equipment are of good quality and the facilities and environs embody

considerable aesthetic appeal. Physical amenities compare favourably with those available within the state education system for whites. The costing appears to be broadly comparable with that of white schools. The School Board comprises persons from a variety of races whose experience and expertise has been devoted to ensuring the financial viability and continued growth of the school.

Essentially an open school, Uthongathi is characterised by a policy of educating children from different racial origins and cultural heritages in the same classrooms. It is thus multi-cultural in orientation. The intake of pupils is balanced or orchestrated to ensure that no racial group is in such small minority that its members feel threatened. Although the intake policy might therefore be described as multi-racial, the category race appears to play no subsequent part in the social and educational activities of the school. The internal dynamics of the school are emphatically non-racial. An anti-racist stance is typical of personnel. The orchestrated intake is viewed as an interim strategy that is within the tradition of affirmative action. Although demonstrably successful, the achievement of a racial balance appears to have placed the egalitarian aims of the school under some pressure. The school appears to have been obliged to modify the policy of radical simplicity enshrined in N.E.S.T. philosophy, in order to attract the necessary contingents of students, certain of whom have available to them fine schooling alternatives in a free market situation. The understandable demand of their parents is for an education of quality, with facilities and a curriculum that will match that available in other schooling options. It has proved difficult to keep costs at the level originally envisaged, in the face of functionalist pressures that became manifest inter alia through the school's finances. The extent to which the school might be

extrapolated to accommodate an economically disadvantaged Third World contingent appears to have thereby been reduced. The creation of a balance of races embodies other practical and ethical problematics, although the intention is benign. The policy is generally accepted by all parties directly implicated in the school.

The social interaction of the pupils and staff appears to have been remarkably positive. In practice the campus community at Uthongathi is characterised by a high level of integration and solidarity. The profound mixing of races at the school represents a quite radical departure from the education of pupils in separate systems that is characteristic of state schooling in South Africa. A buoyant spirit has prevailed far beyond the "halo effect" that tends to pervade new institutions during their early years. Although reflecting an unusual and carefully structured situation, the social interaction has succeeded even beyond expectations. The evidence however, suggests the formation and dissolution of transient cliques. These appear to play a valid, integral role in the process of social adjustment of students whose mind-sets are not yet attuned to the open, individual-achievement orientation of the dominant culture reflected in the school. Such cliques might provide necessary security. There is also a suggestion that some students experience a disjunction between the values and thought-patterns of the school and the currents of consciousness in their home or community environments. It is a tendency evident in other open schools that is worthy of further investigation.

The practical implementation of the complex and very demanding philosophy, with its emphasis on quality education, high achievements and the development of the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor facets of the

students, coupled as it is with a self-help ethic, community service and comprehensive programme of cultural and recreational activities, has resulted in a highly industrious and active school community. It is an exceptionally demanding educational environment for pupils and staff alike. The multi-racial teaching staff are, of necessity, well qualified. Staff morale and interpersonal relations appear to be generally sound, and their disposition towards the school reflects support and commitment.

The formal curriculum of Uthongathi is focused on the achievement of good university entrance qualifications. A quite broad pyramid of conventional Joint Matriculation Board subjects is offered, with emphasis on the arts and sciences. Some additional, non-examinable subjects are also experienced, including Street Law and Life Skills. Pedagogy at the school reflects the use of a variety of teaching methods. Cognisance is taken of the multi-cultural milieu of the class groups. There is evidence of the adoption of appropriate strategies that will harness the variety of view-points represented. The non-formal curriculum is unusual in its breadth and richness, with a strong emphasis on self-help activities and community service. These activities are clearly aimed to develop a commitment to social service amongst the students.

Students are drawn from a range of socio-economic strata. Although most families appear to be middle class, with a percentage from professional backgrounds, a segment clearly have very modest financial resources. Many students are on generous bursaries to offset the fees that remain comparable with those of most other private schools. Due largely to the very generous initial bursary support and the cost of offering a broad education of good quality, finances have proved to be a problem during the early years of the school.

The school has made strenuous efforts to avoid the creation of an elitism based on wealth , and in some measure has succeeded despite pressures driving it "up-market". The comprehensive entrance testing implemented at Uthongathi is nevertheless likely to have eliminated pupils from radically disadvantaged backgrounds, whose educability has been impaired and retarded owing to such factors as poor nutrition, a sterile cultural environment and other by-products of poverty.

Within the limited resources available to a single school, Uthongathi has mounted a programme of accelerated learning for selected pupils in two Zulu primary schools in its vicinity. Further, in its formal programme the school has, from its inception, implemented a powerful and apparently successful programme of academic support focused on the development of skills in languages and Mathematics. The school has consciously avoided a policy of "creaming off" the academic elite. The implementation of a Standard Grade course option is a further recent development that might broaden its relevance to future needs.

Uthongathi comprises an innovative schooling project in which youngsters of different races and cultural backgrounds are brought together for the purpose of creating a prototype of post-apartheid society. In this endeavour, N.E.S.T. appears to have very largely succeeded. In many respects it has clearly succeeded beyond expectations. It cannot be characterised simplistically, however. As already suggested, some aspects of the school might prove very difficult to generalise, especially in an endeavour to incorporate the growing Third World continent of the South African population. Nor do the findings of this research necessarily provide an accurate pointer to the potential success or failure of a more laissez faire integrationist

approach to education, desirable though such prospect might be in the longer term.

The writer concludes that Uthongathi has the potential to make a profound contribution to the education of youngsters in a post-apartheid South African society. Indeed, despite the presence of problematic features, it could serve as a valid model of multi-cultural schooling that could assume a salient role in a future educational dispensation.

#### 5.5.2. The regional setting for Uthongathi.

Although ostensibly independent, Uthongathi is inevitably affected by the context of a broad regional initiative that has endeavoured to create a new socio-political dispensation for the people of the province of Natal. Known as the Kwazulu-Natal Indaba, the initiative has provided a social framework that has been congenial to the development of Uthongathi. Board of Uthongathi member Mr Dirk Kemp was Secretary to the Indaba's Education Committee that functioned under chairmanship of Prof M.J. Niven during 1986. In 1989 Mr Richard Thompson was appointed to membership of the Indaba's Educational Advisory Committee.

The Indaba is a regional political initiative created by thirty-nine organisations representing a quite wide cross-section of public opinion in Kwazulu and Natal. Meeting in the Council Chamber of the Durban City Hall from 3 April to 5 December 1986, delegates negotiated a finely balanced set of constitutional proposals providing for a joint second tier (provincial) government in the region. Kwazulu-Natal was seen as a single economic unit and the resulting proposals accommodated a broadly liberal constitutional philosophy providing for the Rule of Law, a Bill of Rights and a market economy. Legislative and administrative powers

were to be devolved as much as possible (Kwazulu-Natal Indaba, 28 Nov. 1986).

The establishment of an Education Committee under chairmanship of Prof J.M. Niven (1986) resulted in the publication of a concise statement of educational policy upon which the Indaba intended basing future planning. The document makes provision for state and private schools. Provision is also made for the devolution of power from a Provincial Minister of Education advised by a Provincial Education Council, through Regional Co-ordinating Councils, to elected School Committees (ibid., p.4). The aim of education is explicitly stated:

"Education should have as its aim the development of the whole person, though the intellectual and physical, emotional and social, moral and spiritual development of a rational, responsible, humane and compassionate individual who, having formed his own convictions and, guided by them, is equipped and prepared to live as a reasonable citizen in South Africa, capable of adapting and adjusting to a changing society" (ibid., p.6).

It is a classical liberal statement.

The province is charged with the maintenance of high educational standards in a unitary system of open-ended, non-racial public education. The language and cultural rights of all inhabitants are to be protected, although positive universal values are also promoted (ibid., p.7). Private schools will continue to receive assistance and the rights of parents will be respected "to ensure education for their children in conformity with their religious, cultural and philosophical convictions". Group rights are thus to a large extent protected but not on specifically racial

grounds. The document reflects considerable local community choice in the management of schools:

"In the light of the foregoing it is logical to ensure that state schools provided and funded from state sources will be open, non racial schools mainly serving their geographical community. There is scope within the state system for schools which serve the interests of particular cultural and language groups. This may be done where the majority of the community served by the school decides through its committee to do so. This would include determining the school's ethos, participating in the selection of its staff and having an input into the subject matter to be taught" (*ibid.*, p.12).

The report reflects a rejection of co-ercive strategies and the encouragement of co-operation:

"In preparing for change, and especially educational change, all participants will have to learn to accept one another as members of a common society moving towards and adapting to changes within that society. At the same time it is of prime importance for all to recognise and accept the diversity of cultures within the common society of Kwa Zulu Natal. It will be necessary in moving towards the proposed new system in education to proceed systematically and with no undue delay. In seeking the continuing support of the society as a whole, it goes without saying that coercion should as far as possible be avoided and co-operation encouraged" (*ibid.*, p.32).

In an interview with the researcher, Prof. Niven (24 Feb. 1989) commented on Uthongathi:



"Uthongathi is saying 'lets project what is best in the private school system and make it as widely available as possible'. Its not tokenism, opening a bit to black pupils as is prevalent in the state system. Its a genuine attempt to meet the needs of all. It is a stimulating preparation for a leadership role".

Professor Niven went on to speak of the rights of individuals to access to institutions of their choice, with no denial on racial grounds. He recognised the difficulties likely in working class areas, where persons perceiving integration as a threat would not be willing to drop barriers, and felt that the concept of "grey areas" might act as a catalyst. Integration would be implemented by "gradualism", initially by schools prepared to accommodate entrants from different backgrounds. A considerable range of options would need to be tolerated. It was essential to change attitudes, he affirmed, "away from white education, white activities and white collars". He recognised the problem of rural areas where integration would not be a ready option, and expressed concern at the deepening crisis of unemployment, which could best be addressed by the creation of small local businesses and co-operative strategies.

Dr J. van Zijl, Director of Education Policy for the Indaba, also commented on Uthongathi (20 Mar. 1989):

"Uthongathi is a model", he asserted. "It has symbolic value for education. In view of demographic factors, it will always be on the fringe of the hard realities faced in education. That's not to say it does not have a relevant role in changing people's attitudes. Its clearly doing that to a very significant degree".

Referring to a recent visit to the United States of America, van Zijl went on to stress the common view amongst those with whom he spoke in that country, that intergrationist education should be based on voluntary participation, with incentives created for involvement.

Acceptance of the Indaba dispensation in Natal, with its implementation throughout the province, would doubtless create a secure place for a multi-cultural school such as Uthongathi. It would enjoy an enhanced role as a potential model of schooling in a dispensation conducive to a voluntary, gradualist process of integration.

The Kwazulu-Natal initiative appears to hold out some prospect for a regional accommodation. There is much to commend the process of nurturing an accommodation between diverse groups in South Africa by a multiplicity of such regional initiatives, in a growing process of nation-building. Yet N.E.S.T., having opened its second school (Phuthing) in the Transvaal and with schools projected for the Eastern and Western Cape, must also take into account the influence of less centrist or geographically located views than those apparently informing the Indaba. Critical to the future of N.E.S.T. is the principle that its schools be as widely acceptable as possible. Attention will accordingly focus in the following section on an appraisal of factors expected to influence or even determine the directions taken by the provision of education in South Africa as a whole in the years ahead.

## 5.6. THE COURSE OF EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE.

### 5.6.1. Forces affecting the future of education in South Africa.

The Notebook published by Elizabeth Dostal (1988), of the Institute of Futures Research at the University of

Stellenbosch, as part of the Education Futures Project mounted jointly by Mobil and the Urban Foundation, identified the following key societal forces which would influence education in South Africa in the years ahead:

- (a) a rapidly growing population,
- (b) a large-scale process of urbanisation,
- (c) a trend towards modernisation,
- (d) mutual enculturation in an urban "melting pot",
- (e) a move towards more holistic thinking,
- (f) a pattern of income distribution by race,
- (g) a skills shortage in technical areas coupled with a surplus of unskilled workers,
- (h) the creation of "educated unemployment",
- (i) the growth of an economic peripheral sector,
- (j) increased developments in technology,
- (k) a deteriorating physical environment of pillaged natural resources,
- (l) a move to modern party politics from a more traditionalist orientation,
- (m) a complex political struggle.

Professor Michael Ashley (1988) of the University of Cape Town notes that the last factor was seen by many participants in the seminars organised as a feature of the Futures Project, to be of primary importance.

Bearing in mind First World/Third World paradigms, Dostal's list suggests to the present writer visions of a complex society comprised of two closely interdependent yet distinguishable worlds. The following profiles are offered: One, a modernising, urban, First World melting pot, with increasing access to technology. Comprised of members of all races, it would be generally adaptable to the accommodation required by a system of multi-cultural education.

The other world, a Third World, comprised of a rising tide of humanity living in a deteriorating rural and urban environment. Many will have some educational qualifications but no employment. Irrespective of any future political accommodation, demographic trends dictate that most will be blacks. Deepening poverty that results in cultural disadvantage will render access to multi-cultural schooling yet more contentious and problematic than is presently the case.

