

TRIP REPORT: CHINA

October 11 - November 2, 1987

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Acknowledgements

For this opportunity to visit China I am indebted to UNICEF, the State Education Commission, and the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF). In particular, I wish to thank Manzoor Ahmed, UNICEF's Representative and Mr. Meng of the State Education Commission (SEC) for arranging my participation in the Conference on the Strengthening of Co-operation in Teacher Training. The All-China Women's Federation attended to the details of my travel with extra-ordinary efficiency and hospitality. Women's Federation hosts, Mme. Chen in Nanchang and Mme. Ye in Xiamen, were marvelous, not only in their organization but also in their sharing of ideas and experiences. And I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been able to count on Miss Guo Yao in Beijing and Mme. Xin Hua as interpreters - not only of words but of culture and ideas. I am particularly grateful to Mme. Xin Hua for her guidance and instruction.

A Cautionary Note

This report is being written after having visited China for the first time, and then for a period of only three weeks. During that time it became clear that I needed to set aside my usual rules of thumb and guideposts for judgement in order to try and understand better Chinese policies and institutions. My visits were to a very small area within the vast country and did not include time in the more remote rural areas. For these reasons, the observations and impressions recorded here are simply that. In this circumstance, I prefer to raise questions rather than to try and answer them. The concluding suggestions are not offered as prescriptions, but are intended as ideas for discussion.

Purposes

The trip had two basic purposes:

1. To become acquainted with child care and development activities of the All-China Women's Federation, particularly as related to UNICEF collaboration.
2. To participate in a conference, sponsored jointly by the State Education Commission and UNICEF, on the Strengthening of Co-operation in Teacher Training.

Programme and Itinerary

Following my arrival on October 12th, I spent four days (13-16) in Beijing in discussions with UNICEF and the ACWF, with specific visits to the Beijing Municipal Education Bureau, Beijing Normal University, the Managerial Personnel College of ACWF, and the Child Development Centre of China (CDCC). The following four days (17-20) were spent in Nanchang and the nearby city of Xinyu and surrounding area where visits were made to a variety of state-, community-, and individually-run kindergartens in central urban, urban-periphery, and rural communities. Discussions were held with staff of the provincial and local Women's Federation and visits were made to two children's activity parks. It was possible also to see a parental advisory service in action. From Nanchang, I went to Xiamen for another four days (21-24), again visiting various kindergartens (including a factory-run kindergarten). In addition, I saw the final round of a pre-school teachers competition, sat in on a lecture given to correspondence course students, and visited a pre-natal and peri-natal programme providing diagnoses and advice to parents. One week was spent (October 25-November 1) in travel to, and participation in, the teacher training meeting in Fuzhou (with some tourism added in). One day during that week was also spent visiting pre-school and primary normal schools in Fuzhou.

A detailed itinerary is provided in Attachment A.

Field notes are presented in Attachment B.

Organization of the Report

In an introductory section I will record some general observations and impressions.

The body of the report will deal with two topics: parental education and pre-school (kindergarten) education.

In the final section I will offer programme observations and suggestions related to UNICEF's collaboration with the All-China Women's Federation and with the State Education Commission.

General Observations and Impressions

1. Early childhood care and development is considered important.

In many countries, early childhood care and development are not given a very high priority. In China, priority is attached to the early years. That priority is evident first in the numbers. Indeed, one cannot help but be awed, coming from abroad, by the following statistics that appeared in the October 16th edition of China Daily:

- o 16,280,000 of 67,830,000 children between the ages of three and six in China are enrolled in 173,000 pre-school representing 24% of the age cohort.
- o There are now (1987) 650,000 kindergarten teachers.
- o 93.6% of the kindergartens are run by institutional and collective units.

But more impressive than the coverage figures are statistics indicating the rapid growth of early childhood services in recent years. The same China Daily article, for instance, indicated that:

- o Compared with 1981, the number of nurseries and kindergartens has increased by more than 40,000; the number of children attending them by 6 million, and the number of teachers by 240,000. In 1949 the country had only 1,301 kindergartens and 2,100 teachers.

Parental education programmes barely existed five years ago. Since then, and particularly in the last two years, parent schools have mushroomed in number to a reported 40,000 in operation throughout the country.

Clearly, then, early childhood care and development is seen as important. The government attaches importance to the area, from both human resource and moral perspectives. Widespread adherence to the single-child policy has motivated families to pay even greater attention to the young child.

Moreover, China is well on the way to solving the major health and nutritional problems associated with infant and child mortality. The UNICEF Annual Report for 1987 provides the following information:

- o The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in 1985 was 35 per 1000 (i.e., 1 of 28 children die before reaching age one; or, 27 of 28 survive to age one).
- o The leading causes of death for children under 5 are:

Pneumonia	28%
Accidents	16%
Birth Trauma	13%
Prematurity	10%
Others	33%

o A relatively low 3% of deaths were attributed to diarrhoea and only 1% to EPI diseases.

o Nutritional status for children under five varies considerably between urban and rural areas. Using WHO standards, the "below standard" figures for 1985 were:

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Weight for age	5-10%	20-25%
Height for age	Less than 3%	10-20%
Weight for height	Less than 3%	Less than 3%

The implication of these relatively encouraging health and nutrition statistics is that greater national energy can and should be devoted to helping the development of those who survive, something that is indeed occurring.

2. Disparities persist.

Although the general picture presented in the statistics is encouraging when global statistics are used, disparities are obvious, particularly between the urban and rural areas, and with respect to minority groups and areas. That is evident in the nutrition figures presented above.

The preschool briefings I received recognized disparities, usually breaking down the presentation of statistics at least by urban and rural areas. An example illustrating disparities and an awareness of them comes from the relatively well developed area of Xiamen. There, I was told that although 26 percent of the children aged 3 to 6 resided in urban areas, 42 percent of the kindergarten enrollment was urban and 69 percent of all kindergarten teachers were found in the cities. In addition, teacher's classroom loads and level of training varied in urban and rural Xiamen:

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Average number of students per teacher:	13	31
Percentage of teachers trained in pre-school normals or courses attached to vocational schools:	22%	2%

3. Dedication, hard work, good will, and counterpart participation were everywhere impressive.

As a result of the importance attached to early childhood, and in contrast with some other places in which UNICEF works, motivating people to the task, or convincing the government that UNICEF's inputs should be matched by local counterparts do not seem to be major problems in China. From the dedicated central-level SEC officials, to the pre-school director who was "on-duty" in her pre-school 24 hours-a-day, to the consistent evidence that Chinese institutions had provided more counterpart funds than required by the collaborative agreement, the conditions for effective use of modest inputs from UNICEF seemed to be excellent.

4. Considerable programme variety and experimentation were evident.

With very few exceptions, any suggestion I made regarding possible alternatives led to the discovery that my suggestion was already being tried out somewhere. The main problem does not seem to be one of setting up new experiments or models but is, rather:

- o Sorting out which experiments are proving successful and under what circumstances.

- o Spreading information about the most workable alternatives and translating results into policy.

However, the experiments cited seemed often to be in places that were favoured - either in terms of the economic and social circumstances of the people involved, or in terms of the resources (human and financial) available to make it work. A central challenge, then, seems to be to move results down the line and into those areas and institutions that are less favoured.

5. High standards are advocated.

Wherever I went, people were "putting their best foot forward" and were trying, to the best of their ability, to adhere to high standards set by the State Education Commission. Both standards and aspirations were high whether kindergartens were large and expensive state-run institutions or more modest community-run organizations. The Women's Federation reinforced adherence to these standards in the programmes for which it was responsible.

Pursuing quality is certainly to be encouraged and obviously increases the potential for programmes to be effective. However, my impression was that the standards set sometimes implied costs and conditions that would make it difficult to meet the standards on a large scale, particularly in rural areas. Comparing the facilities and materials standards set by the State Education Commission with those of "developed" countries, I found them high. The 20-to-1 ratio for children to teachers, however, is not so favourable, and is probably more realistic.

When I raised a question with the Women's Federation about assistance given for constructing expensive community-run kindergartens that seemed to me to be more-than-adequate facilities, their response was, appropriately, that the community-based kindergartens ought to be as good as the state-run ones so as not to create a double standard. Moreover, when it was necessary to "make do," for lack of resources that seemed to be happening. Later on in this report, I will take up a more specific question of use of space, determined in part by the standards set.

6. An exciting atmosphere of change exists.

It was exciting to feel everywhere in my visits the momentum of change, beginning with the political and economic reforms and including the corresponding drive to adjust educational thinking and action. Fortunately,

the desire to take advantage of new technologies seemed to be only a small part of the picture even though it was a central topic of the Fuzhou meeting and has figured prominently in the UNICEF/SEC collaboration. At least as interesting, for instance, were changes related to promoting "learning through play" and seeking ways to enhance the creativity and independence of young children. The revival of these positions (they were important elements in the philosophy of Chen Hequin, one of China's most important early educators in the period from the 1920s through the 1940s) provides an operational challenge.

