<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>The relevance of communication training to a NWICO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Jayaweera, Neville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10220/913">http://hdl.handle.net/10220/913</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Relevance Of Communication Training
To A NWICO

By

Neville Jayaweera
Lecture: The Relevance of Communication Training to a NWICO
By Mr. Neville Jayaweera
Director of Research and Planning
World Association for Christian Communication

The agitation for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) has unfortunately deteriorated over the past few years into a political slinging match. As is the inevitable result of such political exercises, the truth has been buried under piles of slogans, animosities, outright deceptions and feelings of hurt pride. The task of exhuming the truth, and breathing life into it again, falls on parties who are contenders in the contest. The Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Center and the World Association for Christian Communication and the other sponsors of this seminar, may see their tasks cast in this role.

The heart of the demand for a NWICO may be seen as a quest for a new set of values in communication, both at national and international levels.

These values are either explicitly stated, or are implied, in the eleven resolutions that were adopted by consensus at the General Conference of the UNESCO held in Belgrade in 1980. These values are:

1. A plurality of both sources and outlets. The truth of the matter is never the monopoly of any particular person or institution. All persons and institutions are prone to error. Therefore, in order to approximate the truth, it is necessary to have access to as many different sources as possible. Only plurality can guarantee approximation to the truth.

2. Diversity must be a characteristic of plurality. It is not sufficient to have more and more of the same thing. The different versions must not only be plural; they must also be diverse.

3. Cultural integrity must not only not be violated, but must also be preserved.
4. Balance and freedom to flow to all directions, unhampered by artificial constraints, must constantly characterise communication.

5. Access—both the right to receive and the right to impart information.

6. Participation is crucial: the right to have a say in the shaping of information policies and in the running of monopolies, whether private or governmental.

7. Autonomy of journalists, linked to responsibility.

8. Sensitivity to the problems, the struggles and aspirations of different peoples, and avoidance of a judgemental approach in news reporting.

These values constitute the heart of the New Order. They represent the interests not only of the Third World but of the developed world as well.

If one looks at these values closely, one realises that they are violated flagrantly in most societies. The curious thing is that those values which are most articulated by one group of nations are often found to be the most transgressed by that same group. For instance, the Third World countries who complain against the monopolies practised by the West flagrantly practise them in their own countries. Similarly, in Western countries which extol the virtues of plurality, diversity and free flow, less than 0.1 percent of the news and information that flow within their systems is admitted from outside! Some of the big Western democracies are, in that respect more closed than the communist or socialist countries.

In a reality fraught with such contradictions, it seems futile to expect these values to be realised through resolutions, or governmental policies or fiats. Governments will continue to practise what they think it is in their interests to practise, regardless of the rhetoric they churn out for public consumption.

We have, therefore, either to turn cynical and join these contenders in the charade or abandon the field in despair, or else look to other instruments besides governmental action for promoting and realising these values. It seems to me that one of the most effective options still open to us is to take a long-term view, recognising that the achievement of a New Order will take decades, and start at the bottom, by imparting these values at the level of training.

The objective should be to influence the consciousness of journalists, broadcasters, producers and newswriters, managers and administrators, through training programmes, so that over a period of time they will begin to exert cumulative pressures from
within the system, and thereby contribute to transforming the reality. Not only will they thereby help to shape policy from within, but they will in fact practise these values to the maximum within the space allowed to them by the system.

Unfortunately, in general, not even trainers look upon training as a vehicle for values. Somehow, the scope of training is limited to an imparting of skills, and skills are seen as mechanical, physiological and unrelated to social, economic, cultural and moral issues. So even the training option is not as easy as one might imagine.

What are the problems we have to face in training, before we can adopt it as an instrument for realising a New Order? As necessary preconditions, we must recognise that:

1. Even training which is considered to be "purely professional, above politics and beyond ideology," is in fact pregnant with concealed values.

2. The values embedded in current training programmes throughout the Third World are mostly the products of industrial societies and are oriented towards catering to their needs.

3. These training programmes are mostly unrelated to the needs of developing societies or to the needs of an emerging New Order.

4. We need to take a fresh look at the content of the syllabi, courses and teaching materials from the perspective of the values of the New Order.

Having recognised these facts in principle, we need thereafter to settle down to a disciplined and properly structured programme of:

1. Content analysis of extant training programmes, and

2. Developing new sets of training materials, courses and syllabi--new curricula--for meeting the new needs.

This is a long drawn-out programme and has to be undertaken collectively and in a participatory way. To this end, at a Workshop on Curriculum Development for Asia, sponsored by the WACC in Manila in June 1984, it was decided to set up three clusters of training entities for looking at curricula under three different categories: broadcast, print media and alternative media. Various organisations like the Press Foundation of Asia, the Asian Institute of Journalism and the Asian Social Institute have been assigned to these different categories.
It is hoped that these clusters will complete their analyses and come up with some sample curricula from the perspective of the new values by early 1986.

Lastly, it is necessary to emphasise that the theorising and generalising phase is over. The Third World cannot afford to engage in theoretical debates and in the perpetual regurgitation of basic thinking. We have to move on to operational plans and get on with the job.