The fundamental challenge to the political leadership of South Africa will remain the creation of strategies that will facilitate a peaceful interchange between these worlds: that will weld the worlds into a single nation, without denying the legitimate rights of individuals or self-defined groups. For any future system of multi-cultural education to confine itself to the needs of the First World alone, is to condemn its participants to the perpetual fury of those who have been denied access. It will also deny the excluded sector of the population the opportunity of modernisation.

Professor Michael Ashley (ibid.) has wisely drawn attention to the last of the items on Dostal's list: the complex political struggle. Political ideologies in South Africa are indeed complex. They will continue to exert a powerful influence on the course of educational development in the country. Leatt, et al. (1988, pp.66-85) have put forward profiles of selected, kernel political ideologies that exert a profound influence on thought in South Africa. Any attempt to implement a multi-cultural schooling system in South Africa would be compelled to take note of these ideologies.

The first is Afrikaner nationalism. Leatt et al. (ibid.) remark on the powerful, fundamentalist Old Testament vision

that has enabled the Afrikaner to cope with the threat of a large indigenous population as well as the aggressive Anglicisation policy imposed as a further affront after the sufferings experienced by Afrikaners during the Anglo-Boer war. Fired by a desire to form an independent nation, his fervour sharpened by the anguish of that war, through the 20th century the Afrikaner rose from a rural existence to create a modern state dominated by Afrikaner nationalism yet coupled with an endeavour to create similar statehood for others. Leatt et.al. describe nationalism in these words:

"Nationalism can be understood as the idea that a group or a people have a right to strive for or to maintain a position of independence in relation to other groups or peoples. The positive aspects of self-determination in this sense locate political authority in the people, inspire them to liberate themselves from subjugation, give individuals a feeling of belonging, and overcome sectional interest" (ibid.).

It is clear to the researcher that Afrikaner nationalism will remain a prime player on the political stage for many years, and that any future educational dispensation will need to accommodate powerful Afrikaner sentiments towards self-realisation. Such sentiments will continue to influence the attitudes of a majority of Afrikaners towards open, multi-cultural schooling. They provide a powerful imperative towards flexibility and a wide range of schooling options in any future dispensation.

Multi-cultural education might nevertheless enjoy the support of a noticeable, growing presence within Afrikaner society, of cosmopolitan values and mindsets geared towards evolutionary integrationism.

The second ideology is liberalism. Leatt et.al. (ibid., p.53) explain the liberal tradition in South Africa by referring to its central convictions, several of which have been mentioned in Chapter Two. It is obvious that the "individual ethic" of liberals stands in strong contrast to the "corporate ethic" of Afrikaner nationalism (ibid., p.57). The radical freedom espoused by some liberals is vulnerable to criticism from the Christian tradition and perspective. The view that man is radically free does not very well reflect the Christian view of man:

"Man's freedom is circumscribed by that covenanted relationship with God in Christ. He is free to obey or disobey, to be responsible or apathetic, but he is not radically free" (ibid., p.64).

In its quest for justice in the pluralistic society, the radical individualism of the liberal tradition has limitations placed on it by the Christian social ethic. Leatt et.al. ask:

"Must it not strive to balance the rights of individuals against those of the whole, the rights of one group against the interests of other groups, if it is to approximate a society in which power is shared?" (ibid., p.65).

Liberalism is also subject to criticism from radical ideologies owing to its tendency to support the status quo, its failure to give due weight to class and ethnicity understood in terms of Marxist sociology and its support of a form of capitalism that is seen to be dependent on the exploitation of black labour (ibid., p.62). Afrikaner nationalism, on the other hand, views liberalism as unacceptable because of its tendency to mask English

chauvinism. It is seen to be naive owing to its inability to comprehend the reality of ethnic plurality. It tends thus to give too little weight to the aspirations of diverse groups in South Africa (ibid., p.63).

It is apparent from the foregoing that the interests of multi-cultural education, if grounded broadly in a liberal philosophy, would be well served by reflecting a dispensation that not only accommodates the integrity of cultural groups but also counters racism and ameliorates class divisions! The N.E.S.T. endeavour is quite remarkable in the extent to which it has attempted to address all three of these issues.

The third major ideology is more radically oriented. White radicals have tended to focus on a promulgation of socio-economic class as the proper category of analysis for South Africa's socio-political problems, and have tended to consider the questions of race and ethnicity to in fact reflect fundamental class forces (Leatt et.al., p.88). Black radicals, on the other hand, have tended to reflect their radicalism largely in the form of the black consciousness movement (ibid., p.59), while rejecting the liberal view that the formation of non-racial grouping is an adequate answer to discrimination. They consider efforts to form non-racial alignments to be a ruse to divert black energies away from the conscientisation of blacks.

Charles Simkins (1986, p.18) expresses the point well when he writes:

"... countless humiliations have produced the roar of fury and frustration we now hear: we shall rule and you shall feel our power!"

Member of the Board of Uthongathi Dr Dowlat Bagwandeem (2

Mar. 1989) has argued that black radicalism of this type is selfish owing to its promotion of group identity for blacks alone, to the exclusion of other groups. In the final analysis, he asserts, one encounters polarity in South Africa between white and black, while other groups are considered to be of little or no significance.

Black communalism, the political and economic policies of black consciousness, has evolved after a period of critical examination of the roots of white racism in South Africa. Its manifestation is expressed by Leatt et.al. (ibid., p. 110):

"In ideal terms, the political goal of black communalism was an open society, based on universal adult suffrage irrespective of race, colour, religion or nationality. The political consequences of this would be majority rule, in the sense of a predominantly but not exclusively black representation in parliament. Black communalism favoured the term non-racialism rather than multiracialism, because it emphasised the rights of individuals rather than those of groups".

The picture is further complicated by the existence of black nationalist movements which are, according to Leatt et.al. (p. 87), a reaction to the perceived balkanisation of South Africa through the homelands policy and their experience of racism and discrimination in a number of fields.

The existence of tribalism, and personal fiefdoms or power blocs in the shackland settlements, exacerbates the complexities. Proponents of black consciousness are perhaps likely to favour a powerful Africanisation of schooling rather than a multi-cultural dispensation.



The securing of minority rights in the face of an overwhelming numerical superiority of blacks, while not an issue with some, is a reality in the racial outlook of many South Africans. It cannot be summarily disregarded. It is a pervasive fear fed by perceptions of a deteriorating social and economic situation in Africa as a whole, which continent Sunter (1987, pp. 19;25) portrays as "the swamp" or "the pit". It is a scenario of despair that should be challenged by all persons of purpose and conviction. Taking into account the complexity of the forces that will impinge on the provision of education in the future, the question might be asked: what future scenarios are indeed likely? In order to try to predict future scenarios, and propose a path forward, the writer will again turn to Michael Ashley.

#### 5.6.2. Some scenarios for education in the future: their relevance to N.E.S.T.

Professor Michael Ashley (1988) of the University of Cape Town has developed four scenarios relating to the future of education in South Africa. Each of the four scenarios has its roots in specific political and economic ideologies. The first scenario is the Reactionary, the second the Reformist (or "Business-as-usual"), the third the Socialist and the fourth is an as-yet unnamed, "Other Scenario".

Ashley presents the Reactionary Scenario as a reversion to Verwoerdian apartheid, with an insistence on racially-segregated structures and white control (*ibid.*, p.4). Under this scenario, Ashley predicts an increasingly volatile society with a continuing disruption of educational activities. There would be a growing centralisation of power and a rigidly unitary system with little local autonomy. Education would preserve group identities and

white hegemony (ibid., p.5). Educational equality would be hampered by a shrinking economy and a crisis in educational financing. Ashley suggests a dire time for private schools:

"Private schools would not be encouraged as racially open institutions and severe pressure would be exerted on them to admit pupils of only the group they were designated to serve, in most cases whites" (ibid., p.7).

It is a scenario therefore not congenial to the initiatives of N.E.S.T.

The key theme of Scenario Two, the Reformist future, is one of white control, but with considerably greater participation by other groups (ibid., pp.7-8). The free enterprise system would continue to be the fundamental economic policy. Ashley predicts a considerable level of volatility and repression with periodic unrest in educational institutions, which would continue to be sites of resistance. Some efforts would be made to decentralise, with the state increasingly rejecting its role of providing adequate education for all its citizens. Private funding of education would grow apace. Dropout ratios would continue to be heavily to the disadvantage of blacks. N.E.S.T. would doubtless continue to function, but would do so against a backdrop of socio-political uncertainty.

The Socialist future, according to Ashley (ibid., pp.11-12) assumes power to be in the hands of the majority and their representatives. Such government would experience strong resistance to any endeavour to impose full educational integration. He writes:

"Some compromise would be reached in the interests of stability in the educational system but even so, educational institutions would be 'sites of struggle'" (ibid.).

There would doubtless be centralisation of decision-making in the interests of the achievement of socialist goals, asserts Ashley, and the major purpose of education would be the attainment of equality for all. He continues:

"Such equality would be pursued through many channels, including open access to all facilities, and meaningful equality of opportunity. The historic pattern of discrimination against Blacks would be reversed by a policy of positive discrimination in their favour. Further, the education system would be expected to contribute to the building of a non-racial, democratic and socialist South Africa through the development of appropriate attitudes. Hence the importance of non-individualistic co-operative and collective values would receive strong emphasis. Education of an elitist character would be strongly discouraged as being subversive of the socialist goal of a society without strong class differentiation" (ibid.).

Ashley predicts a sluggish economy, presenting a continuing tension between expectations and the government's ability to meet them. At the secondary level, academic education would not enjoy a favoured status, and agriculture and industrial subjects would appear in the secondary curriculum. In the unlikely event that private schooling were to be sanctioned, such schools would be required to undergo radical adjustments.

The evidence suggests that such adjustments could, in the event of need, be effected at a school such as Uthongathi. This could be done, inter alia by means of a fundamental reappraisal of the entry requirements and a further dramatic expansion of the affirmative action programme to accommodate those whose educability is of a modest order. Financial support from the state would be imperative, with a concomitant loss of autonomy.

Ashley's Fourth Future (ibid., pp. 15-17) is made possible by the widespread recognition that the solution to South Africa's dilemma lies in the principle of decentralisation, with acceptance of the heterogeneity of the population. Government would tend towards a minarchy and individual rights would be constitutionally protected. Consistent with ideological flexibility would be a mixed economy with the traditional private sector continuing to play an important role. Grassroots economic activity would be encouraged, while regional and local government would be increasingly meaningful. Ashley imagines the allocation of a good deal of local autonomy to educational institutions:

"In such a future, with local communities having such a degree of discretion over the use of funds earmarked for education, there would be a variety of educational institutions and practices. Communities would experiment with private schooling and funding might be made available in the form of block grants" (ibid.).

He also writes of a flexible policy of certification that allows for local options:

"Again, local factors would influence provision and curriculum content, depending on the needs perceived in the area. Certification is an important issue at

this level, and within a broad framework of national standards, a pattern would emerge reflecting specific local interests, especially as regards the employment situation, as well as qualifications of wider currency, which might lead on to the other levels of the system".

It is a scenario most congenial to the further development of N.E.S.T.

#### 5.7. PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE: A ROLE FOR N.E.S.T. SCHOOLS.

##### 5.7.1. The South African setting.

As has been pointed out, the socio-political setting in which N.E.S.T. is embedded is one of vast complexity. It is Michael Ashley's Fourth Future, with its emphasis on conciliation and a toleration of diversity that holds out the best hope for the acceptance of N.E.S.T. schools. The dismal picture of the future for South Africa presented by Maylam (1988) reveals the urgent need for a new tolerance: a new accommodation. Maylam writes thus of future prospects:

"Thus it looks as if the impasse will continue in the short term. As long as it continues the quality of life for all South Africans will continue to deteriorate. There will be a growing sense of alienation and isolation" (ibid., p.99).

He continues:

"So that is the gloomy prognosis: not a sudden, swift blow that will knock the whole edifice down, but rather a lengthy process of attrition marked by violence, conflict, and repression, leading to the eventual collapse of apartheid" (ibid.).

In order to roll back the process of attrition, the state must attempt to accommodate an array of conflicting and polarised ideological syndicates, embracing Third World tribalism and shackland power cliques, through a spectrum of mindsets to First World modes of consciousness and integrationist, global thought (Beck, 1989).

South African society desperately needs the benefits of a new cohesion: a nation-building exercise in support of widely accepted superordinate goals. Such cohesive force might be found in the concept of the one God that Bro. Neil McGurk has suggested as a focus for nation-building. It is the source from which can flow a new perception of the dignity of the individual, and a foundation upon which to develop a Bill of Human Rights. An accent on individual dignity and worth implies a seeking for a new and just dispensation, with reform proceeding by peaceful means in search of a profoundly new social order. It implies an evolutionary process of integrating the ideological poles in the creation of common middle ground, as far as this is possible. It implies a political settlement achieved through broadly representative negotiation as an open, ongoing process.