7. In China, as elsewhere, there is a tendency to compartmentalize.

The inevitable tendency to assign separate functions to separate organizations or parts of organizations was often observable. For instance, people who are responsible for administration seemed to be separated from those responsible for programme content. Research seemed to be divorced from programme implementation. The teacher training meeting, dealing with pre-school and primary apparently did not include people from the pre-school or primary divisions in SEC. In the same vein, pre-service training seemed to be differentiated from in-service training in ways that made continuity and complementarity more difficult. In teaching about instructional materials, I observed compartmentalizing of the concepts materials were supposed to illustrate (taught in one lesson), instruction in how to make the materials (taught in another), and demonstrations of how to use what had been made for the purposes desired (taught in a third).

The universal tendency to specialize and compartmentalize may be exacerbated in China where the numbers are so large, allowing greater specialization, and where tight organization is needed to avoid chaos. A challenge is to find ways to reintegrate content and functions.

8. A Disneyland Syndrome?

Walt Disney seems to have had an impact on China. Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck appear everywhere - on clothes, in reading materials, and in children's activity parks. I was surprised to find such enthusiasm for children's activity parks with a heavy emphasis on rides and other activities of the amusement park variety. There are undoubtedly good reasons for this - perhaps related to the current changes in Chinese society. I had the feeling, however, that this approach represented to some degree an indulgence, not unlike the indulgence of single children that is the subject of considerable concern.

Pre-school Observations and Impressions

During the three weeks in China I visited 15 kindergartens, in Jiangzi and Fujian provinces, and held discussions with individuals whose responsibilities stretched across most of the facets of pre-school education. In this section I will record observations related to planning and organization, content and methods, training, and the evaluation of pre-school programmes.

Planning and Organisation

1. Building linkages. As indicated above, helping to develop linkages among parts in the huge and specialized preschool system seems to be more important than promoting new experiments. At the Fuzhou meeting, Manzoor Ahmed, in his closing remarks, took a systems view of planning emphasizing the importance of looking at the relationships among various parts or sub-systems, and the need to recognize and strengthen interdependent relationships among often independent parts. His comments fit well my own observations of "a tendency toward compartmentalization" and lead to the observation that an extra effort may be needed to discover specific ways in which linkages (or bridges, or continuities) can be promoted in order to strengthen planning and organization of the system as a whole. In that vein, I note five kinds of links to be considered.

a. Links through time. How can continuity be provided? (e.g., between pre-service and in-service training programmes)

b. Hierarchical links. a) How can ideas experimented with in in central areas and in favourable pilot project locations be moved down the line? (e.g., teaching techniques applied in the Fuzhou Normal School)
b) How can good solutions created at grass roots levels be moved up the line and applied in other areas as well? (e.g., the supervisory system in rural Xiamen or the use of bed boards)

c. Substantive links. How can health, nutrition, education be brought together?

d. Functional links. How can one overcome compartmentalization among setting of goals, administration, choice of content and evaluation of programmes?

e. Geographic links. How can ideas tried out and successful in one place be disseminated to others?

2. Standards. The fact that China is reaching almost one-fourth of its children with preschool services is an extraordinary achievement. But China shares with others throughout the world the challenge of increasing coverage in rural, marginal, and minority areas. In dealing with that challenge, planners are facing the question of dual standards — one for urban areas and one for rural.

It was difficult to know how the question of standards is handled operationally, based on my short time and the few visits made. On one hand

there was discussion of "walking on two legs." On the other, my visit to Guang Village (see field notes, October 20th), and to several of the community-run preschools that are being helped by the Women's Federation suggested that the standards being applied in rural and community-run schools were the same as in the state-run, urban institutions. Therefore, costs were high as well.

What was clear from conversations everywhere was the importance assigned by programme implementers to the standards set by the SEC. Great pains were taken in briefings to mention adherence to the SEC standards for construction of facilities and for organizing the curriculum. But it was also clear that the high standards promoted have a double edge: they help to motivate communities to provide quality education for children, but they also carry costs. Some communities simply do not have the resources to adhere to the standards. In several cases, I found apologies for not being able to meet space or materials standards rather than pride in innovative solutions that worked well even if not up to standard. In other cases, I found adherence to standards "because the SEC says so," and without thinking about the reasons for setting the standards. This reasoning was applied to the use of space for naps which I will discuss below.

3. Use of Space. One very specific way in which standards might be adjusted to reduce cost and/or improve usage, would be to change the space requirements for napping. The standard is to provide a separate room with individual beds that occupy the space all day, even though children will use the room for only about 2-1/2 hours of the 9 or 10 hours they will be in the kindergarten. In one community-based school with space limitations, I was shown, rather apologetically, a system of sleeping boards, one per child that could be folded up against the wall after nap time, allowing the space to be used for other purposes. Adopting such a system as a reasonable standard could almost double space in some existing schools, allowing either higher enrollment or more flexible planning of activities for children. Or, it could measurably cut costs of new construction.

Content and method

1. Learning through play. The concept of learning through play seemed to be widely accepted in China. However, the way in which play might be used to learn was not so clear. The "play" I observed in the classroom was directed by teachers — even "role play." Except for the model kindergarten in Fuzhou, I did not see children engaged in play situations that they created, with associated learning through choice, responsibility for carrying out what was started, or learning through trial and error. "Play" outdoors seemed to be a different kind of play — for recreation and physical education — and did not seem to be associated with "learning."

2. Creativity. On more than one occasion I was told that additional attention needed to be given to developing creativity. At the same time, I saw little during the visit to suggest fostering of creativity through free expression. There was no messy finger painting, for instance. Music and dancing, which have an important place in the curriculum, were pursued primarily, if not exclusively by having children learn set routines. The children worked at learning these routines. I did not observe expressive

dancing or singing in which a child could choose what she wanted to sing or experiment with different forms of creative expression. In the competition among kindergarten teachers, participants were asked to copy a particular drawing rather than given a theme and asked to create their own drawing.

Clearly, however, there is tremendous creativity in China. And, the fact that creativity is valued was shown in various ways. One was by providing extra attention for children who seemed to show a particular talent. Indeed, I sometimes felt that creativity was defined in terms of attention to the gifted. Creativity was evident in the marvelous choreography done for dances we saw. And, ironically, it was evident in the choice of the winner from among the teachers who had been asked to copy a picture for their drawing competition; the winner had added creative touches to her rendering of the standard drawing, making it stand out from others.

These observations led me to wonder about both the definition of creativity and about the conditions that foster it. Is it more creative to give vent to free expression resulting in something that is an individual creation and totally new, or is it more creative to improvise and innovate within general rules and limits set for action? (Westerners are increasingly faulted for their lack of ability to improvise) Is creativity fostered by allowing free expression or by building self-confidence and basic techniques and forms of discipline that serve as a point of departure? In short, I came away more confused than clearheaded with respect to questions of creativity in pre-school curricula, and I would be reluctant to make Western-based judgements about what is most appropriate to foster creativity. A fundamental examination of what is meant by creativity in the Chinese context could be revealing.

3. The basic curriculum. The six-subject curriculum set by the SEC seemed to be at least as sensible as most curricula. The important place given to music and physical education might provide the West with lessons worth learning. And, a reasonable position is taken toward reading and writing — that preschool is a time to learn the preliminary skills to help with reading and writing but is not a time to stress reading and writing per se.

More important than the actual content of the curriculum is the way in which it is carried out.

4. Classroom organisation. In general, classrooms were organized in rows, with the teacher in front directing the children. A variation on the theme was the arrangement of children at tables which were arranged in rows. Several teachers I spoke with seemed to feel that children learned better if they were arranged in rows. In two of the kindergartens, I saw children arranged in a circle for a particular activity. Only in the model kindergarten of the Fuzhou normal school were children distributed about the room doing a variety of activities they had chosen to do. I did not see other classrooms with what might be called activity corners in which children could learn by choosing an activity and carrying it out under teacher supervision.

Although the ratio of children to teachers was usually 20 to 1, I found that much of the time one teacher was handling 40 students while the other was

preparing lessons. Or, the two teachers were together with the 40 students, both involved in the same activity which was usually led by one teacher while the other helped or looked on. Again, with the exception of the model preschool, I did not see classrooms broken down into smaller groups of children with different teachers working with children to carry out different tasks. (Opening up the napping space for use in other activities would facilitate work in sub-groups.) These observations lead me to think that there could be some basic reorganization of the ways in which teachers work together.

