

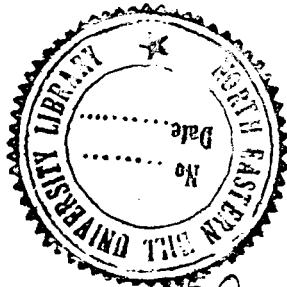
IMPORTANT DIRECTIVES
ON
ADMINISTRATION OF NEFA.

6 1967

DR. VERRIER ELWIN,
B. SHASTRI AND I. SIMON.

1967.

IMPORTANT DIRECTIVES
ON
ADMINISTRATION OF NEFA



El. Imp.

Edited by
DR VERRIER ELWIN,
B. SHASTRI AND I. SIMON

North-East Frontier Agency Administration
Shillong

September, 1967

NEFU, LIBRARY
Acc. No. 182204 182205 corrected By Bm 22/3/97
Acc. by. _____
Date _____
Class by _____
Sub Heading by _____
Enter by _____
Transcribed by _____

352.00954163
ELW

Published by Shri T. P. Khaund, Director of Information and Public Relations,
NEFA on behalf of North-East Frontier Agency Administration and printed
at Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd., Calcutta-9

INTRODUCTION



This volume includes many important directives issued from time to time by the NEFA Administration for the guidance of its officers serving locally in the Agency. Most of these directives are development-centred as is natural when we remember that prior to 1947 the tribal communities of NEFA received scant attention from the old regime. With the attainment of Independence, our national Government rightly discarded the former policy of leaving the tribes out of the Nation's schemes of development and replaced it by the more positive approach of giving to the long neglected tribal communities all the benefits that other sections of the Nation have for long enjoyed. The many administrators and technical experts that the Administration has since then sent out to the Agency have the responsibility of giving shape on the spot to this forward-looking policy of the Administration.

Believing as it does in the wisdom of 'making haste slowly' the Administration has rightly taken up the role of guide and counsellor to these officers to whom carefully thought-out instructions are regularly sent.

Needless to say, the importance of such directives was even more vital in the early days after the Administration had assumed full responsibility for tribal development. That was a period when extreme care had to be taken not to expose the local populations too suddenly to a new pattern of values but to relate all development programmes to existing tribal institutions; in other words, to persuade the tribes to accept voluntarily, and as their own, programmes now taken for granted by other sections of the Nation.

As the number of directives increased, the need was felt for a handy volume which would incorporate at any rate those instructions that laid down the Administration's policy in regard to the management of the tribal areas of NEFA.

The selection of the directives here included was mainly the work of Dr Verrier Elwin who also undertook their arrangement and edited the initial drafts. Unfortunately, before he could complete the work Dr Elwin died and the remaining task had to be taken up by the Philologist and the Assistant Philologist. Every effort was made to check the material with original records maintained by the Departments concerned.

It would not be possible, nor would it be necessary, to include in one volume all directives issued from the beginning. Rather more important are those instructions, basic in their content, that are intimately connected with the life and the psychology of the tribal communities.

If many of the directives appear to be simple and to deal with apparently elementary questions it will be remembered that the task taken up by the Administration for the development of the Agency itself started from very small beginnings; and, in the last analysis, perhaps it will be accepted that simplicity is the best guarantee against mistakes that could arise from ambiguity.

FOREWORD

The North-East Frontier Agency Administration has special responsibility for introducing social welfare work and other schemes to improve the economic condition of the people to raise their level to what obtains in the neighbouring areas. This special charter of the Administration calls for an understanding of the indigenous social patterns and a sympathetic approach towards the people's existing conditions of living. The special measures for the advancement of people must take place in the light of their traditions and cultural values. The Administration has to see that the process of change and cultural expansion does not overwhelm the people and in this respect, the NEFA Administration has acquired somewhat of a wardenship status. To discharge this, the Administration must draw its own special guidelines and policy so that the people's confidence and enthusiasm are stimulated to enter into the wider world of this country as equal citizens.

From the year 1954 or so, the Administration issued from time to time a number of directives to guide the Government staff in their duties and service to the people. Instructions and directives normally either get lost in the filing apparatus of Government offices or they become untraceable through the passage of years. It has been suggested to the Administration that important directives issued in the preceding years may be compiled in a book form to provide an easy reference. This compendium fulfils that purpose and includes instructions as have been issued up to the year 1962. If this book can answer the popular demand successfully it is intended to compile the instructions issued in subsequent years also in a similar compendium form.

Shillong,
The 16th September, 1965

(P. N. LUTHRA)
Adviser to the Governor of Assam



CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE THE THREE POLICIES	
I Introduction	1
II The Right Approach	4
III Assessment Review	7
CHAPTER TWO LAND	
I Settlement of Outside People in NEFA	10
II Use of Cultivable Land	10
III Acquisition of Land for Construction of Roads	12
IV Unnecessary Dispersion of Buildings	12
CHAPTER THREE FORESTS	
I Directive on Forest Policy	14
ANNEXURE 'A' Regulation IV of 1947 (The Sadiya Frontier Tract Jhum Land Regulation, 1947)	18
ANNEXURE 'B' Rules for the Protection of Village Jhum Land Forests and for Regulating the Working	24
II Hunting and Fishing	25
III Wild-Life Board	27
IV The Planting of Trees	28
CHAPTER FOUR AGRICULTURE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	
I Training of the Extension Staff in Agriculture in NEFA	33
A Letter to all Village-Level Workers Information in Connection with Production	35
II Questionnaire for Use in Inspecting the Work of VLWs	36
III Project Advisory Committees	37
IV Self-sufficiency in Food	39
V Development of Villages around the Headquarters and Administrative Centres	41
VI The Issue of Seeds	47
VII Selection and Procurement of Seeds within the Divisions of NEFA	49
VIII Trials and Demonstrations on Cultivators' Fields	50
IX Directive on Land Development Work	52
X Directive on Minor Irrigation Work	52