A prime task of building a new nation in South Africa lies in the creation of a relevant concept of equality that proceeds beyond the scope of legal equality, to also directly address the social and economic inequality and discrimination of the past without crushing the freedom of persons to develop and grow as individuals. For schooling, it perhaps implies the concept of justice proposed by Rawls, with a freedom to achieve for those who are capable, and substantial compensatory policies to aid those who are disadvantaged at the starting line. For the present writer, equality and justice imply the irrelevance of race as a

theoretical construct upon which to regulate lives. The achievement of equality and justice thus implies the dissolution of discriminatory legislation based on race. It however also affirms the right to enjoy the protection and growth of cultures, especially as regards language and religion.

#### 5.7.2. Education in the process of reform, and a role for N.E.S.T. schools.

With a First World - Third World ratio that reflects that of the wider world, South Africa has for the past two decades experienced problems in education that are part of a global crisis (Coombs, 1985). The issues that are so hotly contested are complex beyond human imagination and are not readily susceptible to technicist solutions or insensitive, centralised decision-making. Rather than featuring as a explosively contested terrain, education should be harnessed to the total process of reform. In the view of the researcher it should be made relevant to the process of creating a just society in which racial discrimination is banished, cultural rights are acknowledged, and an endeavour made to provide for the economic subsistence of all, inter alia by means of vocational education and compensatory programmes. The system of education should provide for flexibility. Non-formal education and second-chance programmes should play a crucial role.

It is accordingly recommended that the state resurrect the Human Sciences Research Council Report on Education in the R.S.A. (1981), as a basis for broad discussions on a future dispensation for education in South Africa. The Report has acted as a catalyst to the outpouring of a vast multiplicity of new concepts and programmes, despite its subsequent rejection by government in 1983. Many innovative projects

have flowed from the Report, such as that of S.Y.N.C.O.M. (1986), Directed by Mr Andre Spier. Their Privatisation Position Paper No.3 reflects dependence on the eleven principles of the De Lange Report and its key recommendations. Strongly in favour of capitalism and increased privatisation, S.Y.N.C.O.M. proposes far-reaching reform of "the total system". It recommends an education system that is relevant to enhanced economic performance, achieved through the use of Community Learning Centres that would offer primary, secondary and adult education. Flexibility would be ensured by the exercise of far-reaching autonomy for local education authorities, with a voucher system as a funding mechanism.

Decision-making at local level would be consistent with the proposals of such other free-market proponents as Louw & Kendall (1986, p.107) whose projected future society is characterised by limited government, decentralisation and a devolution of power to the local level. People would be free to associate without the compulsion of forced integration. A voucher system would be instituted to finance education. Such voucher would be issued to each child of school-going age, regardless of race, for use at either private or government schools. The system would encourage greater school autonomy (ibid., p.183) and would make education more relevant, catering for a kaleidoscope of different needs and preferences:

"Privatisation and/or a voucher system would ensure that schools provide what people want in terms of cost, quality, content and racial mix. Schools which did not meet peoples' needs would go out of business"  
(ibid., p.184).

Louw & Kendall also advocate a shift in government spending from higher education to primary education. They argue that



spending on higher education favours people in higher socio-economic brackets at the expense of those in lower brackets. Primary education, they suggest, is in greatest demand. Students who wish to pursue higher education could be offered a government loan, to be repaid when they enter employment.

Louw & Kendall, and also Andre Spier, write firmly in the free market tradition. Flexible and open schools, reacting to free market forces, will be the instrument through which economic and social disadvantages will be largely ameliorated. These writers nevertheless show a deepseated awareness of the need for social programmes to ameliorate poverty. Such recommendations as they make hint at their recognition of the limitations of schooling to redress all societal problems. It is a matter taken up by Mr B. Soobrayan, Acting Director of the Education Projects Unit at the University of Natal, Durban (23 Feb. 1989). Mr Soobrayan queries whether individual schools can redress all problems, when more deepseated and fundamental social action is needed. Like Louw & Kendall, he advocates an emphasis on primary schooling and pre-primary education: also adult literacy. Given the poverty of the working class, he asks: can schools such as Uthongathi be an answer to widespread poverty?

In responding to the question whether the widespread adoption of open schooling such as that promulgated by N.E.S.T. might impact on the economic wellbeing of all, the writer will again return to Dostal. Elizabeth Dostal (1988, p.12) points out that, although education can aid individual development, its impact on the economy at large is not necessarily profound. Some improvement in productivity can be expected, but additional jobs will not be created. The greatest impact of education on society is

in aiding population control, nutrition, literacy and communications. Since the present writer believes the writings of Thomas Malthus to hold much relevance to the improvement of the quality of life in Third World countries, the impact of education in improving quality of life by aiding birth control is significant for South Africa. While contentious, population control is an issue that demands compassionate and courageous address. Dostal's data (ibid., pp. 12-34) shows the explosion of black student numbers, the presence of poorly-qualified teachers in an overextended black education system and the pursuit by young black matriculants of qualifications in the oversupplied areas of the arts and social sciences. Black unemployment is set to rise massively in coming years. The disruption of the education of black pupils during the past decade and the loss of schooling have tended to exacerbate the problem.

Dostal predicts the inexorable growth of the peripheral sector as a proportion of labour supply to 55% by the year 2 000, if past trends continue (ibid., p. 50). She points to a dire need to promote entrepreneurship at every opportunity in order to accelerate the creation of jobs. She writes:

"It seems that unless education is embedded in an entrepreneurial tradition, its contribution to socio-economic development of the whole society is limited. Education may certify people to have acquired knowledge in a specialised field but it does not impart the skills to apply this knowledge in the pursuit of business activities" (ibid., p. 52).

Dostal's forecast reveals a shortage in the year 2 000 of approximately 200 000 highly skilled persons with degrees or diplomas, and a huge surplus of 5 100 000 persons with less than standard eight qualification (ibid., p. 56). She draws attention to the limitations of current educational debate:

"The focus of the educational debate in South Africa is on the equalisation of education amongst all races and on making education available to all. Yet the above trends show clearly that we educate the unemployed. To avoid this, the content of education will have to be seriously reconsidered. Education must become economically relevant" (ibid., p.54).

The present writer suggests that Uthongathi is economically relevant in two respects: (a) by its concentration on meeting the needs for highly educated manpower and (b) by its recognition of the need for life skills and self-empowerment. However, as stated previously, we must also look outside formal education for solutions. Rudman (1988, p.131) advocates a package of measures to stimulate wealth creation at grassroots level. Education (training) is only one of these measures. He emphasises the need to put all South Africans first, and proposes the elimination of restrictive legislation on small enterprises, establishing a national training programme for the formal sector, making available small loans for informal ventures, opening business premises in white areas to all races and converting the informal trader into a taxpayer in the formal sector. He is positive about the advantages of the approach:

"The proposed solution will release, at relatively low cost to the public purse, the entrepreneurial talents of the population, enable small enterprises to operate more efficiently, create new employment and enlarge the gross national product. More entrepreneurs will be drawn from the lower income group. The income of the poorest will rise towards the present median levels. And, all this will occur through economic growth rather than via coercive redistribution" (ibid., p.135).

Such policies as those proposed by Rudman present a more direct attack on poverty than schooling can mount, and holds the promise of generating wealth at grass-roots level. It does not, and must not, however, preclude a carefully planned implementation of suitable state socialist programme to counter the affects of poverty amongst the very needy.

Many of the foregoing scenarios and proposals have been put forward by experts in their fields. There is little doubt that the input from such quarters is important and relevant. Much central planning, with a research of (and reaction to) massive demographic trends remains necessary; yet it is vulnerable to allegations of technicism. Many individuals and communities clearly perceive education in ways very different from those in authority: the existence of Peoples' Education provides tangible evidence of this fact. There is a greater need than ever for a broadening of the Great Educational Debate in South Africa, with the accommodation of a wide spectrum of views.

Opening a state-sponsored debate on education in South Africa to a wide spectrum of opinion, (possibly using principles of the H.S.R.C. Report as a basis, yet leaving the agenda open to reflect the impact of People's Education), would doubtless result in a plethora of contested views that would only be resolved by a very flexible future dispensation reflecting much local autonomy. Such dispensation, although difficult to standardise and co-ordinate, would doubtless enjoy enhanced validity.

It is probable that open, multi-cultural schools such as Uthongathi will play a very pertinent role in any new dispensation. Nevertheless, some limitations will be placed on such schools by pervasive demographic factors. Elizabeth Dostal (1988, p. 18) has pointed out some limitations of open

schooling that are due to demographic factors. She writes of the tremendous increase in the number of black pupils, in contrast to the declining or comparatively stable numbers amongst the other population groups:

"These figures also indicate that opening all schools for all races would only marginally relieve the problem of black education. It may, however, improve the situation in some areas (especially rural) and it will, of course, improve the political climate in South Africa and assist in the process of mutual enculturation".

Dostal clearly places a limit on the development of multi-cultural education by her assertion, since demographic factors confine it to specific areas where a racial mix is most prevalent. Mr John Kane-Berman, Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations (1987, p.50) has nevertheless pointed out in an address to the Natal Teachers Society that in 1986 there were 153 637 empty places in white schools country-wide, and a shortage of 193 575 places for Africans in white areas alone, which would cost enormous sums of money to eliminate.

Schools that are faced with closure owing to gradually diminishing numbers could in fact be closed as they lose viability, and be re-constructed as open, multi-cultural schools. Uthongathi could be taken as a possible model, with parents visiting the school to observe it operating, if such reassurance be needed. It is imperative, however, that school communities be fundamentally involved in the decision-making.

A further valid extrapolation of the Uthongathi experience would be to other private schools that remain undecided on a

pattern to follow in opening more completely to pupils of colour than is the case with many such schools at present.

The Uthongathi model should be viewed as a flexible paradigm: the gradual abandonment of a racial balance could be a matter of policy decided by individual schools. State funding could be linked to such moves as an inducement to integration.

#### 5.8. RECOMMENDATIONS.

No new approach to education in South Africa can be implemented in isolation from socio-political events. It is imperative that the South African government should continue to seek a political settlement acceptable to all main contestants in the political arena. Strategies should be devised and pursued to abandon legislation based on race, with the substitution of a Bill of Human Rights for the country. Educational legislation would come under intensive review so as to embrace a non-racial format. The development of a new and appropriate national philosophy of education would be a major task, achieved by negotiation.

It is recommended that a state-sponsored national debate on education be mounted in order to seek a new educational dispensation enjoying broad acceptance. The writer suggests the following proposals as pertinent to the agenda:

(a) Strategies should be developed in order to facilitate a movement towards a single, national Department of Education. Such move might imply the initial expansion of the Department of National Education to assume responsibility for open schooling.

(b) A system of open, non-racial schools should be established in appropriate culturally plural communities.

Schools with diminishing numbers might be re-constituted by means of a multi-cultural intake at the lowest standards. These schools would be under the initial authority of the present Department of National Education. Schools presently under any of the four racially-based departments could apply to shift to status within the open system. The system of open schools would gradually incorporate many schools that are presently uniraical, leaving private schooling to accommodate particular needs.

(c) New educational structures should be devised in order to ensure a devolution of authority through non-racial provincial, regional and community bodies. Such system would afford considerable local autonomy to accommodate a diversity of needs.

(d) A system of private (religious) schools should be retained, with substantial state support for those that implement a non-racial entrance policy.

(e) Courses and curricula should be structured at community level, within the scope of broad national criteria. They would be validated regionally and sanctioned nationally in the light of such criteria.

(f) Maximum rationalisation of all suitable facilities should be undertaken in order to provide adequately for communities in need.

(g) There should be ongoing research into open schooling, as with the present study focused on Uthongathi. The balanced intake at Uthongathi might prove acceptable to parent communities in need of reassurance, as an interim measure.

(h) A strong component of multi-cultural education should be introduced into the training of teachers. The quality of the teaching corps would doubtless be the most crucial element in the success of any new system. A massive rationalisation of the present separate provision for teacher training within discrete racial institutions, would be imperative.

(i) Education should be rendered yet more appropriate to the needs of individuals, as well as the economy. While retaining a liberal component, consideration should be given to a more powerful drive towards vocationalism, entrepreneurship, and marketable skills. Thoughtful and sensitive differentiation will be necessary in order to accommodate both First World and Third World needs. Non-formal education should be drastically boosted, with flexibility of movement between formal and non-formal structures.

(j) State responsibility should focus on primary schooling, with private enterprise encouraged to aid secondary schooling by tax concessions, loans or vouchers.

(k) It is recommended that there be a massive expansion of academic support programmes in the tradition of affirmative action, as a feature of all state schooling.

In any new dispensation that is to enjoy widespread acceptance, open schooling with a bias towards the accommodation of cultural plurality under one roof is likely to play a major role. The New Era Schools Trust schools are thus likely to be subject to intensified scrutiny as a possible model upon which such schooling might be based. It is the prediction of the present writer that N.E.S.T. will find increasing acceptance within the moderate centre of the



socio-political spectrum, with appeal to the Right and Left wings dependent on the degree of flexibility such multi-cultural system can tolerate in its practical implementation.

The further exploration of kernel issues arising from the empirical study of Uthongathi would doubtless enhance its value as a potential model of multi-cultural schooling appropriate to a future educational dispensation in South Africa. The implications of issues discussed in the present chapter suggest many directions for the mounting of further research. Appropriate research topics are accordingly listed below, with references provided to facilitate continuity with earlier discussion.