4. Toys and teaching materials. In teacher training courses and competitions, I found greater emphasis on teaching aids that would help a teacher explain something to children than I did on providing children with "hands on" materials or toys that they could use in a "learning by doing" way. I also found a preference for modern manufactured toys, sometimes in the extreme (see field notes on visit to Guang Village, October 20). In several places, teachers had created toys or aids from local materials but these were not shown and were brought out almost reluctantly upon request, even though they served a good purpose. I had the feeling much more could be done to promote the use of local materials. More could be done as well to build upon the teaching potential of local games and traditions. These could be explored profitably in a workshop devoted to the theme.

5. Discipline and rewards. Children seemed to be remarkably disciplined. Routine, teacher authority, and group pressure rather than through any kind of physical punishment. I was told that in many places, the old practice of requiring children to sit quietly with one hand behind their back had only recently given way to a more lenient form of discipline. The role of the foot pump organ as a means of keeping classroom control seemed very important.

In contrast with most Western preschools, I rarely saw children's works displayed on walls as a kind of reward. In two or three places this was done, usually, however, in a kind of booklet form so that one could not see all the pictures at once and only one child could actually see her drawing on display.

Training

A continuum exists of varied and innovative approaches to pre-service and in-service training (see field notes, October 14). These vary in the length of time involved, the balance between theory and practice, and in the method used (classroom lecture, micro-teaching experiences, distance learning, supervision on the job). My impression from the visit was that, while extremely varied, the emphasis in training programmes nevertheless tends to be on lecture or observation, on book learning rather than practice, and on instruction by qualified academics rather than learning from supervisors or peers.

The training of rural kindergarten teachers seems to be a major problem for the system. For the most part, normal school graduates are not found in the rural areas. Moreover, rural schools tend to be small institutions in which there are few teachers (sometimes only one) with no qualified director or head teacher to provide assistance. Thus, the problem is not only one of initial training, but of follow-on supervision and support that reinforces the

training received.

The most interesting training-related initiative I observed during my trip was in a semi-rural area near Xiamen (see field notes, October 23) where an itinerant supervisor was providing on-the-job assistance to a group of 40 (I believe that was the number) rural kindergarten teachers. The supervising woman was a normal school graduate who visited the kindergartens periodically and was responsible for bringing the teachers together once a month for some form of lecture or discussion. This supervisory approach struck me as innovative and useful, providing a rural substitute for the director or head teacher found in urban kindergartens. The number of kindergartens the supervisor was expected to cover was much too large, however. Adding an additional person would have cut the number from 40 to 20. This system of training and support seems to me to merit modification and extension to other areas.

Parental Education

During the trip I visited several preschools with parental schools attached (but I did not see such a school in session), was treated to an elaborate performance put on by a parent group (in Xinyu; see field notes, October 20), and visited two advisory services for parents, one operating on a Sunday in a children's park (Nanchang, notes, October 18), the other in conjunction with a pre-natal and peri-natal service (Xiamen; notes, October 23).

A systematic view of parental education programmes is presented in a report from Elizabeth Croll titled, "Schools for Parents, A Summary Report on Family Education in the People's Republic of China" (UNICEF, June, 1987). In her report, Croll describes the organization of family education programmes, discusses their content and the materials used, sets out various modalities established, and indicates parental and teacher responses to the movement. My own observations add relatively little to what Croll has reported.

1. Planning and Organisation. With the extensive and efficient structure of the ACWF in place to provide the mobilizing and organizing power needed, the rapid growth of parental education programmes is easier to understand than it would be otherwise. One means used by the ACWF to organize and implement parental education programmes has been the establishment of "key groups" usually called Family Education Research Organizations at various levels — local, provincial, etc. These organizations have helped bring together government personnel with specialists from various fields in order to identify problems and potential solutions and to help in the implementation of the programmes. Although the amount of direct "research" done by these group seems to be quite small, they seem to have provided an effective way of uniting people and knowledge from the different fields relevant to early childhood development that are needed for programme implementation. Because "integration" of knowledge and interests is always a difficult problem in early childhood programming, this is an important achievement.

I was told (and the Croll report suggested) that the most successful forms of family education seemed to be those associated with preschools or primary

schools. Programmes for newly weds have been difficult to organize, although there have been some successes. The pre-natal and peri-natal programmes have also been less successful. The Parent Advisory Service I visited in Nanchang, held in the children's park, seemed to respond to questions of parents with 5 or 6 year olds who were brought to the park. The drop-in pre-natal and peri-natal service in Xiamen was certainly not crowded. And the pre-school and primary-school related parent schools focus their content, logically, on children aged 3 or above. With the one-child policy, this does not help parenting for a next child as it would in most parts of the world. That leaves the family education programme with a major challenge — to improve their coverage for prospective parents and parents of new-borns and infants.

2. Content and methods. My total lack of Chinese made it difficult to form opinions about the specific content of the parent schools. I did not, for instance determine whether, in parental education programmes for the pre- and peri-natal group, information was being provided about the value of beginning to breastfeed at once and about colostrum. However, from the answers given at the Advisory Services, from the topics displayed on walls of rooms used for parent schools, and the listing of topics contained in Croll's report, the content seemed, generally, both pertinent and adjusted to local interests and needs. In all programmes, a strong component of moral education was present.

A variety of methods were being used: lectures, passing out pamphlets, radio and television programmes, quizzes, and organized activities for parents and children. In some cases, apparently, parents view videos brought by mobile units. When I asked whether there was coordination between the radio or television programmes and the parent school discussions, I was told that would be difficult to do because the organization of the parent schools is so decentralized.

In her report, Croll notes an expansion in the publication and production of manuals, texts, and other reading materials for parents on the physical and psychological development of children. However, she also recommends UNICEF directly sponsor the production and duplication of audio-visual aides that could be used in parental education programmes and suggests assistance with the provision of reading materials for distribution to peasant parents in a format and language appropriate their environment and their own educational levels.

In brief, my first brush with the parental education programmes left me with little doubt that they could be effective in improving the welfare of children, both by imparting knowledge to parents and by helping them organize and draw upon community services. Croll mentions also an important role for rural areas, helping to create demand. She concludes,

"The potential for parents' schools of the collecting together of parents into community-based classes for the systematic dissemination of information and materials is unrivalled and offers an opportunity to take advantage of nationwide capacities and methods to improve the knowledge and education of parents in child-specific needs . . ."

The challenge seems to lie with the rural areas and with expectant parents and parents of children ages 0 to 3.

Programme Observations and Suggestions

In this section, I will look at my three-week experience from a UNICEF programme standpoint, concentrating on UNICEF's relationship to the two main collaborators - the All-China Women's Federation and the State Education Commission - with whom I had the most contact while in China. Again, I must emphasize that these are observations of a first-time visitor to China who saw only a small piece of the much larger whole.

In an earlier section, I observed that the potential is high for modest inputs from UNICEF to have an important affect, given the present climate of change, the availability of counterpart resources, and the dedication of the people with whom the Office for China in Beijing (OCB) works.

All-China Women's Federation

During my visit I was very impressed by the organizational and mobilizing ability of the Women's Federation and by the competence and dedication of the Federation's members. I was also impressed by the way in which the organization incorporates a concern for the intersecting needs of women and children. Organizational expression of the Federation's concern for children is given in several ways. A child welfare department exists - with goals of assisting and up-grading nurseries and kindergartens. The ACWF's College for Managerial Personnel includes pre-school educational administration as one of its three specialized lines. The Child Development Centre for China falls under the ACWF as well. In short, collaboration with ACWF is an appropriate and important way for UNICEF to assist young children in China.

I will comment on five areas of actual or potential collaboration between UNICEF and the Women's Federation.

1. The Child Development Centre of China.

Time spent at the CDCC (see field notes, October 15) was much too short for me to form well-grounded opinions about what it is doing and where it is going. The following observations would need to be checked.

a. Research capacity. My impression was that the in-house research capacity was limited and that a major portion of the research work being done was actually done outside by associated institutions with CDCC playing a coordinating and funding role. It was good to meet Dr. Fang, the psychologist who was previously with the Institute of Psychology and was now in charge of the child psychology research within CDCC.

b. Research agenda. The outline of a research agenda emerged from our conversations, focussing on questions of measurement and milestones and, within the child psychology part, on the single child family. In approaching the single child family, five topics were identified which, when taken together, had a certain integrity to them. Work on measures of child development still seemed to focus heavily on the physical side.

However:

(1) An interesting inter-disciplinary study was mentioned that is being carried out near Beijing examining growth and development and their relationship.

(2) Apparently, there are data from the study of 200,000 children that would allow analysis of mental development. Plans to analyze that information were mentioned but seemed to be linked to the arrival of a computer. I did not have an opportunity to see the data or to talk in detail about how the analysis would be done.