XI Subsidies for Minor Irrigation	55
XII Soil Conservation and Water Management	56
XIII Use of Chemical Fertilizers	57
XIV Live Fencing for Cultivation Fields	58
XV Potato Cultivation	60
XVI Cultivation of Banana in NEFA	62
XVII Pig-raising in NEFA	64
XVIII Introduction of Training in Bee-keeping in NEFA	66
XIX The Growing of Flowers in NEFA	67
CHAPTER FIVE SHIFTING CULTIVATION	
I Shifting Cultivation	68
II Improvement of Jhum Cultivation in NEFA	71
III Growing of Leguminous Crops in Abandoned Jhum Lands	74
CHAPTER SIX CRAFTS	
I Training in Cottage Industries	77
II Supply of Yarn	82
III Training in Tribal Designs	85
IV Requirement of Raw Materials	86
V Training in Improved Agriculture in the Cottage Industries Training Centres	87
VI Discipline and Maintenance of Hostels of the Cottage Industries Training Centres	89
VII Competitions and the Award of a Shield	90
CHAPTER SEVEN HEALTH SERVICES	
I Organization of Health Services in the NES Blocks	91
II What Are the Functions of a Health Unit	96
III Treatment of Tribal Patients	103
IV Doctors and the Tribal Dialects	104
V Designation of Medical Officers	106
VI Mobile Medical Cover	106
VII Medical Examination of Staff and Imported Labour	108
VIII Rehabilitation of the Handicapped	109
IX Mental Health	110
X Venereal Disease	112
XI Enteric Fever and Its Prevention	112
XII Isolation and Treatment of Leprosy Cases	113
XIII People's Presents	114
XIV Malaria Eradication Programme	114
XV Measures Suggested	116

XVI Participation of the Non-medical Staff in the Malaria Control Programme	121
CHAPTER EIGHT. MARKETING OF TRIBAL ARTICLES	
I Marketing of Tribal Articles	122
II Purchase and Sale of Tribal Articles	124
III Investment of Money by the People of NEFA	125
CHAPTER NINE EDUCATION	
I Re-orientation and Organization of School Work in NEFA	127
II Introduction of Basic Education in NEFA	132
III NEFA Pattern of Basic Education	136
IV Practical Instructions for Implementing the NEFA Pattern of Basic Education	138
V Adult Education Centres	142
VI Crafts in the Schools of NEFA	146
VII Posting of Teachers in the Schools of NEFA	148
VIII School Discipline	149
IX School Health Services	157
X Holidays in the Schools in NEFA	159
XI Encouragement of Dancing and Physical Culture in Schools	160
XII Tournaments and Sports	161
XIII Aviaries and Zoos in the Schools of NEFA	164
XIV Border Area Schools	164
CHAPTER TEN THE TRIBAL LANGUAGES	
I The Tribal Languages	170
II Preliminary Examination in the Tribal Dialects	171
CHAPTER ELEVEN SOCIAL PROBLEMS	
I The Emancipation of Slaves	181
II Opium Policy	190
III The Employment of Sweepers	192
IV The Role of Wives of Staff in the Development Programmes	193
CHAPTER TWELVE THE PEOPLE'S CULTURE	
I Custom	196
II The NEFA Theatre	198
III Cultural Centres	202

CHAPTER THIRTEEN RELIGION IN NEFA	
I Religion in NEFA	207
II Adviser's Letter to P.O.'s	209
III An Outline Scheme for the Development of Tribal Religion	210
CHAPTER FOURTEEN LEGAL AFFAIRS	
I Powers and Functions of Tribal Councils	214
II Disposal of Fines Imposed in accordance with Customary Law	219
III Remand and Detention in Custody	220
IV Monthly Report relating to Under-trial Prisoners Confined in NEFA	221
V Holding of Inquests in NEFA	221
VI Execution of Sentence of Imprisonment Regulation I of 1945	222
CHAPTER FIFTEEN TOURING	
I Introduction	236
II Extent of Touring to be Carried Out by NEFA Officers	237
III Planning of Tours	238
IV Instructions	238
V Instructions	241
VI Planning of Tours	241
VII A Review of Touring Policy	242
VIII Economy on Tour	245
IX Touring by Air	246
CHAPTER SIXTEEN THE GIVING AND RECEIVING OF PRESENTS	
I Self-Reliance	247
II The Distribution of Presents and Relief	248
III Rice-beer	251
IV People's Presents	252
V Visits of VIP's	254
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN PREPARATION OF TOUR DIARIES ETC	
I Tour Diaries	264
II The Writing of English in Drafts and Notes	266
III Preparation of Manuscripts for the Press	272
IV The Proper Use of Words	274

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN PUBLICITY

I The Importance of Publicity	276
II The Importance of Publicity	277
III Publicity in NEFA—Guidance Notes	278

CHAPTER NINETEEN CONDUCTED TOURS

I Conducted Tours of Tribal Cultivators	285
II Tribal Visitors to Shillong	287
III Planning of Tours	288
IV Planning of Tours	289

CHAPTER TWENTY EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS

I Employment of NEFA Tribal People	290
II Employment of NEFA Tribal Candidates in Executive and Departmental Posts	293
III Instructors for the Craft Centres	294
IV Employment of Tribal Youths	296



Chapter One

THE THREE POLICIES*

I

Introduction

In the past there have been two main approaches to the tribes of India.