It is recommended that further research be undertaken on:

- the unique contributions of major actors on the Board of N.E.S.T. towards the development of the theory and practice of the N.E.S.T. system (5.2.1.).
- the power structure of N.E.S.T. Central and its relationship with the Board of Uthongathi, in order to illuminate problematics and possibilities that might contribute to optimising future structures of educational control in South Africa (5.2.2.).
- regional studies that would explore the potential for multi-cultural education among South African communities desirous of integrated schooling (5.2.2.).
- a detailed mapping of the major currents of thought woven over the years into the philosophy of N.E.S.T., with a further analysis of its implications for current and future educational practice in South Africa (5.3.1.).

- the role of the philosophy as a guide to major actors involved with Uthongathi, with a view to determining its consequent influence on practice at the school (5.3.2.).
- the apparently maturing perceptions of the philosophy that Uthongathi students develop during their careers at the school, in order to estimate the extent to which principles framed within the philosophy might become part of their value systems (5.3.2.).
- public attitudes towards schooling that accommodates a racially diverse population, including:
  - (a) racial mixing in a laissez-faire "melting-pot" dispensation, with an open intake policy,
  - (b) an orchestrated entry that results in a balance of races, and
  - (c) pluralistic systems that maintain racial separation (5.3.3.).
- public perceptions of schooling that accommodates a culturally diverse society, including:
  - (a) culturally assimilatory approaches to education,
  - (b) multi-cultural education, and
  - (c) cultural pluralism in education (5.3.4).
- strategies used for integrating the economically disadvantaged into Uthongathi, as well as other private schools, in order to identify the most appropriate forms of affirmative action (5.3.5.).
- investigating the most appropriate future role for private schooling in South Africa, in the light of various possible scenarios. Such research might build on the work of Staples (5.3.6.).

- a comparison of the building costs of Uthongathi with the comparable costs of state schooling, on a per capita basis (5.4.1.1.).
  
- exploring the trend towards a less pretentious profile at Uthongathi, and in N.E.S.T.schools as a whole, with a view to extrapolating their experiences to other institutions seeking to maintain quality of education while utilizing a more modest consumption of resources (5.4.1.2.).
  
- an analysis of bursary policies, bursary support and the criteria used at Uthongathi for making bursary allocations, as part of a wider study encompassing other private schools (5.4.2.1.).
  
- determining the relationship, if any, between the philosophy (with its emphasis on both a racial balance and affordability), and costs. Does the maintenance of a racial balance (under the present socio-political dispensation) tend to drive costs up and thereby place the egalitarian aims under assault? (5.4.2.2.).
  
- ascertaining the comparative costs of a multi-cultural endeavour such as Uthongathi that embraces such commendable yet potentially expensive endeavours as community service projects as well as a pervasive academic support programme, when compared with traditionally uni-cultural systems. How do the per capita costs at Uthongathi compare with those of other private schools, and the four state systems that might not pursue a philosophy as apparently complex and challenging as that of N.E.S.T.? (5.4.2.3.).

- the socio-economic profile of the parent community at Uthongathi, with a view to determining the extent to which bursary policies at the school have bridged economic class barriers (5.4.3.1.).
- the perceptions of parents from each of the four statutorily defined racial groups at Uthongathi concerning issues of race, culture and class attached to education in a culturally and racially plural society (5.4.3.2.).
- the level of practical and philosophical commitment of parents to the school, in order to identify factors that might mitigate against the involvement of identifiable segments (5.4.3.3.).
- the development of profiles of those youngsters who apply successfully (or unsuccessfully) for entry to Uthongathi, with a view to highlighting factors that might be influential in their test performance. The programme of affirmative action within the racial balance might also come under more detailed scrutiny in a search for most appropriate selection policies (5.4.4.1.).
- devising entry tests based on dynamic interaction, that are applicable with large numbers. Uthongathi could offer a superb environment in which to embed such research (5.4.4.2.).
- the development of appropriate educational bridging programmes to benefit disadvantaged sectors of the community by facilitating their transition into schooling of good quality. Such research could aid any

future transition from separate systems of education into a single unitary system. Uthongathi presents an appropriate case study to which part of such research might be devoted (5.4.4.3.).

- a mapping and description of the complex racial, cultural, ideological and socio-economic class mix present in the student population of Uthongathi. An effort might be made to create a profile of the school, in comparison with wider community profiles of the school's catchment area. The resulting data could prove useful in attempts to extrapolate the Uthongathi experience more widely (5.4.5.1.).
- a longitudinal study of the careers of selected students covering their years of schooling at Uthongathi, with a view to assessing the influence on these pupils of particular facets of the educational milieu (5.4.5.1.).
- the relationship between relevant demographic profiles impinging on open schools such as Uthongathi and the resulting composition of the student populations of these schools. The focus could be on the design of appropriate intake policies to meet particular educational needs (5.4.5.2.).
- the personal viewpoints of members of the Board of Uthongathi, concerning major policies of the school. An analysis of the dynamics thus revealed could provide a better understanding of the forces impinging on Uthongathi as well as other innovatory education projects in South Africa (5.4.6.1.).
- the racial composition of the Board of Uthongathi; such research to be set against the background of socio-political and ideological factors that might impinge negatively on the involvement of persons of colour

- tracing the professional backgrounds of all teaching staff in order to suggest factors in their training histories that have been conducive to their appointment to the school, in the face of competition from other applicants (5.4.7.1.).
- the mapping of staff relationships and perceptions in order to isolate factors that tend towards **fusion** or **fission** in a multi-racial staff (5.4.7.1.).
- teaching strategies at Uthongathi that show particular promise of meeting the varied needs of a multi-cultural schooling population characterised by diverse backgrounds (5.4.7.2.).
- the design of teacher training programmes to accommodate the future needs of a culturally diverse South African population (5.4.7.2.).
- the development of strategies at Uthongathi that would enable a less generous future staff-student ratio to be introduced, while retaining staff morale, quality of service to the pupils, as well as a powerful community service programme (5.4.7.3.).
- charting the academic and professional careers of Uthongathi students, by longitudinal study, in order to draw inferences about the education offered at the school (5.4.8.1.).
- financial implications of the curricular strategies implemented at Uthongathi. Does the exacting educational philosophy proposed by N.E.S.T. tend to produce schools that are intrinsically expensive to run? (5.4.8.2.).

- the views of staff, parents and students at Uthongathi on curricula appropriate to the needs of the various cultural communities represented in the school (5.4.8.3.).
- a national-level project to develop core school curricula acceptable to all communities. The work of the S.A.A.I.S. might form a basis for such project (5.4.8.4.).
- all relevant implications of a move to three academic streams by 1993 (5.4.8.4.).
- the non-formal curriculum at Uthongathi, with a focus on its use in providing cross-cultural learning experiences for all students (5.4.9.1.).
- the apparently evolving perceptions of the self-help programme experienced by students at Uthongathi. Such research could be undertaken with the identification of particularly useful self-help strategies in mind (5.4.9.2.).
- the history of the Uthongathi Students Representative Council, which serves as a vehicle for accommodating the diverse needs of a multi-cultural schooling population. How are social solidarity and good order maintained in a schooling society that recognises the right of its members to an open expression of diverse viewpoints? (5.4.10.1).
- Uthongathi students' evolving perceptions of such concepts as democracy, authority and freedom (5.4.10.2.).

- the views on discipline, of students and parents from different cultural backgrounds (5.4.10.2.).
- the perceptions of race and culture of identifiable sub-groups at Uthongathi (5.4.11.1.).
- the formation of cliques at Uthongathi, in order to determine causality, and to map the internal dynamics of such cliques (5.4.11.2.).
- possible disjunctions between the life-worlds of students at school and at home (5.4.11.2.).
- the attitudes of persons in communities within the catchment area of Uthongathi, towards racial mixing at the school (5.4.11.2.).
- community service projects at Uthongathi, including an appraisal of their success in meeting community needs (5.4.12.).
- maturing insights into community service evident amongst students at Uthongathi (5.4.12.).
- the extent of students' involvement in community service projects during their post-school careers (5.4.12.).
- teaching strategies implemented at Uthongathi that are proving particularly successful in meeting diverse student needs (5.4.13.1.).
- the process of inter-cultural enrichment experienced by students through their years of schooling (5.4.13.2.).



- professional teacher development at Uthongathi. Such research could seek to tease out significant, contentious professional issues arising from the multi-cultural environment, with a subsequent mapping of appropriate strategies designed by the staff to meet them (5.4.13.3.).
- the Uthongathi language programmes (5.4.14.1.).
- the enrichment (bridging) programme mounted by Uthongathi with selected pupils from local schools. Which strategies have proved particularly successful? (5.4.13.2.).
- successful strategies mounted at Uthongathi and in other open schools to enhance learning skills amongst pupils from deprived educational backgrounds (5.4.14.3.).

## 5.9. CONCLUDING SUMMARY.

In this final chapter, findings derived from the empirical study have been analysed and discussed in the light of relevant theory. Consideration has been given to their implications for further practice. A holistic portrait of Uthongathi has been presented and its possible relevance to a future educational dispensation debated against a background matrix of scenarios shaped by social and environmental forces likely to affect education in the future. The chapter has concluded with an analysis of strategies relevant to the adoption of a multi-cultural schooling model, as exemplified by Uthongathi. Recommendations have been made for appropriate research.

## LIST OF APPENDICES.

- APPENDIX A : NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST (NEST): THE PHILOSOPHY.
- APPENDIX B : THE N.E.S.T. PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION AND SELECTION.
- APPENDIX C : STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE.
- APPENDIX D : STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE.
- APPENDIX E : PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE.
- APPENDIX F : DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS' INCOMES FOR 1988.
- APPENDIX G : UTHONGATHI SCHOOL - SCHOOL NUMBERS AS AT 19/1/89.

For the sake of brevity, questionnaires show both questions and the results achieved through their use, in a composite format. The original questionnaire structure and content should become clear as appendices C, D and E are read.

## APPENDIX A

## A STATEMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF N.E.S.T.

## NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST (N.E.S.T.)

## THE PHILOSOPHY

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Prof G.R. Bozzoli (Chairman)	Alternate Trustees:
Mr M.T.S. Krige (Associate Director)	Mr W.M. Shorten
Prof P.F. Mohanoe	Mr C.L. Sunter
Mr T.S. Molete	
Dr S.C. Naidoo	
Mr D. Yates (Director)	

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD :

Prof G.R. Bozzoli (Chairman)	Sir Richard Luyt
Prof P.F. Mohanoe (Deputy Chairman)	Mr T.S. Molete
Mr B. Biggs	Mr J.B.M. Moloto
Ms E.N. Chinkanda	Dr S.C. Naidoo
Mr R.S. Desai	Mr M.C. O'Dowd
Mr B. Dudley	Mr F.J. Pheyane
Mr B. de L Figaji	Mr R. Pillay
Mr G. Gassiep	Mr I. Sogoni
Mr Y. Hassim	Mr F. Sonn
Mrs T. Henderson	Mr R. van der Heever
Mr J.S. Kane Berman	Mr W.D. Wilson
Mr M.T.S. Krige (Associate Director)	Mr D. Yates (Director)

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NATIONAL FUNDRAISING AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE:

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Dr A.M. Rosholt (Chairman)	Mr R. Pillay
Mr G. Cachalia	Mr W.M. Shorten
Mr Y. Cachalia	Mr M.W. Spicer
Mr G. Gassiep	Mr H.R. Slack
Mr A. Lee	Mr C.L. Sunter
Mr K. Mason	Mr T. Tenza
Mr T.S. Molete	Mr D. Yates

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NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE

---

Dr A.M. Rosholt (Chairman)	Mr A. Lee
Prof G.R. Bozzoli	Mr K. Mason
Mr G. Cachalia	Prof P.F. Mohanoe
Mr G. Chalmers	Mr T.S. Molete
Mr G. Gassiep	Dr S.C. Naidoo
Mrs B. Gibson	Mr W.M. Shorten
Mr M.T.S. Krige	Mr H.R. Slack
	Mr D. Yates

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AIMS

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THE NEW ERA SCHOOLS TRUST HAS BEEN FORMED FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH SHALL BE FREE OF RACISM. IT IS THE AIM, WITHIN THE ORGANISATION AS A WHOLE AND WITHIN EACH OF THE SCHOOLS WHEN ESTABLISHED, THAT THE COMMUNITIES THUS FORMED WILL BE NONRACIAL IN THEIR WAY OF LIFE AND IN THEIR ETHOS.

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## INTERPRETATION

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Nonracialism is seen as state of mind resulting in a way of life which is not influenced or motivated by considerations of race. Nonracialism will evolve effectively and completely when each race is committed, not in an insignificant minority, but in a physical partnership in each community, so that it does not feel threatened, but adequately represented. Such communities are being established in NEST schools.

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## APPLICATION

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In practical terms the New Era Schools Trust will seek to bridge the communication gap which has resulted from separation caused by apartheid, having as its goal a society free from racism. This will be done:

- a) By the composition of the membership of its board, committees and employees as well as in its schools at every level, i.e. pupils, teachers, governing bodies and ancillary staff.
- b) By drawing pupils from all sections of the community.
- c) By making the schools affordable to all sections of the community by giving assistance in the form of bursaries to any child who would otherwise be prevented from being admitted.
- d) By emphasizing community service in the activities of the schools.
- e) By seeking to establish the schools as community centres

in the areas in which they are situated.