The process of setting a research agenda was not clear to me. My impression was that the agenda was a mix of ideas from the professional advisory group guiding the CDCC and the particular interests of staff members. There seemed to be room for establishing a clearer set of guidelines for choosing research areas and topics to be carried out and supported.

c. Information gathering. The CDCC is well positioned to gather (and disseminate - see below) information about child development. That line of activity has not yet been well developed. Discussion of the activity was linked to the arrival of a computer. That indicates to me a viewpoint within the Centre that could lead to an expensive and passive documentation approach to assembling information. As the information gathering and documentation develops, particular attention will have to be paid to making links with users that will allow the information gathered to be alive, useful and available. There is a natural risk of compartmentalization in this process in which documentalists become independent from users and their needs. Fortunately, the CDCC is at an early stage and the chance exists to make information gathering, synthesis, and dissemination a vital part of the organization.

I did not have the feeling that the CDCC was particularly aware of the research of others, but that may have been a communication problem on my part. They did not seem to be aware, for instance, of the testing by WHO of a developmental protocol in conjunction with a Chinese institution, or of the IEA study being done at the CIER.

d. Dissemination. The marvelously done display of CDCC history and of research results presented on the ground floor of the new building suggests an excellent in-house potential for publicizing and disseminating information. So did the several documents I saw, including the pamphlets and information cards for parents (which I subsequently saw being used in Nanchang) and the journal. I did not see research results converted into audio-visual tapes in a way that could be used in training programmes or in parental education. If that is not being done it is something that could be considered. As the information gathering and disseminating function of the CDCC grows, some coordination with the pre-school normal universities would be advisable, particularly in light of the recommendation made at the Fuzhou teacher training meeting by Working Group No. 1 to set up an information centre.

e. Research methods. A laboratory approach to research seems to dominate the in-house efforts at the CDCC.

I was told that work on child rearing patterns was being done by psychologists, in part because "there are no anthropologists in China."

I did not hear anything to lead me to believe that the Centre was considering programme evaluation as part of its responsibilities.

f. Relation to other parts of the Women's Federation. My impression was that the CDCC sees itself as a self-standing institution with considerable independence from the rest of ACWF and that the ACWF position toward CDCC is one of ambivalence. With the rapid growth of parental education programmes, the CDCC has an important role to play. This observation is made with considerable hesitation because it is not firmly based. However, given UNICEF's heavy commitment to the CDCC and the interest in parental education being mobilized by other parts of the ACWF, I certainly would want to see the potential for collaboration realized.

2. Parental Education

From my visit and the Croll report come several programme observations.

a. Rapid growth. The spread of parental education schools and advisory services during the last two years is a powerful illustration of the ability the Women's Federation has to mobilize people. This movement, important in its own right, happens also to be consistent with UNICEF's search for ways to help empower parents and to sustain results of mass campaigns. It therefore merits UNICEF collaboration.

b. Reaching parents of children aged 0-3. My main observation, based on visits and the reading, is that efforts to reach parents of 3 to 6 year olds are more successful than efforts to reach expectant parents or parents of children aged 0-2 with basic information about psycho-social aspects of development.

c. Content. It would be useful to analyze the content of selected family education programmes for the age period 0 to 3 and look for ways in which that might be strengthened, particularly with relation to programmes in rural areas.

d. Method. Because experience suggests that mass media communications are more likely to be heeded and lead to change of behaviour if followed by discussions in groups that reinforce and personalize the ideas, an attempt to link the mass media messages with the group meetings of parent schools would be worthwhile. If this is being done in one or more areas, the result might be evaluated and, assuming there is an impact, the examples could be publicized. If this is not being done, an experiment might be carried out. Where television reaches a significant audience, a similar approach might be taken.

e. Literacy and parental education. One of the few times I received a negative answer when I asked whether a particular approach was being tried out was when I asked whether child development content was incorporated into literacy programmes for women. This would seem a natural thing to do if it really is not being done. While learning to read, women might also be empowered with information about, for example, the ability of a newborn to use its senses, or the value of colostrum. The recommendation is consistent with others made by Croll about providing appropriate material for parents in rural areas.

3. Children's Activity Parks

In both Nanchang and Xiamen, I was taken to children's activity parks. The Women's Federation was supportive of these and wondered whether UNICEF could provide some assistance. The Nanchang Park, still being developed, will include several educational features in addition to playground and amusement park attractions. The park in Xiamen was more for amusement. Both parks were for children of school age rather than young children.

Although these parks, which partake of the Disneyland syndrome mentioned earlier, will certainly be places that children will enjoy, and they will meet a recreational need, they did not seem to me to be a high priority for UNICEF support.

4. All-China Women's Federation and Kindergartens

Because my visit was mainly to urban areas and because there was an understandable desire to put the best foot forward, I do not have as good a feel as I would like for the ACWF work in less-favoured and remote areas. Nevertheless, I did see some community-based and rural programmes in operation leading to the following observations.

a. A major role for ACWF. The responsibility taken by the ACWF for mobilizing support to organize and up-grade community-based and individually-run kindergartens clearly makes it the key actor in helping extend pre-school services to less-favoured areas.

b. A question of standards. As indicated earlier, I had the feeling that the high standards for pre-school facilities being promoted by the ACWF as well as by the SEC have a double edge: they help motivate communities to provide quality facilities for children, but they also carry a cost that makes widespread adherence to the standards difficult. While recognizing the rationale behind an approach that seeks first an improvement in facilities, I could not help but feel that a better balance might be called for between attention to facilities and attention to how they are used. It would be particularly interesting for the ACWF to promote experimentation with more efficient use of space, particularly with respect to alternative arrangements for napping.

c. Educational materials. More could be done by the ACWF to promote the making and use of toys made from local materials (sometimes throw-away

material). The donated toys of the ACWF tended to be toys that had to be purchased. The examples I saw of teacher prepared materials were rarely "hands-on" toys for children but were more "teaching aides" or decorations. During visits it was necessary to show a specific interest in home-made toys before they would be brought out of hiding - suggesting a perception by teachers that these were really not appropriate. Toy-making could be done in parental education programmes. The ACWF might promote, under the new economic policy, local toy-making industries as income-generating projects for women. These efforts would, however, have to begin with a consideration of how the toys would be used.

d. Training. Potentially, one of the most productive actions the ACWF might take to strengthen training would be to improve on-the-job training linked to supervision using itinerant supervisors in rural areas. Experiments might be run to examine the effect of reducing the number of kindergartens per supervisor. If this form of job-related training seems to have merit, it might be extended to other areas.

5. College for Managerial Personnel.

a. Managing Rural Programmes. Large kindergartens in urban areas clearly require a kind of management skill that the ACWF programme can help to provide. An equally important challenge, however, is the management of rural programmes consisting of several kindergartens in which the need for support through supervision and exchange is at least as great as in the cities. Could the Managerial College play a more active role in developing management systems for the rural areas?

b. Use of AV equipment. From the brief observation of video tapes produced at the College, I came away with the feeling that better use could be made of the equipment. That will undoubtedly come with time, but it is a process that can be helped along by more direct linking between those with responsibility for the content of programmes and those who handle the cameras.

State Education Commission

From visits to kindergartens and normal schools and from participation in the Fuzhou meeting come several observations and comments.

a. Use of AV equipment. My observation regarding the use of audio-visual equipment in the normal schools parallels that made above for the ACWF Managerial College. Although the technology is now in place and good use is being made of the equipment, I wondered whether the content of the messages being provided might be improved. The software competition mentioned at the Fuzhou meeting and planned for the coming year may help to fill the gap.

b. Training and supervision. Linking training to on-the-job supervision of kindergarten teachers in rural areas, as I observed in the semi-rural area near Xiamen, struck me as innovative and useful. I wondered whether a increase in investment in this kind of job-related training might not be more important than some of the short courses being provided or some of the funding

that goes into construction of facilities. Strengthening the supervisory system, viewed as a form of training, would help to provide continuity in training over time. If evaluations have not been done to look at the effectiveness of this kind of supervisory effort, undertaken in several different ways (e.g. with variations in the number of kindergartens for which a supervisor is responsible) then I would suggest they be carried out. If results are as positive as I think they would be, then an effort to bolster supervision on a broad scale would be worthwhile. The SLC and the ACWF would need to collaborate in such an effort.

c. Strengthening evaluation. While in China, I did not find much attention to programme evaluation. In fact, I was told in one discussion that there was very little evaluation because so much energy had to be devoted to expansion. The research community seemed to have little interest in programme evaluation. Would it be possible for the SLC to build an evaluation component into its programmes in a way that would strengthen programming as expansion is occurring? In the previous paragraph, I have given one example of how evaluation might be used to help set directions.

d. Recommendations from the Fuzhou meeting. Several recommendations outlined by Working Group No 1 in the Fuzhou meeting struck me as particularly worthy of consideration by UNICEF. These were:

1. Production of a national video show dealing with how to educate children at home.
2. Compilation and editing of comparatively high quality textbooks for training through correspondence courses.
3. Establishing a national kindergarten information center. One function of that center would be to obtain information from other countries and to publish it. This, in turn, was related to a proposal for an international meeting on early childhood development in 1988. It was not clear to me how much these particular activities might overlap with information gathering and disseminating activities the CDEC is supposed to carry out.