The Policy of 'Leave Them Alone'—The British Government inclined, on the whole, to leave the tribesmen alone, partly because the task of administration, especially in the wild border areas, was difficult and unrewarding, partly from a desire to quarantine the tribes from possible political infection and partly because a number of officers sincerely held the view that the people were better and happier as they were.

But the policy of 'Leave them as they are' is dead; modern industry is transforming the whole world: there can be no isolated pockets today, nobody now (least of all the scientists themselves) wants to keep the tribesmen as specimens in a museum for the benefit of science. To wish to preserve and develop the best elements in tribal art, religion and culture is something very different from wishing to keep the people in a zoo.

We do not want to preserve the tribesmen as museum specimens, but equally we do not want to turn them into clowns in a circus. We do not want to stop the clock of progress, but we do want to see that it keeps the right time. We do not accept the myth of the Noble Savage, but equally we do not want to create a class of Ignoble Serfs.

The Policy of Detribalization—In sharp contrast to the first policy is the second one of assimilation or detribalization. This has now become popular and both Christian missionaries and social reformers and village uplifters are following it, sometimes on a large and enthusiastic scale. For this too there is something to be said. The Christian missionaries have produced a number of educated persons among the tribes who are proving of value to the country, and not least to the NEFA administration. Assimilation into Hindu society has often led to a better way of living and to economic advance.

In general, the supporters of this policy take a rather poor view of tribal life: 'animism' should be replaced by the purer ideals of Christianity or Hinduism; the social organization, the 'vices,' the 'superstitions' should go; tribal dress is a mark of inferiority and should be replaced by shorts and shirts. You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs, and the

* Abridged from *A Philosophy for NEFA* by Verrier Elwin.

Chapter Two

LAND

I

SETTLEMENT OF OUTSIDE PEOPLE IN NEFA*

The tribal representatives of NEFA have represented from time to time that Government should not allow settlement on land within NEFA of outside people. The feelings of these representatives have to be taken into consideration as, if this is not acted upon, various agricultural schemes for the future development of the tribal people will be adversely affected leading to various repercussions. Besides this, there are other considerations why such settlement may not be advisable.

I am, therefore, to request that the question of temporary or permanent settlement within your Division of persons not belonging to the Division who want to settle there for the first time, as also of those who have already been settled and desire permanent settlement, should in future be referred to this Administration.

II

USE OF CULTIVABLE LAND†

Cultivable land should not be acquired when it is possible to select an alternative area. If the acquisition of cultivable or cultivated land cannot be avoided, action may be taken to ensure that the reasons for acquiring it are elaborately explained to the local people and that suitable compensation is paid to them. It is preferable in such cases to acquire the land outright and fix a reasonable amount of compensation which is acceptable to the persons whose land is being acquired. In fixing the quantum of such compensation, it would be best if the matter is left in the hands of the local Village Council, but it should be ensured that no undue influence is used by the Village Council to beat down the price in order to gain popularity with the Administration. Our aim should be to see that the village people get a square deal so that, later on, there are no feelings of resentment because they have been talked into a bad bargain.

We are aware that there have been some instances in which village land

* No. Rev. 10/55 of 25.6.55.

† D.O. No. Rev. 6/60 of 8.10.60.

Chapter Four

AGRICULTURE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I

TRAINING OF THE EXTENSION STAFF IN AGRICULTURE IN NEFA*

No sooner does an Agricultural Inspector, who generally hails from a place away and very different from NEFA, land up in the Division after taking up an appointment than he is at once faced with a change from what he is generally used to. The geography of the place probably is first to strike his mind while he travels to his place of posting, coupled with the difficulties of communication. He looks at people who are really different. Their pile-dwellings pose a serious contrast. Reaction in the mind, which varies with the receptivity of individuals, is then only natural. He starts thinking about his work. What will be his duties? How will he function? He probably starts taking a mental stock of his technical knowledge and finds that the theories which he learnt in his classroom are really not followed in the tract through which he passes. Why should the people grow crops over the steep slopes without following the preliminaries of soil conservation? Everything seems to be incorrect to him. Perplexed as he is when faced with such drastic change, he travels and thinks. Probably the first thing he is going to ask the people when he really starts functioning is that they should terrace the slopes and only then grow crops. Incorrect notions and ideas have already formed in his mind before he has actually reported for duty.

It is here that a suitable training for the newcomer is essential. He needs to be put on the right track. He must get a clear understanding and a strong faith in the objectives of the Agricultural Development Programme and as nearly complete picture as possible of the people with whom, and for whom, he has to work. He must know the five fundamental principles of functioning in a tribal area as laid down by Prime Minister Nehru. He should be told the important aims towards which all the activities of the NEFA Administration are directed. The training has to be effective and convincing. The syllabus of the training programme outlined below will help in giving him a good start.

I. *Philosophy for NEFA (Action by POs)*

(a) The Fundamental Problem.

*Memo. No. TS/45/57 of 20.4.60.