- f) By encouraging all to learn from each other so they contribute to the whole from the richness of their own heritage.
- g) By having a religious base through which the beliefs, held by the pupils, in the main world faiths may be respected and encouraged.
- h) By establishing each NEST school on ground which is reasonably accessible to all.

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## CURRICULUM AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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### AIMS

- a) To train the pupils in democratic principles so that they will be able to handle freedom, power and leadership as responsible individuals who can make decisions for themselves in society.
- b) To harness the heritage of all sections of the South African population through the fullest use of indigenous literature, art, music and folklore, thus promoting an ethos of a post-apartheid South Africa.
- c) To instil a lasting commitment to service through encouraging an understanding of national and community issues.
- d) To develop the personal qualities of tolerance, compassion, humility, initiative, self-discipline and moral and intellectual integrity for their own sake and because they are essential to creating an understanding and respect between individuals of different races, nationalities, classes, faiths and cultures.
- e) To promote a high degree of intellectual, cultural, spiritual and physical development in the pupils.

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PLACE IN SOCIETY

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- a) The schools will set themselves the objective of simplicity in their buildings and in the food, dress and way of life of their communities.
  - b) All members of the school at every level will be involved in self-help activities and domestic work, thus learning to appreciate the dignity of labour and also of forming the closest personal relationships the one with the other through mutual contact in their work.
- 

IN PURSUANCE OF THESE IDEALS THE SCHOOLS WILL:

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- a) Be co-educational and cater for both day pupils and boarders.
- b) Set an entrance test for all applicants to determine their educability up to matriculation level. The criterion for admission will not be the highest results, but an acceptable standard in this test, as well as due priority based on the date each application was received.
- c) Set academic standards which will enable the pupils to realise and fulfil their own potential, leading to the equivalent of a university entrance pass.
- d) Maintain a proper balance between work, sport and approved extra-curricular activities.
- e) Counter elitism in every way possible.

January 1988.

## APPENDIX B

THE NEST PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION AND SELECTION, PROCEEDING  
FROM THE DEED OF TRUST AND THE STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY.

## Principles of Operation.

1. The NEST schools must be located where they are reasonably accessible to each of the four race groups, which through Group Areas legislation are often widely separated.
2. They must be mainly boarding institutions. Only when the children live and grow up together will the socioeducational aims and objects of the Trust be most effectively realised.
3. The buildings must be simple and functional. This makes the costs per pupil less than those applicable to state schools and to the recently established conventional private/independent schools.
4. The communities which are established must have a simple way of life, reflected in the food which is eaten and the clothes which are worn, as well as in the self help activities and domestic work.
5. These principles of operation will themselves determine the fees charged for tuition and boarding and make them lower, or considerably lower, than those in conventional private/independent schools, the great majority of which, unlike NEST schools receive a state subsidy.



6. The schools must be affordable to all sections of the community. To those who cannot afford the relatively low fees, assistance in the form of bursaries is given. To this end not less than 50% of the total fees charged in each school per annum are subsidised in the form of bursaries.

#### Principles of Selection.

1. Applications for admission are dealt with on the basis of equality of the sexes and of "first come, first served" within each of the four race groups in order to achieve a balanced enrolment.
2. A non verbal aptitude test, designed to test educability up to Matric level, provides the most equal opportunity for all candidates as an entrance test.
3. The criterion for selection of candidates will not be the highest results in the aptitude tests, but those who applied first and passed the test will be accepted first. The policy of "creaming off" is not used.
4. The highest quality of instruction and education will be given, with the aim of providing a special potential in the pupils when they graduate both as leaders and as citizens.

APPENDIX C  
UTHONGATHI  
STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE  
APRIL 1989

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS : 20 (100%)

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please provide the following information:

1. First home language : English 16, Zulu 3, Xhosa 1.
2. Other home languages : English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Gujerati, Sotho, Tamil, Hindi, Telugu.
3. Religion : Hindu 3, Anglican 4, Catholic 2, Other Christian 5, Other 6.
4. Qualifications presently held :
 

N/A :	1
Diplomas :	2
First degree and diploma :	8
Degree/Honours degree :	2
Degree/Honours degrees and diploma :	4
Masters degree and diploma :	3
5. Years of professional experience in teaching :  
 Average 10.00 years.
 

1 - 5 years :	6
6 - 10 years :	6
11 - 15 years :	5
16 - 20 years :	3

B. QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is aimed at finding out your views on some aspects of Uthongathi. The statements that follow are not necessarily 'correct'. They have been written in a positive or negative form so that no regular pattern of answers is likely. Please read the statements and answer headings very carefully indeed. Please then respond frankly to each of the statements by placing a cross (X) in the relevant column to show your level of agreement or disagreement with the statement as it is written. Where appropriate, please briefly explain your response to each statement in the space provided below it.

## KEY TO THE RESPONSE ITEMS DERIVED FROM THE LIKERT SCALE:

- A. STRONGLY AGREE
- B. AGREE
- C. UNDECIDED
- D. DISAGREE
- E. STRONGLY DISAGREE

Replies are displayed as percentages under each response item.

Key to analysis of staff responses to each question:

- (a) Findings from the statistical analysis of responses.
- (b) General comments.

1. When teaching, I do not take into account the cultural backgrounds of my students.      A      B      C      D      E  
 20,0   15,0   0,0   50,0   15,0 %
- (a) There are significant sectors of support for, and against, the statement, with no indecision. The bias is towards disagreement with the statement.
- (b) "Its basic to school philosophy!"  
 "I try, but sometimes forget."  
 "So many concepts based on Western culture."  
 "We need to give careful explanations. It depends on the subject."  
 "Select appropriate books."
2. During appropriate lessons I try to enable my students to better understand and respect the cultures of other students.      A      B      C      D      E  
 50,0   15,0   25,0   10,0   0,0 %
- (a) There is strong support for the statement, with some indecision and minority disagreement.
- (b) "Vital. We do encourage respect for cultures."  
 "Set a variety of readings."  
 "Discussions are useful."  
 "Use the library, literature and films to explore cultures."
3. At Uthongathi the assimilation of students into the wider South African society with its Western industrial culture takes priority over the enculturation of students into distinct groups.      A      B      C      D      E  
 25,0   65,0   5,0   5,0   0,0 %
- (a) There is considerable support for the statement, with minority indecision or disagreement.

- (b) " 'Wider society' is an uncertain concept."  
 "We certainly don't acculturate them into groups."  
 "An amalgamation is created."  
 "We consider norms of both West and East. A synthesis emerges."
4. The learning experiences created in my classroom are positively extended and enriched by the presence of students from different cultures.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|------|-----|-------|
|  | 55,0 | 25,0 | 15,0 | 5,0 | 0,0 % |
- (a) Staff predominantly agreed with the statement, although a few were undecided or in disagreement.  
 (b) "Some subjects are not affected at all. Others are greatly enriched."  
 "Challenge to negative stereotyping."  
 "Children explain to each other."
5. Serious instructional problems arise from teaching students with different cultural heritages together in the same classroom.
- |  | A   | B   | C   | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
|  | 5,0 | 5,0 | 5,0 | 50,0 | 35,0 % |
- (a) There is strong disagreement with the statement, with minimal dissension.  
 (b) "Language (English) problems in the classroom."  
 "Communication is the main problem."  
 "There are very few problems other than language."
6. The practice of different religions in not encouraged at Uthongathi.
- |  | A   | B   | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 0,0 | 0,0 | 15,0 | 50,0 | 35,0 % |
- (a) There is considerable disagreement with the statement, with a measure of indecision.  
 (b) " They can attend their own churches."  
 "90% of pupils are Christians."  
 "Interdenominational services."  
 "Cross-cultural R.E. course."
7. I accept students of different races and cultures as equal in worth and status.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 90,0 | 10,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 % |
- (a) Staff overwhelmingly agreed with the statement.  
 (b) "Some pupils, however, seem to consider white staff superior."  
 "I think that all staff do."  
 "I am not prejudiced."

8. I do not favour the discussion of controversial topics dealing with race or culture in my classroom.
- |  | A   | B   | C   | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
|  | 0,0 | 5,0 | 5,0 | 40,0 | 50,0 % |
- (a) There is obvious disagreement with the statement, with minority dissension.
- (b) "Essential: they need to voice opinions."  
"Need honest discussions."  
"Encourage a confrontation with reality."
9. Students of different races mix in harmony at Uthongathi.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|------|-----|-------|
|  | 60,0 | 25,0 | 10,0 | 0,0 | 5,0 % |
- (a) Staff strongly supported the statement, most perceiving students of different races to mix in harmony at Uthongathi. Disagreement was minimal.
- (b) "I have never encountered problems."  
"Some typical 'youth' problems, however."  
"Not a question of race."  
"Some new pupils do take time."  
"Some cultural grouping."  
"Some racial or language cliques."
10. Racial differences are sources of antagonism amongst the staff of Uthongathi.
- |  | A   | B   | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 5,0 | 5,0 | 15,0 | 25,0 | 50,0 % |
- (a) Despite some indecision, the tendency is strongly towards disagreement with the statement.
- (b) "Not within my experience."  
"All are here for the same reason."  
"Personality clashes - yes! Racial, no."  
"Some cliques have formed."
11. Merit should be the sole criterion for the appointment of staff to the school.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D    | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|------|-------|
|  | 70,0 | 15,0 | 0,0 | 15,0 | 0,0 % |
- (a) Despite a measure of disagreement, the statement is powerfully supported.
- (b) "Need to consider whole person."  
"Perhaps proficiencies and academic (ability) with understanding of basic philosophy."  
"Merit is ideal, but we do need a mix."
12. The staff at Uthongathi tend to discriminate against students from poorer families.
- |  | A   | B   | C   | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
|  | 0,0 | 0,0 | 5,0 | 10,0 | 85,0 % |

(a) There is very powerful disagreement with the statement.

(b) "All are treated alike."

"We do not know the financial position of pupils.

"Some colour discrimination too, perhaps?"

"The staff usually help if there are disadvantages."

13. I support the social philosophy of Uthongathi.	A	B	C	D	E
	70,0	25,0	0,0	0,0	5,0 %

(a) Staff are emphatic in their support for the social philosophy of Uthongathi. There is powerful agreement with the statement.

(b) "The only solution for S.A."

"Mind-opening for outsiders."

"Its the main reason I am here."

14. The curriculum of Uthongathi is too Euro-centric and should be more Africanised.	A	B	C	D	E
	5,0	10,0	25,0	50,0	10,0 %

(a) Despite considerable indecision and some agreement, the tendency is firmly towards disagreement with the statement.

(b) "Must adapt to Euro-centrism."

"They need a "world" perspective."

"Find a balance: don't go overboard."

"Not easy to do."

"Some Africanisation is already evident."

15. High academic standards are being maintained at Uthongathi	A	B	C	D	E
	30,0	50,0	10,0	10,0	0,0 %

(a) Staff overwhelmingly agreed with the statement, although a minority remained undecided or in disagreement with the statement.

(b) "We all demand high standards."

"Standards are hampered by language. We need a primary school."

"The standards compare with any other private school."

16. Uthongathi should offer subjects on the Standard Grade as an alternative to Higher Grade, in order to accommodate less able students.	A	B	C	D	E
	45,0	25,0	15,0	10,0	5,0 %

(a) There is considerable support for the offering of subjects on the Standard Grade, with some indecision or disagreement.

(b) "Capabilities do vary greatly."

"We need to acknowledge various abilities."

"Standard Grade for extreme cases only."

17. 'Self-help' is not taken seriously by the students of Uthongathi.	A	B	C	D	E	
	5,0	5,0	15,0	65,0	10,0	%

(a) The tendency is firmly towards disagreement with the statement, although some indecision is evident, and even a measure of agreement.

(b) "It is strongly emphasised."

"Some are very good, some not."

"Varies greatly. Depends on home background."

"The students are neutral about self-help."

18. Community service is not taken seriously by the students of Uthongathi.	A	B	C	D	E	
	5,0	5,0	20,0	50,0	20,0	%

(a) Despite a measure of indecision and agreement, staff tend predominately to disagree with the statement.

(b) "Some compulsion is used."

"Pupil attitudes vary greatly.

Some make very genuine efforts.

"Staff don't get involved enough."

19. Students at Uthongathi are positively encouraged to develop a compassionate social conscience.	A	B	C	D	E	
	40,0	50,0	5,0	5,0	0,0	%

(a) There is powerful support for the statement, with minority dissension.

(b) "Central to school philosophy."

"The general school atmosphere helps."

"Its an important aspect of philosophy."

20. The moral code relating to 'right' and 'wrong' conduct held by the school administration is generally accepted and obeyed by all students.	A	B	C	D	E	
	30,0	45,0	10,0	15,0	0,0	%

(a) Despite strong support for the statement, indecision and disagreement are evident.

(b) "Many reminders are given."

"Some children enjoy freedom and respond well."

"Students are made to understand reasons for punishment."