Postscript

I end this report where I began, with thanks to my hosts, and with the hope that I have not overstepped boundaries in trying to make suggestions based on too little information and experience. I close also with a lingering and forceful impression of the excitement, openness to change, commitment, and dedication to hard work characterizing those I met during the trip, all of which should make UNICEF's collaborative task a gratifying one.

A T T A C H M E N T S

ITINERARY AND PROGRAMME: CHINA TRIP
 Robert G. Myers
 October 11 - November 2, 1987

October

- Sun. 11 Depart New York
- Mon. 12 Arrive Beijing, early evening.
- Tues. 13 Morning: UNICEF orientation
 Afternoon: Visit Beijing Municipal Education Bureau
- Wed. 14 Morning: Tourism - Forbidden City and Summer Palace
 Afternoon: Visit Beijing Normal University
- Thurs. 15 Morning: Visit All-China Women's Federation, Managerial
 Personnel College and Child Development Centre of China
 Afternoon: Visit All-China Women's Federation
- Fri. 16 Tourism - Great Wall and Ming Tombs
- Sat. 17 Early flight to Nanchang.
 Morning: Visit Community-run Kindergarten
 Afternoon: Visit Individually-run Kindergarten
- Sun. 18 Morning: Visit Children's Park and Parental Advisory Service
 and Children's Activity Park
 Afternoon: Discussion with Women's Federation
- Mon. 19 Morning: Visit State-run Kindergarten and Community-run
 Kindergarten
 Afternoon: Travel by car to Xinyu
 Evening: Performance by children and parents from Xinyu.
- Tues. 20 Morning: Visit ACWF Community-run Kindergarten
 Afternoon: Visit Country-run Kindergarten (Fen Yie) and
 Village-run Kindergarten (Guang Village, Yan Quao Township)
- Wed. 21 Morning: Return to Nanchang, flight to Xiamen.
 Afternoon: Briefing from Women's Federation
- Thurs. 22 Morning: Visit Community-run and State-run Kindergartens,
 and Goulongyu Island
 Afternoon: Pre-school Teacher Competition
 Evening: Correspondence Course Session
- Fri. 23 Morning: Visit Factory-run Kindergarten and Children's
 Activity Park
 Afternoon: Visit Rural Kindergarten and visit to Pre-natal
 Education Programme

Itinerary and Programme: China Trip
 Robert G. Myers
 October 11 - November 2, 1987
 Page Two

ITINERARY AND PROGRAMME: CHINA TRIP
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 October 11 - November 2, 1987

October

- | | | |
|--------|----|--|
| Sat. | 24 | Morning: Visit Women's Federation Kindergarten
Afternoon: Tourism and Visit Jinmei Education Complex |
| Sun. | 25 | Travel by bus to Fuzhou Province |
| Mon. | 26 | <u>Teacher Training Meeting</u> . Opening session and selected presentations. |
| Tue. | 27 | Morning: Visit Fuzhou Pre-school Normal School and Model Kindergarten
Afternoon: Visit Fuzhou Primary School Normal School and Primary School
Evening: Performance |
| Wed. | 28 | Lectures by Foreign Experts. |
| Thurs. | 29 | Tourism - Fuzhou. |
| Fri. | 30 | Tourism - Quanzhou. |
| Sat. | 31 | Closing Ceremony of Teacher Training Meeting. |

November

- | | | |
|------|---|-------------------------|
| Sun. | 1 | Return to Beijing |
| Mon. | 2 | Return to United States |

TRIP REPORT: CHINA
 October 11 - November 2, 1987
 Robert G. Myers

FIELD NOTES

Beijing, October 13

Beijing Municipal Education Bureau (BMEB).

At the BMEB, Madame Ho Xiao explained that in pre-liberation days, pre-school lagged behind. At the time of the founding of New China, there were only 15 nurseries and kindergartens serving 2,400 children. Two kinds of kindergartens were encouraged: state-run and community-run. The state-run institutions were to serve as models. Government, factories, universities, and neighbourhood units were all encouraged to set up pre-schools, according to their own needs.

Currently, there are 3,502 kindergartens in municipal Beijing of which, 119 are run by the Education Department, 1,280 by government agencies, colleges, and other administrative units, leaving more than 2,100 run by neighbourhood committees - in Beijing proper and in the surrounding rural areas. The kindergartens enroll 340,000 three to six year olds. In nurseries there are another 63,000 children (62% in Greater Beijing). My notes indicate that the admission rate for nurseries and kindergartens is 48% while the attendance (?) is 84.5%.

The Beijing Municipal Education Bureau is responsible for institutions where children are age three or above.

There are 53,000 teachers and other staff in the nurseries and kindergartens.

Beijing is divided into 8 districts. There is a pre-school normal school in each. Training courses for pre-school teaching are located in vocational schools and pre-school normals. These are capable of producing, together, about 1,200 new teachers each year.

Because pre-schooling is developing so rapidly there are not enough trained teachers. Therefore, secondary school graduates are often hired. About 30% of the teachers are "qualified," many as a result of in-service training. Five years ago only 16% were qualified. Another 60% of the present teachers have more than 1/2 year of training, usually in correspondence courses.

There is no study comparing normal school graduates with in-service graduates.

At the university I was treated to a well-organized and informative lecture on pre-school training by Professor Zhu.

Before 1949, teacher training centres were generally organized by churches. After 1949, some pre-school training was set up under Dr. Chen Heguin. In 1952, a pre-school section was created within Beijing University. Prior to 1966, there were only 5 pre-school centres in the country, one in each of the five administrative regions. These disappeared during the cultural revolution, but after 1978, the 5 again began to function and the number of institutions began to grow - from 5 to 22.

The main tasks of the universities are to train 1) teachers for the pre-school teacher training institutions; 2) managers of pre-schools, and 3) researchers. Programmes of many kinds are available.

- a. Graduate training (for teaching in normal universities or researchers).
- b. Undergraduate training (for teaching in pre-school colleges).
- c. Two-year undergraduates (for teaching in pre-schools or vocational schools with pre-school training or managers in some countries).
- d. Refresher courses.
- e. In-service training courses (since 1980).
- f. Evening schools (for teachers who want to do pre-school work in the evening).
- g. Correspondence training. During summer or winter vacations, teachers give lectures in various cities to correspondence students. (For correspondence or evening courses an entrance exam is required.)
- h. Short-term training (2 to 4 weeks).
 - (1) Provides basic knowledge. Professors go to other cities and provinces for short courses with pre-school teachers or head teachers. Courses are in education, psychology, physiology, and the six basic curriculum areas.
 - (2) Refresher courses enroll teachers in normal university or pre-school or research institutions with training focussing on one subject. Sometimes these involve foreign experts (for example, Lillian Katz and Bernard Spodek from Illinois).

Professor Zhu also spoke about pre-school normal schools, pre-school education classes in general normal schools and mid-level vocational schools and pre-school classes in education colleges (for high school, primary, and kindergartens) and teacher training colleges (primary and kindergarten).

Pre-School Normal Schools. Most pre-school normal schools were founded post-1955. Up to 1966, there were 19. Today there are 59 pre-school normal schools, including 4 in some provinces and none in some provinces even though every province is supposed to have at least one. About 28,000 students in China are in pre-school normal schools. The task of pre-school normal schools is to train for kindergartens.

For pre-school normal schools, there are 2 systems:

A. Pre-service training can be three-year courses or four-year courses. The state Education Commission says that there must be at least 12 classes in each school and not more than 24, but some have surpassed 24, e.g. Xian 36 classes.

B. In-service training.

1. Some in-service training is arranged for people from specific organizations, e.g. if a factory would like to have a teacher trained it will give money for training at a pre-school normal school. Upon graduation, must return to their organization.

2. Some in-service training is short-term - 10 days to 8 months. Some examples of short-term training are:

(a) In-service training with time off from work during the training period (e.g. 3 months). (In Beijing, in 10 years, 10,100 have received such short-term training.)

(b) Rural short courses in which teachers go to rural areas to give courses, usually for 10 days, and with a practical, not theoretical bias.

(c) Radio/television courses. (In Beijing, the pre-school normal school uses radio (1,000s); Shanghai uses television.)

(d) Mobile training. UNICEF has helped pre-school normal school with audio-visuals and vehicles.

Does it work? It is very effective because teachers provide video tapes making the topic very vivid. Also, some parents and teachers would not have a chance to leave for training.

The Pre-school Department is thinking of producing videos for remote/rural areas.

Students in Department have a chance to go to remote areas for social investigation. When they go, they go with teachers. They become sensitive to the local situation and area.

Before teachers give lectures in outlying areas, they hold a seminar to determine what is needed and what people would like to know.