Chapter Five

I

SHIFTING CULTIVATION

As compared with the other hill areas of India, the North-East Frontier Agency hill areas have certain very marked differences, being sparsely populated and thickly covered with undergrowth jungles, with an abundance of both insect and animal pests, excessive rainfall, limited and difficult communications (mostly foot-tracks through thick jungle growth) and complete absence of all the usual marketing facilities. The above factors combined with the primitive conditions of life and labour are not only responsible for the system of agriculture in vogue but also form the greatest obstacles to the speedy progress of cultivation improvements.

Shifting cultivation popularly known as *jhuming* may be treated as a primitive agricultural practice adopted by different tribes to eke out a living under the hilly conditions of NEFA. The practice consists of clearing of jungle available on hillslopes, burning of debris, and dibbling in the seed. After one year or two of cropping which exhausts the built-up resources of the soil, the land is left to regain its fertility by a regular fallow. The period of fallow or interval between two cycles of *jhums* varies from place to place depending on the available village-land and population. As a rule, *jhums* with a long fallow interval yield good harvests. In areas where, because of pressure on land, the fallow interval is so shortened as not to allow sufficient time for the soil to rebuild its crop nutrients, the yield goes down.

Anyone who has a close contact with the tribal people and knowledge of the areas will agree that *jhuming* is a way of life for the people and hence the correct approach to the problem is not to condemn it, but to understand it and, as far as possible, to suggest ways and means of correcting to maintain satisfactory production for the requirements of the local population.

Remedies

The problem may be tackled from two angles:

- (1) Restoration of the exhausted fertility to maintain a required standard of production. In other words, it amounts to an adjustment of the fallow period in areas where owing to too great a pressure of population or limitation of land, the fertility has been brought down to a state of unsatisfactory returns.

Chapter Six

CRAFTS

I

TRAINING IN COTTAGE INDUSTRIES*

The training in different crafts is being given without proper regard to the art and culture of the tribes. Nor is there sufficient appreciation of the vital part which these Centres have to play in the civilizing mission of NEFA. The tribesmen have a great tradition of artistic and cultural self-reliance; they have impeccable taste in colour, form and design. It is of the first importance, therefore, that our sincere efforts to help them should not in any way damage or destroy what is good and beautiful, but should assist them to develop further and bring their treasures of tribal art into the rich cultural heritage of India. A renaissance of tribal art will help to vitalize the life of our people, and will be of economic advantage to them. It is essential, therefore, that articles which are tribal in their background should be produced by our trainees, and that our Centres should aim at preserving and developing the present art and culture of the hill people.

The Craft Centres are intended to train adults from representative regions of each Division in crafts which are essential for their own lives. The trainees are not expected to drift into the towns but to go back to their villages and inspire their neighbours to learn the new crafts and improve the technique of the old crafts. Many articles needed by the people for a higher standard of living will thus be produced in the villages themselves. For instance, scantlings, planks, doors, windows etc. can become available for improved housing conditions if the crafts of sawing and carpentry enter our villages. The same applies to pottery, spinning, weaving, smithy, wood-carving, leather-work, bamboo and cane industries and so on.

The object of the Craft Centres is not to enable adults to earn a livelihood. It is assumed that they are already owners and cultivators of their own agricultural lands. We have no intention of changing them from agriculturists into artisans. Most of their productions will be the fruits of the off-season. Just as a woman's weaving today does not interfere with her work in the fields, so also almost all crafts are intended to supplement and not to replace agriculture.

*No. Ind. 45/54/13 of 15.7.54. The institutions were originally called Cottage Industries Training Centres; the name was then changed to Cottage Industries Training and Production Centres. They are now called, more briefly, Craft Centres and this designation is followed throughout this Chapter.

Chapter Seven

HEALTH SERVICES

I

ORGANIZATION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE NES BLOCKS*

Realistic and sound planning is the basic foundation on which all developmental activities should rest. The NES Block aims at bringing about an all-round improvement in the different spheres of life of a community by launching intensive development programmes. Health is an important aspect of community life. The NES budget grant and the normal budget grant are the two sources from which money is made available for the various programmes in a Block. It has been customary in the past to prepare a comprehensive programme for the entire Block period from the NES budget grant only. This is defective planning. A Block programme should cover the funds available from the normal Development grant also. For instance, there is no provision for Health personnel in the staffing pattern of the NEFA-type NES Blocks. The costs of establishment and services have to be met from the normal grant. The provision under the Second Plan (Health) is considerable and the special features of a NES Block should be utilized to organize intensive Health programmes. The following is a brief outline of the resources available under the normal Medical grant and the procedure to be adopted in organizing Health Services in the NES Blocks.

Staffing Pattern

Each NES block will have one or more Health Units depending upon the area, density of population, number of villages, means of communication and political considerations. The normal staffing pattern of a Health Unit will be as follows:

(a) Medical Officer	—	One
(b) Compounder	—	One
(c) Health Inspector	—	One
(d) Health Social Worker	—	One
(e) IV-Grade Staff	—	One

*Development Directive No. 60 (Memo. No. XII-3/56 of 15.6.56). The staffing pattern has since been revised in the light of experience.

Chapter Eight

MARKETING OF TRIBAL ARTICLES*

I

Lately the Administration has been considering the question of evolving facilities and plans for the marketing of articles produced by the tribal people as a result of the introduction of cottage industries in the Divisions. The benefits which will accrue from such undertakings are self-evident. It will mean that the tribal people will gain financially through the sale of their articles; it will encourage them to produce more goods; and finally, it will popularize their arts and crafts products and, in due course, establish for them a reputation as in the case of, for instance, Manipur people. This subject has been under consideration for some time and it is now proposed to apply the following methods for the sale of articles produced by our tribal people.