"Some ideas (physical contact) are old-fashioned."

21.	The school is <u>not</u> doing enough to promote thinking skills leading to independent, analytical, critical thought.	A	B	C	D	E	
		10,0	5,0	0,0	45,0	40,0	%

(a) There is powerful disagreement with the statement, with minority dissention.

(b) "We are all trying to move away from rote learning."

"There is plenty of reinforcement."

"Pupils are given much initiative."

"We use research and problem solving."

22.	I adjust my teaching methods and materials to accommodate the English language deficiencies of certain students."	A	B	C	D	E	
		35,0	50,0	5,0	5,0	5,0	%

(a) Most staff agreed with the statement, often strongly.

(b) "I speak more carefully."

"Repeat. Go over basics."

"Remediation needed in Std. 5, 6, 7. O.K. by Std 8."

"Unlock thought processes by means of language."

"One has to adjust. There is no choice."

23.	The mastery of English by students whose home language is not English is the most serious 'learning' problem' at Uthongathi.	A	B	C	D	E	
		30,0	45,0	5,0	20,0	0,0	%

(a) Despite a significant measure of disagreement, most staff members consider the mastery of English as a second language to be the most serious learning problem at Uthongathi.

(b) "It was bad at the beginning."

"Improving. Needs 2-3 years for some pupils to overcome problems."

"Maths is also a problem for some."

"Consider the home background."

24.	The multi-cultural approach of Uthongathi is a <u>less</u> desirable mode of schooling than the separate education of groups with distinct cultural heritages.	A	B	C	D	E	
		5,0	5,0	5,0	15,0	70,0	%



- (a) The powerful tendency towards disagreement with the statement reveals support for the multi-cultural approach of Uthongathi, in comparison with schooling that separates cultural groups.
- (b) "It bridges gaps."  
 "We have not yet had much impact on society."  
 "Society must change for us to have any impact."
25. A single system of education is desirable for South Africa.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E    |   |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|------|---|
|  | 70,0 | 20,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 10,0 | % |
- (a) Despite minority dissension, staff overwhelmingly supported the statement.
- (b) "Only of value to those who can cope."  
 "Yes, but with flexibility."  
 "It is long overdue."

### C. GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Concerning which general features of Uthongathi are you most positive?
- "The relaxed, friendly and genial atmosphere."  
 "Pupils are well behaved, courteous, honest, open."  
 "High standards and enquiring minds."  
 "Community service and self-help."  
 "Wide curriculum. Life skills."  
 "Interpersonal relations. There is no racism."  
 "Genuine solutions are sought at staff meetings."  
 "Children must assume responsibility for their actions."  
 "No school uniform. There is individuality."  
 "There is a positive, corporate spirit."
2. Concerning which general features of Uthongathi are you most negative?
- "The poor background of some entrants who had an inferior education previously."  
 "Staff and pupil cliques."  
 "Punishment is too negative."  
 "Lack of commitment to extra-murals of some students and staff."  
 "Some pupils are overburdened with activities."  
 "We need closer attention by admin. to staff views."  
 "Pupils are not sufficiently exposed by staff to the outside world."  
 "Some staff don't follow the self-help ethic themselves."  
 "Decision-making rather autocratic."

APPENDIX D  
UTHONGATHI  
STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE  
APRIL 1989

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS : 208 (96.30%)

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION.

Please answer the following questions.

1. What is your main home language?

Result

<u>Language</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
English	157	75,5
Zulu	38	18,3
Sotho	5	2,4
Xhosa	5	2,4
Afrikaans	1	0,5
N/A	2	1,0
	<u>208</u>	<u>100,0</u>

(Corrected)

2. What is your religion?

Result

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Christian (Not Specified)	56	26,9
Hindu	43	20,7
Catholic	34	16,3
Anglican	23	11,0
Agnostic/Athiest	10	4,8
N/A	10	4,8
Tamil	9	4,3
Methodist	7	3,4
Moslem	6	2,9
Presbyterian	4	1,9
Jewish	2	1,0
Other	4	1,9
	<u>208</u>	<u>100,0</u>

(Corrected)

## B. QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is aimed at finding out your views on some aspects of Uthongathi. The Statements that follow are not necessarily 'correct'. They have been written in a positive or negative form so that no regular pattern of answers is likely. Please read the statements and answer headings very carefully indeed, and ask your teacher to explain if you are unsure. Please respond honestly and openly to each statement, by placing a cross (X) in the relevant column to show your level of agreement or disagreement with the statement as it is written.

Where possible, use the space following each question to explain why you chose a particular answer.

### KEY TO RESPONSE ITEMS DERIVED FROM THE LIKERT SCALE:

- A. STRONGLY AGREE.
- B. AGREE.
- C. UNDECIDED.
- D. DISAGREE.
- E. STRONGLY DISAGREE.

### Key to analysis of students' responses to each question:

- (a) Findings from statistical analysis of responses.
- (b) General comments.

Replies are displayed as percentages under each item.

1.	My teachers are generally positive about the cultural backgrounds of all their students.	A	B	C	D	E	
		11,5	51,4	31,3	04,8	01,0	%
	(a)	While most students agreed that their teachers were generally positive about the cultural background of all of their students, a significant percentage was undecided.					
	(b)	"There is usually openness and honesty about culture." "Its not outwardly shown, but they seem positive." "Everyone's culture is respected, as stated in the ethics ( <u>sic</u> ) of N.E.S.T." "Some are sceptical about certain traditions: e.g. Zulu tribes." "Some are not too interested." "Some people seem 'out' in subjects like History, but it can't be helped."					
2.	Lessons in appropriate subjects help other students to better understand my home culture.	A	B	C	D	E	
		25,0	48,5	18,3	8,2	0,0	%

- (a) There was a predominance of agreement with the statement, despite some indecision.
- (b) "Comparative Religion and Zulu help us to understand cultures."  
 "History helps me to understand cultures. Drama too."  
 "I learn about cultures after class time."  
 "I lack a culture of my own: well, culture in the sense that I know."
3. Lessons in appropriate subjects often help me to better understand the home cultures of other students.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|------|-----|-------|
|  | 22,1 | 56,7 | 17,3 | 3,9 | 0,0 % |
- (a) There was considerable agreement with the statement, despite significant indecision.
- (b) "It makes it a lot easier for me to understand why certain people do certain things. Some cultures are so strange!"  
 "We air our views on culture during class discussions."  
 "I have learnt a lot about Zulu and Indian cultures."  
 "Not many lessons have helped."  
 "I have learnt about Indians, not whites or coloureds."
4. I have difficulty in adjusting to home life after returning from school.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D    | E      |
|--|------|------|------|------|--------|
|  | 10,1 | 11,5 | 12,5 | 33,2 | 32,7 % |
- (a) A significant spread of replies is evident, with a bias towards disagreement with the statement.
- (b) "We mix freely at home. There is no discrimination."  
 "My friends, no matter what race, are the same as my other friends" (sic).  
 "We are isolated, a different world."  
 "I have difficulties when people talk violently about other cultures in front of me."  
 "There are two different environments and I have to adjust to township life and another language."
5. No member of the teaching staff shares my cultural heritage.
- |  | A   | B   | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 3,9 | 4,3 | 22,6 | 38,5 | 30,7 % |
- (a) While most students disagreed with the statement, many remained undecided and several agreed.
- (b) "There are teachers of every race and culture."  
 "There are several teachers of my cultural background."  
 "There is no coloured teacher: all are from the other three races (sic)."  
 "They sometimes expect me to act like whites or Indians." (Zulu respondent).

- |    |  |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|----|--|------|------|------|-----|-----|---|
| 6. | My education at Uthongathi will enable me to feel confident in the wider (Western industrial) South African society.   | A    | B    | C    | D   | E   |   |
|    |  | 43,3 | 40,9 | 13,0 | 2,8 | 0,0 | % |
|    | (a) There was strong agreement with the statement, with minority indecision or disagreement.   |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|    | (b) "I'll feel at home in a multi-racial work area."<br>"The high standards here will help."<br>"I'll mix confidently with other races."<br>"Society, yes: but I'm not sure about the industrial bit."<br>"I've never felt comfortable in Western industrial cities."<br>"I fear rejection from other people, coming from a multi-racial environment." |      |      |      |     |     |   |
- 
- |    |  |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|----|--|------|------|------|-----|-----|---|
| 7. | Different religious beliefs are accepted and encouraged at Uthongathi.   | A    | B    | C    | D   | E   |   |
|    |  | 41,8 | 38,0 | 14,4 | 3,9 | 1,9 | % |
|    | (a) There was significant support for the statement, with minority indecision or disagreement.   |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|    | (b) "Respect and tolerance are our motto."<br>"Accepted, yes: encouraged, I'm not so sure!"<br>"Traditional religious food is even served at meals."<br>"We learn about Buddhism, Hinduism, Mohammedanism and Christianity."<br>"We seem to be getting a dominance of Christianity."<br>"Its difficult to encourage <u>all</u> beliefs." |      |      |      |     |     |   |
- 
- |    |  |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|----|--|------|------|------|-----|-----|---|
| 8. | My teachers accept students from different races and cultures as equal in status and worth.  | A    | B    | C    | D   | E   |   |
|    |  | 45,2 | 36,5 | 13,9 | 2,9 | 1,5 | % |
|    | (a) Students tended to agree, often strongly, with the statement. There was a measure of indecision.   |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|    | (b) "We don't recognise colour, its the face we look at."<br>"They seem interested in our cultures. Race never arises."<br>"One or two teachers are still getting used to the system." |      |      |      |     |     |   |
- 
- |    |  |     |      |      |      |      |   |
|----|--|-----|------|------|------|------|---|
| 9. | Controversial topics dealing with culture or race <u>cannot</u> be freely discussed in the classrooms. | A   | B    | C    | D    | E    |   |
|    |  | 3,9 | 13,5 | 18,3 | 37,5 | 26,8 | % |
|    | (a) While some students were undecided or in agreement with the statement, most disagreed with it.     |     |      |      |      |      |   |

- (b) "There are the most open and heated discussions, leaving everyone fulfilled, knowing they have learnt."  
 "I have experienced quite a few free discussions on race and colour."  
 "There must be valid statements."  
 "People are proud of their race and culture and discuss it, while others show respect for what they believe or do."  
 "Some pupils do get offended, but our teachers have explained the reason for discussions - to build awareness."  
 "Some people do get a bit defensive."  
 "Some controversial topics are soon crushed."
10. Students are often prejudiced against by teachers, because of their race.      A      B      C      D      E
- |  |     |     |      |      |        |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 1,0 | 2,9 | 15,8 | 31,3 | 49,0 % |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
- (a) Disagreement with the statement is predominant, although a number of students remain undecided.  
 (b) "I have never encountered racism."  
 "It has never, ever happened at Uthongathi."  
 "Some pupils think black teachers may not be well-trained, yet they are absolutely brilliant!" (Misread the question.)
11. Students of different races mix in harmony at Uthongathi.      A      B      C      D      E
- |  |      |      |     |     |       |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 51,9 | 36,1 | 8,1 | 3,9 | 0,0 % |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
- (a) A high level of support is evident for the statement, with minority dissension.  
 (b) "You should see for yourself."  
 "There is a great feeling of belonging."  
 "They accept each other and don't condemn, but don't mix in 'harmony'.  
 "Some still tend to associate with their own group, especially newcomers."  
 "Some black girls make 'clicks'" (sic).
12. Staff members are generally prejudiced against students from poorer families.      A      B      C      D      E
- |  |     |     |      |      |        |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 2,9 | 2,9 | 11,0 | 28,4 | 54,8 % |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
- (a) A considerable majority of students consider the statement to be invalid, yet some remain undecided and a few are in agreement.  
 (b) "Absolute rubbish, as far as I know."  
 "It never happens. No one knows who is rich or poor."  
 "The poor are offered bursaries."  
 "Whether you come from a squatter camp or are a millionaire, you are treated the same here."  
 "Some staff members will not touch children from influential families."