C. Pre-school education classes in general normal schools and mid-level vocational schools are 3 year courses. Graduates will teach in kindergarten (so similar to pre-school normal school).

D. Pre-school classes in education college (high school, primary, and kindergarten) and teacher training schools (primary and kindergarten) and colleges are mostly refresher or certificate, not degrees.

We discussed the balance of theory and practice in training. In the normal university, students have three kinds of practice during the four years. One month is spent in a kindergarten. One month is spent in a pre-school normal school. One month is spent in a social investigation. Before graduation, another two months in a kindergarten while writing a thesis (I think that is what was said). Also, in a psychology course, each student takes a child as a subject of research. They visit the child often and try to help the child develop.

With the above, Professor Zhu nevertheless said the lack of practical experience was a problem. More and more people are suggesting that the university hire people with teaching experience. There is a discussion in the State Education Commission about these matters at present.

Other comments:

- o There is little evaluation of pre-school programmes because so much time and energy has to go into expansion.

- o Because people are at many levels, the question is not what kind of training is best. Many kinds are needed.

- o In Beijing, if a requirement were to plan to train all to a pre-school normal school level, it would take 25 years.

- o In rural areas young girls are taking the place of older "baby minders." These girls need training and short-term courses are arranged. However, many get married so there is a fairly high turnover.

- o Mobile training is used in some areas.

- o Very few graduates of pre-school normal schools work in rural areas.

At the beginning of 1987 Beijing Normal received video equipment from UNICEF. Two workshops have been held. They have produced some videos. Professor Zhu said that since Beijing University is the key university for the whole country, tapes produced will be at a high level - to be used by other universities and sometimes for use on satellite television for the entire country. The video equipment has not been used in rural areas.

A suggestion was made that UNICEF might like to hold a workshop to show how other countries carry out teacher training.

Beijing Normal University is the centre of the teacher training network in North China.

Most teachers in the pre-school department are very aware of conditions in rural areas. Last year 40 or 50 went to rural areas to carry out research and training. Next year a group will go to the grasslands of Inner Mongolia.

Beijing, October 15

This day was devoted entirely to becoming acquainted with activities of the All-China Women's Federation. In the morning, I visited the Managerial College and the Child Development Centre of China (CDCC); in the afternoon, conversations were held with staff of the various departments in ACWF headquarters.

A general description of the ACWF is attached, providing information about organization (at five levels; urban/rural), purposes and tasks, and operational departments.

The Chinese Women's Managerial Personnel College

At the College, I met with: Mme. An Shufen (Deputy Secretary, Party Committee of the College), Mme. Shu Maimei (Director of the Pre-School Department), and Mr. Li Wu Chen (Audio-Visual Director).

The College was established in 1949 as the Women's Cadre School. In 1984 its name was changed to the ACWF College for Women's Managerial Personnel and in 1987, changed again to the Chinese Women's Managerial Personnel College. These changes seem to represent a general broadening of function and participation beyond the party and beyond the central task of ideological and moral mobilization.

Three courses are offered dealing, respectively, with the women's liberation movement, pre-school administration and law. The 400 women currently enrolled in courses come from all over the country for a two-year period and then return to their regions. Admission is through a standard examination. Some short-term or refresher courses are also provided by the College.

The ACWF and the State Education with which it collaborates would like to see the College expand to include two more departments: business management and computer management. Plans are made to set up a small factory in conjunction with the College that would produce toys and clothing for children. The factory would also serve as a place for students to learn and could also provide some supplemental income to the College.

The pre-school administration programme was set up 2-1/2 years ago. With the rapid expansion of kindergartens there is an increasing need for managerial personnel. Students in the College's programmes come from the county level and should have 5 years working experience with at least a senior middle school educational background. Most students have been 1) head teachers in kindergartens, or 2) health care workers in kindergartens, or 3) women's cadre workers in charge of child welfare programmes for the Women's Federation, or 4) teachers in kindergartens. Course work includes some basic early childhood education theory and management courses. The first year is

more general. The second year involves specialization in child psychology, pedagogy or child health as well as management. The pre-school programme had a music room, an exercise (or physical education) room, and a hygiene lab.

Because I had not yet visited the larger pre-school found in urban areas nor seen the magnitude of the task I did not adequately appreciate the need for these management courses at the time of my visit to the College. After visits to Nanchang, Xiamen, and Fuzhou the importance of management was much clearer. This is mainly, but certainly not exclusively, an urban problem. When responsibility for large scale parent education programmes is added in the need is even greater.

Mr. Li explained that \$140,000 in audio-visual equipment had been received from UNICEF, with the first batch arriving in March 1986 and the second in 1987. The Chinese government provided 500,000 RMB as counterpart funds. Although the equipment has not been in place for a long time full use is being made of it. For instance, 210 hours of teaching tapes are now available covering such topics as psychological problems (40 hours), famous persons lectures (30 hours), and pre-school health education. Teachers lectures at the College (including visitor teachers) have been taped so they can be used at the provincial levels. Demonstration tapes have been made of teaching in pre-schools. I think I was told that tapes of practice teaching experience are made and shown to the student, but I am not sure how or whether that happens (see below).

A one-week audio-visual workshop was organized for 38 specialists from 19 provincial institutions where tape players have been provided.

We were shown several tapes made at the College:

1) An early tape on child nutrition, done with one camera was straight lecture and did not make particularly good use of the potential of video to make topics vivid and interesting.

2) A tape of practice teaching documented a visit by College students to a Beijing pre-school. The music background was very loud and distracting. The visit was to observe what a model teacher does, not to tape practice teaching by College students. All the model teaching featured children in rows directed by the teachers. Five-year olds were being taught how to tell time (appropriate?). When I asked about learning through play and choice by pre-school students of activities, I was told that occurred "after class."

3) Teaching aides. Recently, a national exhibit of teaching aids was held featuring use of inexpensive materials. Many of the items were very elaborate and decorative but not particularly functional. Few were "hands-on" toys for children. There were some interesting items from minority areas - a mosque, a house on stilts, but again, more "talking" than "doing" aides. I was told afterward that there were many functional items in the exhibit and that, unfortunately, the tape reflected a relatively uninformed bias by the cameraman who picked up the sorts of things described above.

Child Development Centre of China (CDCC)

The time spent at the CDCC was much too brief. I did not feel I had an adequate opportunity to get acquainted, let alone understand CDCC.

In a briefing by Mme. Chung, Head of the Programme Division, I learned the following: The CDCC recently moved into a new building which houses three labs, six divisions, and a general administrative office. The 97 staff members include 60 professionals. The labs are for child nutrition, child growth and monitoring, and child psychology. The six divisions are:

- a. Programme Planning
- b. Training (in conjunction with training bases in other provinces)
- c. Publication (publishing pamphlets and a quarterly journal)
- d. Information (including a computer system and a library)
- e. Equipment
- f. Personnel

The CDCC's leadership (Director and Deputy Director) is bolstered by a Specialists Committee of famous scientists (from health, nutrition, and psychology) who help to judge proposals presented to CDCC.

Cooperative relations exist between the CDCC and four Associate Centres:

- a. The Institute of Psychology within the Chinese Academy of Science (Psychology)
- b. Beijing Child Health Care Institute (Child Health Care)
- c. The Preventive Medicine Academy (Child Nutrition)
- d. Beijing Medical University (Mother and Infant Research)

In addition four regional centres carry out projects in association with the CDCC. For example, the Guanzhou Institute is carrying out research on the socialization of children ages 3 to 6 as part of a larger programme of research on the only child (see below). The Shanghai Institute is working on "scientific child rearing."

The substance of CDCC work is focussed on: a) physical development, b) young baby development, and c) child psychology centred on the only child and on mental development.

A journal called Child Development of China presents disciplinary research on development nutrition, and early education. The journal is directed to child health workers, pediatricians, child psychologists and others. In a 1986 issue, selected at random, there were articles on how to take care of children, on breastfeeding, ORT, and an index for parents on how to educate their young children.

Publications include material on physical and mental factors affecting normal development directed to parents, kindergarten teachers, and nurses. Also, a pamphlet on scientific child-rearing (ages 0-3) is being used in the parent advisory and education programmes promoted through the ACWF. A set of cards is also available covering height/weight norms to three years of age, common nutrition problems, how to be qualified parents, hours for sleep and

other topics. A pre-natal booklet is available.

Five areas of research were discussed:

a. Child psychology work is focussed on the single child family. The particular themes being researched are:

1. Parental expectations. This research is being done in Beijing and, when touring the CDCC building, we saw some testing being carried out in the child psychology lab related to this theme. The research seems to be laboratory research.

2. Teacher expectations.

3. Child-rearing styles. Data apparently came from many parts of China. Work is being done in Nanjing and one other place.