As a first step it is felt that a good deal of work for the sale of tribal articles can be done within the Divisions themselves. For example, articles of utility produced by one tribe can be purchased by the Political staff and used as political presents to be given to another tribe which does not produce the same articles. This procedure will have the obvious advantage in that it will set up an inter-tribal exchange of goods which will stimulate each other's artistic acumen and also may well develop into a regular inter-tribal trade. For example, the Noctes in Tirap who do not produce any bags could be given, as political presents, those produced by the Wanchos. Similarly the cotton rugs produced by the Minyongs could be used as political presents for the Gallongs in the same Division.

Another way of increasing the sale of tribal articles would be to purchase them for relief gifts in a certain area where there has been a loss of property owing to flood, fire or any other natural calamity. Here again, relief goods are to be purchased from surrounding areas or even from other distant tribes. The present practice is to buy the relief goods from the plains markets, which leads to introducing articles which are not always suited to the needs of people or to their taste.

Certain tribal articles have already found favour with many of our staff and one occasionally hears of the products of Siang being sold to officials in another Division. This is a very healthy practice and can be further encouraged by the following methods:

- (a) Each Head of the Division should prepare a list of articles, their utility, specifications and prices manufactured in his Division.

*Development Directive No. 1 (Memo. No. Ind. 11/55 of 19.4.55).

Chapter Nine

EDUCATION

I

RE-ORIENTATION AND ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL WORK IN NEFA*

Introduction

It is desirable that the school work in the various Divisions of the Agency should be reorganized and reorientated on a sound and uniform footing. In doing so the educational values and the genius of the tribal people should be taken into account. It is of the greatest importance, therefore, that all our educational efforts should be revitalized with a new force, in conformity with the interests of the country in general and the tribal people in particular.

School Work

The school should have a homely atmosphere for the children and also be a model institution where the tribal child will have sufficient scope to develop his individuality in terms of his social environment.

The proposed introduction of the Basic System of Education in Schools of the Agency makes it all the more necessary that the school life should be closely related to the tribal life, which is marked by strong practical sense, self-reliance and freedom. All the work of the school should, therefore, be based on these salient features of tribal life and character. The school work as such will have to reflect the genius of the tribal people and will have to be viewed accordingly. The teachers should scrupulously respect local customs and should not interfere in the local customs of dress and the style of doing the hair.

Proportion of School Work

- (a) The daily routine in schools should therefore be so balanced that both the theoretical and practical work are properly proportioned.

The principle underlying such a balanced routine should be to lay *more emphasis on practical work* than on academical lessons. Out of the five hours of daily school-work, for example, a minimum of three hours daily should be devoted to practical work such as Agriculture and Crafts. Even in the two hours earmarked for theoretical lessons, 'the doing aspect' must never be lost sight of. In learning Literature, Counting, Nature Study,

*Development Directive No. 53.

Chapter Ten

THE TRIBAL LANGUAGES

I

For the successful administration and development of the Agency, it is a matter of top priority that all Government servants serving beyond the Inner Line should acquire an adequate knowledge of the local dialects *as early as possible*.* Unless this happens, there will be no alternative but to continue the system of administrating the people through tribal interpreters, with all its inherent faults and weaknesses. Knowledge of a tribal language is the window by which we see into the tribal mind; it is the door through which we shall most readily receive tribal affection and cooperation. In former days, the most popular officers were almost without exception those who could talk to the people in their own tongue. It is thus vital for the success of their work (and of their own success in their careers in NEFA) that all members of our staff should learn the local languages. It is also the most important prerequisite of achieving our ideal of identifying ourselves with the tribal people.

This learning of a tribal language, therefore, should not be regarded as a mere matter of rules. It should be looked on as an ideal to be attained and to be pursued with enthusiasm. Classes should be started, friendly rivalries created, and every attempt made to master the subject in far less time than that prescribed.

In order to encourage the learning of languages, every endeavour will be made to avoid frequent transfers and where such are inevitable, special concessions will be made. Instructions have already been issued laying down a minimum of three years for school teachers to remain at any one location, and similar instructions will cover other members of the staff, as well.

Members of the I.F.A.S. cadre will be eligible for service in other areas such as Sikkim and Tibet as well as in NEFA. It will obviously be of great advantage to such of the officers who are to be posted to Tibetan-speaking areas, if they already know the language of the place. It will be in their own interest, therefore, that they should learn Tibetan as early as possible, say within three years.

But the important thing in the first instance is to learn the local tribal language, a task in which it is essential for the Political Officers and Assistant Political Officers to set an example.

The tribal languages themselves must be strengthened and developed.

*See D.O. No. P. 56/55 of 20.10.55.

Chapter Eleven

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

I

THE EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES*

1

It has been decided that we should now go ahead a little more energetically than before with the liberation of slaves in NEFA. This will, of course, have to be done carefully and we should not in any way force the pace in comparatively untouched areas. Equally, we should not be complacent and delude ourselves into thinking that the people do not mind being slaves or that there is no reproach to us in their existence. In some ways, the NEFA slaves are in a very similar position to many of the slaves that used to exist in South America. That is to say, they are fairly well treated, they are members of the family and in a few cases are not particularly anxious to be liberated. On the other hand, the reproach of slavery and its social disabilities are severe and many slaves today who have heard of the ideas of equality and brotherhood governing India are beginning to desire their freedom.