13. Girls are treated by staff members as lower in status and worth than boys.
- |  | A   | B   | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 5,8 | 4,3 | 23,6 | 36,5 | 29,8 % |
- (a) While most students disagreed with the statement or were undecided, a very small group agreed.
- (b) "We are all one, but girls are taken more care of."  
 "My dear fellow, its exactly the opposite!"  
 "Boys often complain that the girls are preferred."  
 "Boys treat the girls as lower in status, not the staff."  
 "Only as a joke! Staff usually side with the girls."  
 "Girls get blamed if sports teams lose."  
 "One or two staff members are a bit chauvenistic."
14. No help is given to students who experience difficulty with the language of instruction (English).
- |  | A   | B   | C   | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
|  | 1,0 | 1,0 | 5,8 | 20,6 | 71,6 % |
- (a) The disagreement with this statement is overwhelming.
- (b) "E.S.L. arrangements are very important."  
 "A concerted effort is made to ensure that students are helped."  
 "Teachers work very hard to help."  
 "When I came in 1987, I could not communicate. Now I do."  
 No adverse comment was recorded, despite the statistical evidence.
15. Students with learning difficulties are given much useful assistance to overcome the difficulties.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|------|-----|-------|
|  | 26,4 | 44,7 | 24,0 | 3,4 | 1,5 % |
- (a) The statement is very well supported, despite a significant measure of uncertainty evident in student responses.
- (b) "Plenty of extra tutorials are arranged by the teachers."  
 "Teachers help immensely."  
 "Teachers do give extra lessons."  
 "Sometimes problems are not spotted and students struggle."  
 "You are expected to overcome problems in your spare time."
16. The moral code (relating to 'right' and 'wrong' conduct) held by the school administration is generally accepted and obeyed by all students.
- |  | A   | B    | C    | D    | E     |
|--|-----|------|------|------|-------|
|  | 7,7 | 37,0 | 34,1 | 17,3 | 3,9 % |

- (a) A considerable spread of replies is evident, with significant levels of agreement and disagreement.
- (b) "99% of the law is obeyed ever single day."  
 "Rules are generally strictly obeyed."  
 "There are a few exceptions when some students disobey the rules."  
 "Most people realise they are in charge of themselves and will feel guilty when they do something wrong."  
 "As in all schools, certain rules are broken."  
 "Admin. should not justify by public opinion but by moral grounds alone."  
 "Some rules are dictated by a fear of the public."  
 "Some rules are stupid and cynical."
17. Community service and the self-help programme are valuable aspects of my education.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 39,4 | 46,2 | 8,2 | 5,2 | 1,0 % |
- (a) The tendency is strongly towards agreement.
- (b) "The world is bigger than my comfortable home."  
 "I am learning to be unselfish: self help is very useful."  
 "It helps (me) to understand the problems of people from different social classes."  
 "I won't work with the community, so what's the use?"  
 "I don't see the need for community service."
18. Sport is a valuable aspect of my education.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|------|-----|-------|
|  | 39,9 | 32,7 | 17,3 | 9,1 | 1,0 % |
- (a) A considerable majority of students agreed with the statement, often strongly. There was a measure of indecision and minority disagreement.
- (b) "I learn the real meaning of sportsmanship."  
 "Its just as important as my academic career."  
 "Meeting other students on the sportsfield is valuable."  
 "It won't help me get a degree, or pass matric."  
 "I don't enjoy being forced into sport."  
 "We play against too many white schools."
19. There are not enough subject choices in the curriculum at Uthongathi.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D    | E      |
|--|------|------|------|------|--------|
|  | 12,5 | 16,4 | 21,6 | 32,2 | 17,3 % |
- (a) Replies were fairly evenly spread, with significant levels of agreement and disagreement. The bias is towards disagreement with the statement.
- (b) "We have all, and more, of the choices other schools have."  
 "The choice is really very good."  
 "Being a new school, one would not expect the amount



already (available)."

"There are not enough teachers for a wider choice."

"Yes, but the fees will skyrocket."

(Additional subjects requested included Business Economics, Electronics, German, Latin, Technical Drawing, Typing.)

20. Being educated with students of different cultures and races is an enriching experience.	A	B	C	D	E
	63,9	26,0	8,2	1,4	0,5 %

(a) Students responded very positively to the statement, with a very small measure of dissension.

(b) "We are developing a common culture."

"I'll never regret going to this school."

"I've learnt things here I never would have learnt at a government school."

No negative response was recorded.

### C. GENERAL

1. Please describe and explain those things about Uthongathi that you think are very positive.

The high standards (and breadth of education offered) were praised:

"The standards are higher than in other schools. Its tough going."

"A broad education: Not just text book. It teaches about life."

Students were also impressed by the ethos of support and helpfulness:

"Everybody cares for everybody else. We care about each other's feelings."

"The teachers are so friendly. They are so helpful."

"Teachers and pupils co-operate hand in hand."

"There is a lot of friendship. The students are really nice people."

Many students specifically mentioned the mix of races:

"Nobody worries about the colour of your skin."

"Unlike other private schools, one race doesn't dominate."

"There is general racial harmony."

"The atmosphere is always happy and friendly and there is no discrimination."

The policy of responsible freedom was also approved:

"Teachers don't spoonfeed."

"Its a stunning, relaxed atmosphere."

"There is a great system of trust."

2. Please describe and explain those things about Uthongathi that you think are very negative.

The hard work was often mentioned:

"Up to seven tests a week."

"Not enough time to hang around with friends."

"Projects are our daily bread."

"Homework too heavy: it ruins weekends. Projects ruin holidays."

The school rules were considered to be too strict:

"They are narrow-minded regarding physical contact."

"Too many laws. Rules are getting stricter each day."

"Some very silly rules. No vests, slops, earrings."

"Girls are expected to be blue virgins."

Too much note was taken of the opinion of the outside world:

"We go overboard about the impression we give to the public."

There was too little socialising:

"Boys and girls should mix more, since we do have friends of the opposite sex."

"We don't get as much freedom as we'd like."

"There are few weekend activities. Kids get frustrated."

The lifestyle was too Spartan:

"No tuck in dorms."

The administration was sometimes too autocratic:

"In spite of the say the students are supposed to have, the Head or Vice (Principal) sometimes clamp down."

One Zulu respondent worried about attitudes:

"Some attitudes are a bit patronising."

APPENDIX E  
UTHONGATHI  
PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE  
APRIL 1989

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS 146 (69.2%)

A. QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is aimed at finding out your views on some aspects of Uthongathi. The statements that follow are not necessarily 'correct'. They have been written in a positive or negative form so that no regular pattern of answers is likely. Please read the statements and answer headings at the top of the columns very carefully indeed. Please respond frankly and openly to each statement by placing a cross (X) in the relevant column to show your level of agreement or disagreement with the statement as it is written.

Where possible, use the space following each question to explain why you chose a particular answer.

KEY TO RESPONSE ITEMS DERIVED FROM THE LIKERT SCALE:

- A. STRONGLY AGREE.
- B. AGREE.
- C. UNDECIDED.
- D. DISAGREE.
- E. STRONGLY DISAGREE.

Key to analysis of parents' responses to each question:

- (a) Findings from the statistical analysis.
- (b) General comments.

1.	I am <u>not</u> well informed about the social and educational aims of Uthongathi.	A	B	C	D	E	
		0,0	4,1	7,5	55,5	32,9	%

- (a) A substantial majority of parents disagreed with the statement that they were not well informed about the social and educational aims of Uthongathi. The obviously perceive themselves to be well informed, with few dissensions.
- (b) "We are well informed."  
 "The newsletter and 'Canefields Chronicle' student magazine are excellent."  
 "Its fine now, but at first I learnt more from newspapers than from the school."

"The social and cultural aims have been well identified."  
 "It was initially well explained, but more updates would help."  
 "I've not had much information."  
 "They keep changing."

2. The South African government should offer non-racial, multi-cultural schooling as an option open to all.

	A	B	C	D	E
	73,3	22,6	2,7	1,4	0,0 %

(a) An overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the South African government should offer non-racial, multi-cultural education as an option open to all.

(b) "As an option, yes. Not to be forced."  
 "We must build better cultural understanding."  
 "Its part of a new trend in S.A."  
 "Its a world trend."  
 "Parents should have a choice. Avoid domination."  
 "It provides a basis for democracy."  
 "Only solution to our educational problems."

3. Uthongathi should offer Standard Grade for pupils who cannot cope with the Higher Grade requirements for Matric.

	A	B	C	D	E
	9,6	34,9	25,3	17,8	12,3 %

(a) Despite a tendency towards agreement, considerable indecision (and a wide spread of replies) was recorded. Many parents disagreed with the statement. A contentious issue.

(b) "We must prepare people for tertiary education."  
 "No. We must create tomorrows leaders."  
 "We must equip them for tertiary entrance."  
 "There should be no compromise on standards."  
 "Only if there are enough teachers to cope."  
 "But not at the expense of challenging brighter pupils."  
 "Its necessary because abilities vary."  
 "All schools should offer various grades."  
 "Not all pupils can cope with higher grade."  
 "We must accommodate clever and not so clever pupils."

4. I do not support the use of a school uniform at Uthongathi.

	A	B	C	D	E
	20,5	32,9	25,3	25,3	12,3 %

(a) The tendency is towards agreement, with some indecision and a strong counter-lobby of disagreement. A contentious issue.

- (b) "I have a conservative view of uniforms."  
 "We should wear something that says 'I belong'."  
 "Creates a sense of pride. An identity."  
 "Uniforms are a great leveller."  
 "It would promote a bond."  
 "What about additional expenses?"  
 "A partial uniform is a sensible compromise."  
 "For outings and special occasions only."  
 "Costs are prohibitive."  
 "A neat, basic going-out outfit."  
 "Yes, when other schools are present."  
 "Its essential for special occasions."  
 "Its contrary to the ethics of the school."
5. In accordance with its philosophy, Uthongathi should avoid developing an elite image.
- |  | A    | B    | C    | D    | E     |
|--|------|------|------|------|-------|
|  | 34,9 | 37,7 | 11,0 | 13,7 | 2,7 % |
- (a) A considerable majority agreed with the statement, some strongly. There was minority indecision or disagreement.  
 (b) "We are there for education, not prestige."  
 "We are ordinary people, not an elitist society."  
 "It may be becoming elitist. The fees are very high."  
 "All private schools are elite. Can underprivileged children really keep up anyway?"  
 "I'd like my child to fit into our society."  
 "It need not be elite. It must be relevant."  
 "We don't want egoism. We want tolerance."  
 "We need 'men for all seasons'."
6. My child is treated as equal in dignity and worth to all other pupils in the school.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 50,7 | 38,4 | 6,2 | 4,8 | 0,0 % |
- (a) There was overwhelming support for the statement, with a very small sector of uncertainty or disagreement.  
 (b) "The principal pays special attention to this."  
 "Any visitor would note the equal treatment."  
 "One or two teachers seem to pay more attention to some groups."  
 "She does not complain of prejudice."  
 "He loves school immensely and wouldn't miss a moment of it."  
 "My child sometimes feels day pupils are left out."
7. My child's religion is not sufficiently encouraged at Uthongathi.
- |  | A   | B    | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|------|------|------|--------|
|  | 4,8 | 19,9 | 23,3 | 41,1 | 11,0 % |

- (a) A majority disagreed with the statement. Uncertainty and concern were nevertheless strong.
- (b) "Only Catholics and Anglicans are catered for."  
 "All religions seem to be encouraged."  
 "He's learning a lot about many religions."  
 "Its mainly up to the home."  
 "Her religious background is simply outnumbered."  
 "Only the peripheries are touched on."  
 "I don't agree with debates on Satanism."  
 "Our children are taken to services."
8. My child's language is not sufficiently encouraged at Uthongathi.
- |  | A   | B    | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|------|------|------|--------|
|  | 0,0 | 20,5 | 10,3 | 37,7 | 31,5 % |
- (a) Approximately two thirds of the parents considered their child's language to be sufficiently encouraged, while the remainder were uncertain or unconvinced.
- (b) "There are just too many languages. Impossible."  
 "We need Tamil classes twice weekly."  
 "English is taken too seriously."  
 "His spoken English is deteriorating."
9. I support the policy of maintaining a reasonable balance in numbers between the races at Uthongathi.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 57,5 | 35,6 | 2,1 | 2,1 | 2,7 % |
- (a) A very strong majority agreed with the balance of races, often very strongly. Disagreement was minimal.
- (b) "She is in a minority. A balance is essential."  
 "Only as affirmative action, or else it is racist."  
 "This is also to be seen as discriminatory."  
 "It should be by population ratio."  
 "Its fine. No group can dominate."  
 "Yes, but we need students of high calibre."
10. Uthongathi does not give enough emphasis to my child's cultural heritage in the classroom.
- |  | A   | B   | C    | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
|  | 2,1 | 8,9 | 26,0 | 49,3 | 13,7 % |
- (a) Most parents were in disagreement with the statement, despite considerable uncertainty on the issue.
- (b) "Uthongathi is doing a fine job, but we need more about Zulu heroes."  
 "Children must respect each others' cultures."  
 "All cultural heritages are taken seriously."  
 "The classroom is not the right place for cultural heritage."  
 "There would be chaos if it had to be considered."