4. Family structure is being examined at the Cooperating Institute of Psychology.

5. Socialization of children, ages 3 to 6 is being explored at the Guanzhou Institute.

Discussion of this area brought out several points. First, there are few anthropologists in China so child-rearing work falls to psychologists. Second, a study is in progress (at the Institute of Psychology?) comparing only children and children with siblings from birth to age 3. Third, symposia were held in 1984, 1984 and 1985 to report on child development research. In 1986, a workshop was held on the situation of children in China. In 1988 another symposium will be held. Fourth, the Centre for Child Psychology is in the first phase of a project dealing with psychological development scales for ages 0-3. Fifth, in the Institute of Psychology there are projects dealing with children's play and toys and with bi-lingual teaching in minority areas.

This information (which really needs to be double-checked) came from Dr. Fang Yiying who is now at CDCC directing the psychology research and was formerly at the Institute of Psychology. Professor Fang is collaborating with the growth and development monitoring section of CDCC in a pilot study in Tsching County near Beijing that is looking for relationships between physical and mental development. The study apparently involves detailed observations (?) of mental development.

Dr. Fang did not seem to know about the WHO study of child development (or I did not describe it correctly).

b. Growth and development monitoring. This project has gathered data from a large sample of 200,000 children, ages 0-7, in order to establish developmental milestones. To date, analysis has been of physical development milestones (e.g. tooth eruption, closing of the fontanel). Mental developmental data has not been analyzed. That is to be done by the Growth and Development Section, in conjunction with the Beijing Child Health Care Institute.

c. Nutrition. We did not discuss this area.

d. Information collection in child development. This area is still at the idea stage. In part, realization is awaiting the arrival of a large computer.

e. An ORT pilot dissemination project is being carried out in two border areas.

The above information suggested many areas that would have been interesting to explore in greater detail but there was no time.

The CDCC people were not aware of work at the Central Institute for Educational Research.

Headquarters of the All-China Women's Federation

Present for the discussion were the Director of ACWF's International Division and individuals from the Women's Weekly, Children's Rights and Interests, the Children's Welfare Department, and the Chinese Women's History Project and Publicity. Attachment C provides a general description of the All-China Women's Federation.

After a briefing that included presentation of an excellent English-language videotape describing the ACWF, most of our discussion time was spent talking about the ACWF work in the Child Welfare Department. That Department has four programmes: a) Nurseries and Kindergartens, b) Family Education, c) Coordination, and d) the Children's Foundation.

Some statistics were provided on nurseries and kindergartens. Of the 170,000 nurseries and kindergartens in China in 1986, 78 percent were community-run. Responsibility for these falls at least in part to the ACWF. Since the economic and political opening in 1978/9 the growth of individually-run nurseries and kindergartens has been rapid so that approximately 40,000 institutions now enroll about 450,000 children. The rapid development of individually-run kindergartens has occurred because state-run, factory-run, community-run...cannot meet the needs. Also time is more flexible. In addition, some local governments give subsidies to the individually-run programmes. In the Northeast, in Bandung, an individual can obtain a low-interest loan to establish a kindergarten and is given low prices for building materials. In Bandung, those in charge of the individually-run have formed an association with the Deputy Mayor as honorary president. Teachers in individually-run programmes have an equal opportunity for training in SEC training programmes. The quality of the individually-run programmes is extremely varied. There are different levels of quality for teachers and equipment. In Bandung, the individual nurseries and kindergartens are almost the same quality as state-run. Recently, ACWF held a workshop in Bandung on individually-run nurseries and kindergartens. They found that the staff often had very little training. Sometimes, however, retirees were running the schools or teaching. The workshop provided some short-term training. When I asked why ACWF rather than a normal school did the training, I was told that the teaching resources were local and that the Federation's role was an organizational one. Some tapes from Beijing Normal University were also used to disseminate health and nutrition information.

In 1985, ACWF allocated 400,000 yuan for training courses given to local head teachers in model kindergartens in cities and townships and nurseries and kindergartens that were community-run. These were 4-month training courses. Local Women's Federations also helped organize short courses in simple technical skills (dancing, painting, puppetry, etc.), provide some moral training for teachers, organize discussion groups, run teacher competition (with citations), and help publicize pre-school activities.

ACWF is compiling a book about making cost-effective toys scientifically which are suited to babies.

Parent Education. As of 1986, 40,000 parent schools had been established throughout the country. These are sometimes associated with educational institutions (nurseries or kindergartens or primary schools), sometimes with neighbourhood committees or factories or local agencies. Parental education also occurs in conjunction with after-school activity programmes and sometimes by television classes arranged for newly-weds, parents of newborns, and grandparents.

The parent education courses are organized by the Federation, but the teachers come from many sources, depending on the organization and the topics. In general, the most popular courses seem to be those associated with nurseries and kindergartens, although in the cities, courses held in primary and secondary schools also seem to work well and in rural areas the courses for parents of newborns seem to be popular. These schools for parents provide a forum for advice (which includes moral advice). There is an increasing need, recognized by parents for information about scientific child-rearing.

When I asked about the most common problems treated, the first examples given were feeding, behaviour problems, and obesity.

Another form of parent education occurs through open advisory activities. These may be organized on special days (the day of the child) or may be more regular "drop in" programmes (see notes from Xiamen).

In some rural areas a family education team is formed that travels around to publicize scientific child-rearing practices. The team is made up of medical, nutrition, and education personnel. It can monitor growth.

Publicity is given to good parenting by putting material in newspapers, in public places, and by citing model parents.

When I asked about child-rearing practices that might be problematic and in need of correction mention was made of separation of mother and baby at birth, of delayed beginning of breastfeeding related to misunderstanding of the value of colostrum, and of care for teeth.

I asked whether material on child-rearing was included in the literacy courses from women run by ACWF and was told there was none.

There has been no formal evaluation of parental education programmes.

UNICEF support has been used to help parental education. At the end of 1985, a workshop was held in Wuxi for training of teachers from parent schools. There are plans to hold another similar workshop, but funds have been short. In Sichuan, some training was given to about 800 family education workers. There a popular education programme has been developed. In some places, groups are brought together for discussion in conjunction with the radio programme. In mountainous areas, where reception is not so good, a tape is brought to villages and played in the loud speaker.

The ACWF cooperates with the Health Committee of Public Broadcasting to spread scientific child-rearing messages. Through its Coordinating Committee it also works with health, the SEC, Art and Culture, Trade Unions, Food and Daily Necessities. The Federation has the ability to bring such organizations together at various levels.

The parent education courses are organized by the Federation, but the teachers come from many sources, depending on the organization and the topic. In general, the most popular courses seem to be those associated with nurseries and kindergartens, although in the cities, courses held in primary and secondary schools also seem to work well and in rural areas the courses for parents of students seem to be popular. These schools for parents provide a forum for advice (which includes moral advice). There is an increasing need, recognized by parents for information about scientific child-rearing.

When I asked about the most common problems treated, the first examples given were feeding, behaviour problems, and obesity.

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Nanchang, October 17

The City

Nanchang is a city of 800,000 (in the city proper) and about 2.2 million in the immediately surrounding areas. It was here that the People's Liberation Army was formed. And here the new economic policy is evident in a range of small independent enterprises that have grown alongside the state-controlled heavy industry in the city where airplanes and trucks are manufactured and where lighter industries (electronics, textiles) are also located. The city is growing rapidly and here, as in Beijing, construction was everywhere.

The All-China Women's Federation

We were met and escorted by Madame Chen and Madame Sun. Madame Chen has been the Director of the Child Welfare Division (at the provincial level) for about a year after having held other administrative positions within ACWF. She is a 1957 graduate of the pre-school programme at Beijing Normal University. During the day we met also ACWF officials at the municipal and neighbourhood levels.

Visit to a Community-Run Neighbourhood Pre-School

The first pre-school visited was a "key" or model pre-school that had been started in 1953 as a small neighbourhood programme. The school now has 456 students enrolled in 8 classes. The school is primarily a daily school but also takes in some students on a weekly basis (I counted 20 beds). In addition, "odd-day" students are taken in during vacation periods when the state-run centres close leaving some families without a day care arrangement. In addition, a parent education programme is carried out.