The situation varies from place to place and each Political Officer should exercise his judgement and discretion in enforcing the terms of this letter in his respective locality. We feel it is important at the present time not to stir up resentment which may develop into a law and order problem and we should therefore, in the main, concentrate our efforts on areas where we have the influence and position to carry out our policy and where real commercial slavery and human misery are involved. You must take all steps to ensure that the action taken by you and your officers does not precipitate a law and order situation or disrupt the local tribal economy. In certain areas, however, slaves are regarded very much from the commercial point of view and you might consider whether in such areas we might not do more in the way of utilizing the money that has been placed at our disposal for the redemption of slaves by the Government of India. A sum not exceeding Rs. 300 can be paid to ensure the release of each individual slave. Then again you may find it best to leave alone old slaves who are reasonably well-treated and are, on the whole, content with their lot and who may set a problem in rehabilitation for you, if set free.

*D.O. No. R. 58/53 of 6.8.56.

Chapter Twelve

THE PEOPLE'S CULTURE

'Wherever you live, you should live in your own way. This is what I want. You have to decide yourselves how you would like to live. Your old customs and habits are good. We desire that they should survive.'

'It is a great pity that in large parts of India we have drifted away from the aesthetic side of life. We have still a good deal of folk-songs and dances when we go to the villages, because our so-called modern city civilization has not affected them so much as it has affected us. We confine our attention to the cinema which is an excellent medium for good things, but unfortunately, as it is, it is not particularly inspiring. When I look at the progress of what is called modern civilization in India, I see many good things, I see also the lack of many things. Some of the things lacking here, which I find in the tribal folk, are the spirit of song and dance and enjoyment of life. Therefore if we go there and meet these people, we must learn and imbibe something of the spirit and not go there with long faces and black gowns and try to kill that spirit among these people.'

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

I

CUSTOM

The NEFA Administration takes a realistic view of tribal customs and institutions; it does not hold that these are necessarily sacrosanct and never to be changed. There are a number of bad customs such as slavery and head-hunting; and wasteful customs such as those which impose a taboo on work for long periods in the midst of the cultivation season. But wherever possible, our aim is to effect change by evolution from within and not to impose it by official orders or by undue official pressure, least of all by uninformed criticism or casual interference.

This is not always possible and we have in fact already changed by official orders the aspect of life in NEFA bringing to an end inter-tribal and inter-village feuds and the head-hunting that in one Division was fundamental to the organization of society. But in the main it is now universally accepted that in all matters that do not directly affect law and order, the greatest care should be exercised in bringing about rapid changes in the social and economic pattern.

Chapter Thirteen

RELIGION IN NEFA

1

It is only logical that we should extend our respect for tribal life and its institutions to tribal religion. If we are not to impose our own way of living on the people, we are equally not to impose our own religions on them. In NEFA we have developed this rather negative attitude into something much more positive, and as a result of much enquiry, thought and discussion we have evolved a sort of 'philosophy' of tribal religion, which is in some ways unique.

The essential point in this new attitude is that we should no longer assume that as our tribal people become educated and enter into contact with the outside world, they are necessarily bound to abandon their traditional faith. It has previously been supposed that an educated tribal is almost inevitably bound to become a Hindu or a Christian. Today we feel that, while he is, of course, at perfect liberty to change his religion if he so desires, it need not be necessary for him to do so. A deeper study of the tribal religions has shown that they have many elements that satisfy the heart, even though, like other religions, they have other elements which do not satisfy the mind. We feel that we should provide a climate in which the old religions can grow and reform themselves *from within* so that ultimately there will be in NEFA religious concepts that will be truly tribal in character, yet having a wider view and a purer conception of God and man.

If we are to achieve this, there are certain things that we ourselves should do:

(i) The first is that we should study and try to understand the religion of the areas where we live. This is not only a fascinating pastime but, if it is done with tact and sincerity, will in itself help to encourage the tribal people in their faith. Besides, the very fact that we take such interest helps to cure the inferiority complex that so easily arises.

(ii) The second is to extend to tribal religion that attitude of sincere respect which we are trying to give to tribal life and institutions generally. No one should on any account criticize or laugh at any tribal ceremony or belief. Sometimes the work of a well-trained higher officer may be completely undone by the ignorant folly of a clerk or a jawan. The same reverence should be shown by all members of our staff, should they be present at any tribal ceremony, that they would show in a Christian Church or Hindu temple.

(iii) As suggested in another chapter, we should be careful how we talk and about the words we use. Let us banish such expressions as 'supersti-

Chapter Fourteen

LEGAL AFFAIRS

I

POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF TRIBAL COUNCILS*

'The foundation of any democratic structure in India', says Shri V. T. Krishnamachari, 'must be in the village, which is the oldest unit known in the country and has survived through many centuries.' He quotes Sir Charles Metcalfe who wrote of 'the little republics having nearly everything they want within themselves, and almost independent of foreign relations; they seem to last where nothing else lasts'. This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little State in itself, is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence. Shri Krishnamachari goes on to say that in spite of the factions, caste tyranny and stagnation which undoubtedly existed, it was 'owing to the life in the village communities and the measure of autonomy they enjoyed that we achieved social cohesion and stability and succeeded in preserving our traditional cultural values over many centuries. This survival of our values during long periods of foreign dependence is certainly due to the continuity of the village organisation. We must, therefore, recognize that modern democratic government can have a solid foundation only in village democracy'.