- |     |  |      |      |     |     |     |   |
|-----|--|------|------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| 11. | I favour my child becoming informed about, and sensitive to, cultural heritages not his own. | A    | B    | C   | D   | E   |   |
|     |  | 35,6 | 51,4 | 8,9 | 4,1 | 0,0 | % |
- (a) There was strong support for the statement, with minimal disagreement.
- (b) "It tends to build understanding."  
 "Agreed, but not at the sacrifice of truth."  
 "A main reason for her to attend Uthongathi."  
 "Do it informally so as to not highlight another difference."  
 "It eliminates bias and affords appreciation."  
 "One of the main points in having a school like this."  
 "This is what Uthongathi is all about."
- 
- |     |  |      |      |      |      |     |   |
|-----|--|------|------|------|------|-----|---|
| 12. | A balance of races should be considered when appointing teachers to the staff. | A    | B    | C    | D    | E   |   |
|     |  | 30,1 | 27,4 | 10,3 | 24,0 | 8,2 | % |
- (a) A majority supported the statement, although disagreement was significant. There was a quite marked spread of responses on this apparently contentious issue.
- (b) "We need the best teachers regardless of race."  
 "Merit alone. Best teacher. No affirmative action."  
 "We need talent, ability, loyalty and dedication."  
 "Don't compromise education by trying for a balance."  
 "No tokenism: the teaching might suffer."
- 
- |     |   |      |      |      |     |     |   |
|-----|---|------|------|------|-----|-----|---|
| 13. | I am generally satisfied with the standard of teaching at Uthongathi. | A    | B    | C    | D   | E   |   |
|     |   | 20,5 | 52,7 | 17,1 | 9,6 | 0,0 | % |
- (a) There was strong support for the statement, with some indecision and minority disagreement.
- (b) "It is the first school my son has attended that pushes his mental ability."  
 "Some mistakes have been made."  
 "Creative thinking is encouraged."  
 "My child's marks have improved in a single term."  
 "There could be stricter classroom control of students."
- 
- |     |   |     |      |     |      |     |   |
|-----|---|-----|------|-----|------|-----|---|
| 14. | I am not active in the affairs of Uthongathi. | A   | B    | C   | D    | E   |   |
|     |   | 3,5 | 48,6 | 5,5 | 35,6 | 6,8 | % |
- (a) Results were fairly evenly divided, between "active" and "inactive" parents. Few were undecided.

- (b) "I live 600 kms away."  
 "I do attend meetings, and express my concerns to staff."  
 "I take an active interest, but not on committees."  
 "I reside in Swaziland."  
 "I attend all parents' functions."
15. Self-help and community service are essential parts of my child's education.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 53,4 | 42,5 | 2,1 | 2,1 | 0,0 % |
- (a) Powerful support was recorded for self-help and community service as an essential part of the educational experience at Uthongathi.
- (b) "It creates compassion, understanding and involvement."  
 "Its my responsibility: not the school's."  
 "Yes, but vary them from year to year."  
 "We make independent and happy adults, to build the new S.A."
16. All four racial groups are equally represented on the Board and senior management structure of the school.
- |  | A   | B    | C    | D    | E     |
|--|-----|------|------|------|-------|
|  | 6,8 | 49,3 | 25,0 | 13,0 | 5,5 % |
- (a) A majority agreed that there was equal representation of all race groups, although disagreement and indecision were significant.
- (b) "No, but that's not the Board's fault!"  
 "Only one 'coloured' on the Board?"  
 "The coloured group does not seem to be represented."
17. Sport is of little importance to the education of my child.
- |  | A   | B   | C   | D    | E      |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|
|  | 4,1 | 6,2 | 2,1 | 50,7 | 37,0 % |
- (a) A majority of parents disagreed with the statement,, although there was a small pocket of agreement.
- (b) "Sport is essential to an all round education."  
 "There should not be an emphasis on winning alone."  
 "Learning to compete creatively, work as a team and keep fit are all important."  
 "Its a great social education."  
 "Sport is fundamental to my child's development."  
 "Less time on sport and more on education."  
 "Please don't over-emphasize it like in most schools."
18. I support the moral code that is implemented at Uthongathi.
- |  | A    | B    | C   | D   | E     |
|--|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|  | 33,6 | 54,1 | 9,6 | 2,7 | 0,0 % |



- (a) The moral code at Uthongathi was strongly supported, with little indecision.
- (b) "I do not subscribe to laxity and permissiveness."  
 "At school level - control is necessary."  
 "An absolute imperative."  
 "Students will need constant reminders."  
 "I do support the self-control and self discipline, without petty rules."  
 "A little more discipline is needed."  
 "I sometimes think it should be pushed more strongly."  
 "It could be made clearer."  
 "'No contact' is a strange ethic."

19. My child has serious and persistent academic problems.	A	B	C	D	E
	0,0	1,4	8,9	37,7	52,1 %

- (a) A strong majority considered their child to not have serious and persistent academic problems. A small minority was undecided.
- (b) "They have been sorted out."  
 "There are some problems, but not too serious."

20. Wherever possible, the school curriculum should focus more on South Africa than on Europe.	A	B	C	D	E
	11,0	32,9	21,2	22,6	12,3 %

- (a) Responses were widely spread, with a slight tendency towards agreement. There was a considerable measure of indecision or disagreement. The issue is contentious.
- (b) "Yes, but we must also keep a world perspective."  
 "Many South African issues are examined."  
 "One must not become introspective and biased."  
 "We are South Africans and part of the world."  
 "We must not be too parochial."  
 "We are part of a large planet too."  
 "Don't perpetuate colonial perceptions, but knowledge of the world is important."  
 "We need a blend."  
 "We are not in Europe, as many of the multiracial (sic) have tended to pretend."  
 "We are South Africans, after all."  
 "We need more international languages, like French and Latin."  
 "Our roots are here."

E. GENERAL QUESTIONS.

Please answer the general questions that follow.

In answering these general questions, you might consider such concerns as: the school philosophy and aims, buildings and equipment, fees and bursaries, finances, administration, the entrance tests, staffing, the academic curriculum, sport, community service, discipline, teaching, student affairs, remedials and academic support. Please provide fairly complete answers.

1. Please state your main reasons for sending you child to Uthongathi.

"A better quality of education, but also the philosophy and aims."

"Financial support was an important factor."

"I wanted my child to have a good, balanced education, with small classes."

"It appeared to be a good school, outside the apartheid structure."

"Uthongathi has a high-grade academic curriculum."

"There were very good student-teacher relations."

"The multi-racial, multi-cultural aspect was attractive."

"The school has a good staff and excellent skipper at the helm."

"Pupils would learn to mix with people from different cultural backgrounds."

"Good teaching in a relaxed atmosphere."

"Pupils would be treated as human beings, with dignity and respect."

"The school represented a normal society."

2. About what aspects of Uthongathi are you most positive?

"We produce no black Europeans, but people who are truly South African, with a world view of life: well-rounded people."

"It reflects the true South African situations in which my child will live and work."

"Facilities are good and the school is well equipped."

"It provides proof that people of different races, cultures and religions can live together happily, in harmony."

"Extra murals and community service."

"High academic standards."

"A wide range of subjects is offered."

"Thinking people are created in a relaxed atmosphere: no little boxes."

"Lessons focus on the South African reality."

"Children participate in democracy: they are responsible for their own actions."

3. About what aspects of Uthongathi are you most negative (critical)?

"There are too many preoccupations with outside opinion."

"There are no coloured teachers."

"Some children are overly familiar. No uniform has led to slackness."

"Expenses are increasing. The financial demands are accelerating."

"There is some formation of cliques and classes."

"A racially mixed staff means not all teachers are good."

"Can all teachers cope with Uthongathi's methods?"

"There is some friction between day scholars and boarders."

"Some students lack etiquette. They should be taught good manners."

"Some classes are too big. Thirty pupils. Its detrimental."

"The girls' cloakrooms and dormitories are very untidy."

"We need more parent-teacher contact."

4. What changes in policy, or new projects, do you suggest in order to further develop and enrich the school?

"Do represent coloured persons better."

"Keep expenses down. Don't drop bursary support."

"Weekends are boring for boarders. Surely parents can help."

"The principal has too much power."

"Bring in first aid, driving lessons and the growing of produce."

"We need more comprehensive progress reports."

"We need further enrichment programmes for bright pupils."

"My child could be the target of violence if he has a uniform."

"A good first batch of matrices is needed."

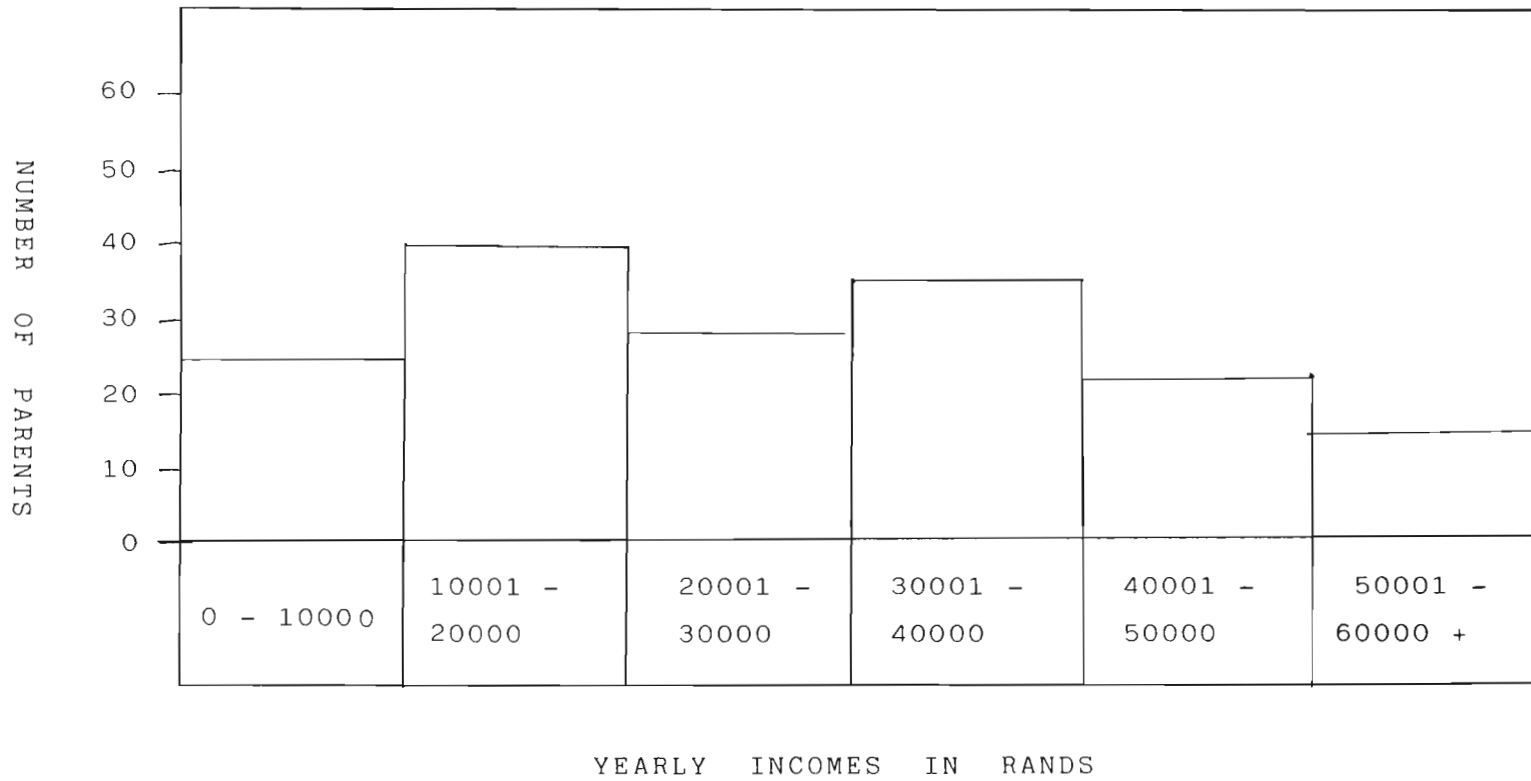
"Early career guidance is needed."

"We need a programme on human values (truth, peace, non-violence)."

"Treat parents more gently. They are a big problem in a dislocated society. Don't be defensively aggressive."

DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS' INCOMES FOR 1988

No = 158



UTHONGATHI SCHOOL - SCHOOL NUMBERS AS AT 19/1/89

	GIRLS					TOTAL	BOYS					TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL	TOTAL 5	TOTAL 6	TOTAL 7	TOTAL 8	TOTAL 9
	5	6	7	8	9		5	6	7	8	9							
BOARDERS																		
AFRICAN	5	5	8	6	3	27	2	5	6	7	2	22	49	7	10	14	13	5
COLOURED	0	2	1	3	1	7	4	2	2	7	4	19	26	4	4	3	10	5
INDIAN	2	3	1	1	1	8	0	5	2	4	1	12	20	2	8	3	5	2
WHITE	0	0	5	4	4	13	0	7	4	1	5	17	30	0	7	9	5	9
TOTAL BOARDERS	7	10	15	14	9	55	6	19	14	19	12	70	125	13	29	29	33	21
DAYPUPILS																		
AFRICAN	2	4	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	2	5	0	0	0
COLOURED	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	4	5	0	0	2	3	0
INDIAN	5	4	8	5	1	23	2	11	9	1	5	28	51	7	15	17	6	6
WHITE	1	4	5	5	2	17	1	3	2	2	3	11	28	2	7	7	7	5
TOTAL DAYPUPILS	8	12	13	11	3	47	3	15	13	5	8	44	91	11	22	26	16	11
GRAND TOTAL	15	22	28	25	12	102	9	34	27	24	20	114	216	24	51	55	49	32

SUMMARY

A/F = 33) 56 = 26%  
 A/M = 23)  
 C/F = 8) 31 = 14%  
 C/M = 23)  
 I/F = 31) 71 = 33%  
 I/M = 40)

W/F = 30) 58 = 27%  
 W/M = 28)

Female Board = 55) 125  
 Male Board = 70)  
 Female Day = 47)  
 Male Day = 44) 91  
 Total Females = 102  
 Total Males = 114

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