Where in many other parts of India, village government is being rebuilt only with difficulty, in NEFA we have in the tribal Village Councils institutions which have managed village affairs for centuries and in most places retain their vitality and power. These Councils vary in character and influence from tribe to tribe. In some tribes they have never been highly organized; in some they have become greatly weakened in recent years; in others, as among the Adis, they are of the greatest importance. But everywhere, if they are properly guided and strengthened, they may become the chief means whereby we can implement our policy of consultation with the people and of developing them along the lines of their own genius.

All the Councils have great potentialities. Established in history and tradition, supported by social and religious sanctions, expression of a genuine democracy representing the cooperative and communal temperament of the people, they can be used not only to maintain law and order but also to further progress throughout NEFA.

The Councils may be considered under three main aspects:—

(a) *Administrative*—The Councils of many tribes settle all the affairs of

*Memo. No. Jud. 150/58 of 24 January 1959.

Chapter Fifteen

TOURING

I

INTRODUCTION

Touring and the reporting on tours, occupies such a large place in the life of every one of our officers that it is worth while devoting a chapter to the subject.*

The first essential in all touring programmes is that they should be carefully prepared and should only be undertaken with a definite purpose. Unnecessary touring by the lower staff should be discouraged. This applies specially in cases where there is no particular plan or purpose in the tours, which are sometimes undertaken rather to display a show of activity.

The constant arrival of members of the staff in villages along the more well-worn routes is a distraction to the villagers, and frequent demands for portorage diverts them from the urgent task of agriculture. Political Officers, therefore, should carefully scrutinize the usefulness of tours by their staff before sanctioning them. Careful planning too might arrange that officers of more than one department could tour together; this would reduce the inconvenience caused to the people.

At the Divisional level it is essential that a rough forecast of tours for the entire year should be prepared by each Political Officer in respect of himself and the Assistant Political Officers so that one of them would be able to visit every village in the Division at least once per year. In this rough annual forecast, there should be coordination with the Divisional Heads of Departmental Offices so that they may accompany the Political Officers or the Assistant Political Officers on tours of significance and particular importance. Such coordination is essential in respect of tours to new and unadministered areas and for these it is, of course, necessary also to co-ordinate with the Commandant of the Assam Rifles Battalion concerned.

The tours of Assistant Political Officers, or Base or Area Superintendents in charge of forward Sub-divisions, will normally be confined to the neighbouring areas of their Headquarters and the Political Officers should remain in the picture regarding the touring activity on the part of such officers.

Similarly, tours by officers of the NEFA Secretariat and Heads of Departments should be carefully planned, and their tours should be spread

*From the compendium of 1956.

Chapter Sixteen

THE GIVING AND RECEIVING OF PRESENTS

I

SELF-RELIANCE

One of the most attractive characteristics of the tribal people is their self-reliance. This virtue is one that is easily destroyed, and we must therefore watch very carefully that we do not, through a mistaken notion of benevolence, make the people grow soft and unwilling to do things for themselves.

In our development programme*, therefore, great emphasis is laid on the importance of self-help. Ultimately, it is the people themselves who should take charge of their own welfare and development programme. This, of course, is the ideal aim which can only be achieved when the people have been sufficiently educated in the new techniques and their interest and concern sufficiently aroused for devising and executing schemes intended for their own amelioration. However, if this be the ultimate object, it is necessary that all along the various stages of development the approach and propaganda of our staff should impress upon the people that they must prepare to help themselves more and more as time passes. The quantum of self-help should, therefore, progressively increase and reach a stage when the required awakening has been sufficiently roused amongst them to enable them to take charge of their own welfare.

The question of self-help, which must engage our attention in the very early stages of our development work, can be interpreted in a number of ways:

(a) Self-help may be expressed in the form of contributions by the people, who, for any activity aimed at their welfare, may like to contribute land or materials. Thus, for example, the site required for a school, Cottage Industries Training Centre or a sericultural farm could, as a rule, be a free contribution by the people, for which it should not appear necessary for the Government to make any payment. This is so because the installations proposed are intended for the direct benefit of the people and it is desirable that gradually they should be made to feel that these installations will remain a part and parcel of their possessions.

(b) In certain cases, such as schools, and the Cottage Industries Training Centres, the people, apart from giving free land, may also put

*Memo. No. DEV. 55/54/PF.

Chapter Seventeen

PREPARATION OF TOUR DIARIES, DRAFTS AND MANUSCRIPTS*

I

TOUR DIARIES

Records of tours will be in the form of Tour Diaries. Tour Diaries, as their title indicates, will be prepared by dates and all matters and events of importance occurring on a particular day will be recorded against that date so far as possible on the same or the following day. Observations on the nature of paths and tracks and length and timings of daily journeys, distances between villages visited and information of interest to the Administration may be entered. It is most essential that as full a picture as possible of the state of affairs in different parts of his Division is available to the Political Officer and thereafter to the Local Administration, as we are dealing with changing and developing situations even in administered areas and a complete picture of things is desirable for the formulation of a sound and timely line of action. The North-East Frontier Agency consists of villages, rather than large tribal zones or Divisions, as the real units of tribal function and any vague general impression about large blocks of territory in a Division will give a misleading idea of the concrete situation. The fuller notes about each place visited may take some more minutes each day in writing them but it will be worth-while giving that time.

In view of the above, where the Tour Diaries relate to the tours of the Political Officer and Assistant Political Officer they will contain their observations under the following heads in respect of each village which they visit :

(1) Present population; (2) agricultural condition and food situation; (3) state of health, sanitation and water-supply; (4) state of education; (5) attitude towards Government; (6) internal co-operation within the village; (7) present condition of arts and crafts; (8) general economic progress or retrogression; (9) any urgent need as experienced or expressed by the people.

The following other subjects are worthy of special attention:

(1) *Acculturation*: It would be good to have some account of how contact with the Administration and the outside world is affecting the

*This Summary is based on two directives, No. P. 32/54 of 13.11.54 (Appendix B) and No. P. 56/54/43 of 20.7.55.

Chapter Eighteen

PUBLICITY

I

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLICITY*

We have, on several occasions, impressed the urgency and importance of publicity in NEFA in the context of the existing situation. In view of the political developments across the border and the subtle and massive propaganda offensive by the Chinese this urgency and importance have increased a hundredfold. We have, therefore, to rise to the occasion and do our best by utilizing the existing resources fully for effective publicity.

Every member of the Administration, in whatever capacity he may be serving, has to do the job of a publicity man in addition to his normal work. However, we would suggest that the Publicity subject at the Divisional level should be entrusted to the Assistant Political Officer (I), Headquarters, and he should spare no pains to invigorate and enthuse the existing publicity apparatus for the best possible performance.

The Officer should be made responsible for the subjects enumerated in the Appendix.

We should be grateful for quick and immediate action on the lines suggested. Kindly confirm action taken.

In view of the importance of adequate and proper publicity in the interior, the subject of Publicity should be dealt with by a senior officer at the Divisional level. The Assistant Political Officer (I), Headquarters, should be entrusted with all work relating to it.

The duties of the Officer entrusted with this subject are enumerated below (the list is not necessarily exhaustive):—

- (a) To ensure proper utilization of the Projection Units. This would include arrangements for regular film shows in the villages and selection of films therefor. Steps should be taken to see that border areas are covered sufficiently by the programme of film shows.
- (b) To send a monthly report on the working of the Projection Unit regularly. This report is to be signed by the Political Officer himself.
- (c) To ensure proper utilization of the Mobile Publicity Unit of

Chapter Nineteen

CONDUCTED TOURS

I

CONDUCTED TOURS OF TRIBAL CULTIVATORS*

Every year Conducted Tours of selected progressive cultivators of the Agency are organized to different Divisions and to places outside the Agency with the objective of giving them an opportunity to see for themselves what is happening in the important places of Agriculture and Community Development. These tours will only be successful in their objectives if they are planned well in advance and conducted at the right season. Hurried and ill-planned tours naturally will not help in achieving the objectives. Besides, the cultivators would not like, and for that matter no one likes, the idea of being pushed around. If at the end of a tour the cultivators are not able to translate even one or two of the new practices or ideas in the field, the purpose of Conducted Tours is actually defeated and the whole thing becomes a haphazard sight-seeing affair. The following few points are therefore suggested to get good results from the Conducted Tours.

Composition

The party should be composed of cultivators representing as large a section of people as possible. For obvious reasons, cultivators who are self-reliant (not necessarily self-sufficient), enthusiastic and who have participated well in their own village programme may be selected for such tours. This gives them a good incentive. It is not always that the rich cultivators are interested in improving their cultivation or set a good example to others.

Itinerary

The plan of the tour has to be so prepared that the touring cultivators visit the right places in the right seasons. The party's way of farming and cropping patterns and other allied interests are also to be kept in mind. Geographical affinity of the place and the cultural similarity of the people to be visited will leave lasting impressions in the minds of the visitors and only then will the tour afford possibilities of a healthy comparison. For instance, the cardamom cultivation of the Lepchas and the Bhutias on the hill slopes around Gangtok may impress NEFA hill cultivators. Likewise,

*Memo. No. Agri-V/32/60 of 8.3.60.

Chapter Twenty

EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS

I

EMPLOYMENT OF NEFA TRIBAL PEOPLE*

It is of the utmost importance that the education which has been undertaken in respect of the NEFA tribal people and which, as time passes, will find intensification, should result in profitable settlement of the educated youth. It will be appreciated that it will not be possible for most of those who will receive education to obtain Government appointments. This is the case in regard to the country as a whole and so also to NEFA. It is in the nature of things that the majority of the educated class will have to be settled on their land in the village and help to raise, on its basis, their standard of living and that it is only the select minority which will find employment in Government service.

It is the policy of the Government that appointments in the Administration should become available to the local tribal people and that special efforts should be made to select and train suitable personnel in pursuance of this policy.

In considering the various appointments, we may categorize them as follows:

- (a) Grade IV appointments, such as those of Malis, Chowkidars, Peons, etc. These, being entirely non-technical and requiring no education, should invariably be filled by the local tribal people.
- (b) Grade III staff consisting of the departmental workers. These refer to appointments such as Village-Level Workers, Agricultural Demonstrators, Assistant Agricultural Inspectors, Veterinary Field Assistants, Sericulture Operators, etc. in the case of the Agriculture and allied departments. There would be analogous appointments in the Medical, Forest and Engineering Departments.
- (c) Grade II appointments, such as those of Gazetted Medical, Agricultural and Educational Officers. In addition to these, there are appointments of the Political staff also, such as Base Superintendents, Assistant Political Officers (II), etc.

Whereas some progress has been made in appointing the local youth to the various grades of staff in the Political Branch, and this has to be

*Development Directive No. 13 (Memo. No. ED. 12/55 of 28.7.55).



50
DIGITIZED

DIGITIZED

DIGITIZED