We were greeted by singing children waving red pompoms who were specially dressed and made up for the occasion. Also greeting us were the energetic Director, Madame Xiao Fang Ming, and assorted local community, party, and ACWF folk involved with the school. Almost immediately we were whisked upstairs to a large second-story room in the old house where the school began (a house that had been donated by an 80+ year old woman). In the first of many such "briefings," we sat at a table loaded with fruit and candies, our teacups constantly refilled. The Director gave a thorough and animated description of the school. She began by noting that the quality of the education was improving so that it was almost at the level of the state-run schools. A phalanx of awards hung on the walls in testimony to the school's quality. The Director also said that:

o The old, middle-aged and young leaders of the community were all supportive.

o The school had received special donations of equipment and was helped to build a new building behind the old house by funds from ACWF and the neighbourhood committee.

o Parents include some civil servants, but are mostly factory workers or workers in small local entrepreneurial businesses.

o Teachers are mostly educated youth, not normal school graduates. During the last year, the quality of the staff was raised through short-term and in-service courses. Seventeen teachers took evening courses in their spare time, attending two hours each evening over 4-1/2 months. The course was organized by ACWF and drew upon education and health people. Graduates earned a certificate. Another 5 teachers took 6-month long refresher courses at Nanchang Normal. Teachers are also offered moral education on the job - by retired teachers who tell of the school's history and the importance of serving the community. Competitions among teachers are held for best teacher.

o The school offers specialized courses, including music, gymnastic exercises, and parenting.

o Recurrent expenses are met by charging a fee of 23 yuan per child per month. This covers 2 meals per day and 1 snack for daily attendees and 3 meals per day and 2 snacks for live-ins (for 6 yuan more). Everyone can afford the fee. In fact, most parents only pay 9 yuan of the 23 because their working unit pays the rest if they are a single child family.

o Priority in admission to the school is given to those living in vicinity.

Quarters were very cramped. Classes each had upwards of 50 children, all contained in rooms no larger than 25 feet by 25 feet. The kindergarten had a large entrance way, with play equipment including a slide and merry-go-round. The rooftop of the new building, a largish veranda, and a small courtyard provided other play spaces. However, children were all in their rooms so I do not know how these spaces were used.

Children seemed generally alert and healthy. The centre is large enough that it had a para-professional (who doubled as the bookkeeper) who was responsible for small health emergencies. She was supported by a woman from the community and wall charts displaying height and weight figures, non-anemia (which had dropped from 52% in 1979 to 36% in 1987) and immunization records. All children were said to have been immunized. About half the children, however, were said to be under weight.

As we walked about the two buildings, children were either involved in singing or clapping or were playing at small tables in groups of 5 to 6 in individual ways with plastic construction-type pieces that fit together. There seemed to be enough pieces for each child to have only 5 or 6 of the small pieces. They did not seem to be sharing or building joint constructions. In the room where we were received there was a piano, a small foot-pump organ, and a dozen or so toy musical keyboards.

After formalities and the discussion of the school, we were treated to a six-act performance of music and dance. Although 11 children took part, these were 5-6 year olds, with the exception of a delightful 4-1/2 year old who played songs on a electronic keyboard, showing great presence as well as the

ability to play. The finale included 4 little boys dressed up in grey People's Army uniforms, sporting a grey cap with a red star, and carrying guns. I was told the dance was to remind the children of the revolution.

On one wall was a schedule, by month, of Parent Education activities. These included: basic health information, how to prepare your child for school, the importance of education in the family, a parental award ceremony, a meeting for the parents of newborns, what to do for zinc deficiency, the importance of early childhood education, feeding, moral education, how to educate single children, and a summary meeting.

Visit to an Individually-run Kindergarten: The Peach Blossom Kindergarten

To get to this kindergarten we drove to the edge of the city, then drove down a small lane to a transitional area where intensive farming was being carried out on small plots and where a set of six-story apartment buildings were under construction. In this urban fringe community, one family had become "rich" under the new economic policy by setting up a business to recover minerals (copper, iron, zinc, etc.) from scrap materials. In order to do something with their wealth that would be of benefit to the community, they decided to set up a kindergarten. The local District Officer explained to us that because this was not set up as a way to earn money, but rather to share with the community, it was a very good thing and worthy of help from the community and ACWF. The community had provided the land to building the three-story house in which the kindergarten was located. They also helped with gifts of toys and teaching aids as did the provincial and town levels of ACWF.

This kindergarten was begun only in April of this year when Guo Xiao Ping, the teacher decided to return to her community. She had worked previously in a community-based programme, first as a teacher, then as Deputy Director. From a beginning with 27 children, the pre-school has already grown to 56 (37 children from farm families and 20 from working couples living in the village. Mme. Guo said there was a high demand because hours were flexible, the curriculum was the same as in state-run kindergartens and they provided good care and education.

The staff of 5 included 3 teachers, all secondary school graduates, none trained in normal schools. When asked about plans for the future, the Director said she would like to recruit normal school graduates, but when pressed, said that they did not necessarily make better teachers. Her first criterion for choosing a teacher was love for the children. Her teachers are dedicated and prepare lesson plans in their spare time. She would like them to have more musical training.

The 56 children were in two rooms on the ground floor - one of which was quite large. The large room had a raised platform along one wall. The raised area was covered with a thin mattress and was used for napping. Some homemade decorations were in evidence. Small, stackable red plastic chairs were available for each child. These could easily be picked up and moved around by the child (and were as part of a performance). A foot-pump organ was in the larger room and was used by the Director in the performance.

The Director said teaching is done through play - to make it fun. Teaching periods are short - 40 minutes for 6 year olds and 30 minutes for under age 6. It was not clear whether there was only one such session per day or several. Children are taken on outings. They have been taken to play in the sand. Some toys have been made from waste materials (e.g. stone in can for noise-maker).

As in the community-based school, families paid 23 yuan per month per child for which children received two meals and a snack.

We were shown the upper stories of the house. Judging from the electric appliances present, the family was indeed doing well financially.

Again, we were treated to a performance, this one however, a group performance involving the whole group of 5 and 6 year olds doing some of the things they would do during a regular day.

Because the school is small, it had no health person or facilities. Children must have a physical checkup before they enter.

Nanchang, October 18

Visit to Children's Park and Parent Advisory Service

The Children's Park is run by the district. It is a large-scale playground and very small-scale amusement park. The usual swings, climbing toys of a playground are present, but so are some mini-bumper cars, merry-go-rounds, and a centripetal round-about. In the centre is a small structure that was being used this Sunday (and is used every-other-Sunday) as a location for a parental advisory service.

Four parent advisors were present - a doctor, a nutritionist, and two educators. Each was seated at a small table with parents crowded around when we arrived, at about 9:00 am. The playground was not crowded, but there was, nevertheless, a press of people around the advisors. While we were listening to the education advisors, parents asked questions about when they should begin to teach the child to read characters, how they should deal with a child who incessantly asked "why" when there were many questions the parent could not answer, how to help overcome timidity, what to do with a boy who seemed to reverse characters (this seeming dyslexia was not recognized as such and was not treated well by the advisor), and how to deal with discipline in a situation where grandparents and parents had different beliefs but lived in the same house. According to the WF staff, common questions also have to do with why a child won't eat certain foods and why they are so selfish. In addition there are many health questions and the advisory service provides a quick opportunity for superficial diagnosis. For instance, one father was concerned by the fact that his child would not sleep if covered and he was worried that the child had pneumonia. The doctor listened to the child's breathing and said he had some bronchial congestion but not pneumonia.

The parents asking for advice seemed to be asking about their 5 year olds, perhaps by coincidence, but probably because these were the children being

brought to the park to play. I did not feel this form of advice to parents was reaching 0-3 year olds.

Parental education takes many forms (discussed elsewhere in these notes).

Visit to Children's Activity Centre

This ambitious centre, on the shores of a lake, is in a preparatory stage. It will cater to children up to age 14. The centre is to be a combination playground, mini-amusement centre, science museum, and special events place. The total cost of construction is estimated at 10,000,000 yuan, covering three phases - construction of: 1) a wall of toys, 2) a "wisdom palace," and 3) a mysterious tunnel (with special information inside). The city is the main funder, but a tight budget has slowed construction. Donations of about 840,000 yuan have been received. I think it was hoped that UNICEF might help, but I suggested this did not seem to fall within the UNICEF priorities.

In a description of plans and activities, the Director mentioned that a proposal had been made to CDCC to fund training of teachers in extra curricular activities. CDCC accepted and a 6-month course was arranged. Research was mentioned in the description, focussing on the development and use of toys. I suggested that trying to carry out research while doing all the other activities might prove to be an administrative headache and might require different staffing.

The Centre will be an interesting place for children. An old helicopter has been donated and is fitted with a 22-seat area inside for listening to information about aviation history. An extremely large and complicated apparatus has been built that incorporates climbing, slides, a maze, and other features, all in one. A strange feature - already functioning, is an animated version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs playing musical instruments and singing (plastic statues with movable parts). Next door is a shooting gallery in which "hits" by light ray guns set off innumerable happenings, from tin cans jumping to opening coffins.

This visit seemed to have little to do with the main purpose of the visit. I found myself volunteering to try and find information about science museums in the United States.

Discussion with Staff of the Women's Federation

Jiangxi Province has 34,000,000 people in 102 counties (including small cities classified and the county level). The province contributed greatly to the revolution and is one of six revolutionary provinces. During the war, one-sixth of those who died came from the province. There have been many female leaders from Jiangxi. Many joined the long march.

The revolutionary history (and counter-revolutionary reactions) and the mountainous landforms have, ironically, helped to keep Jiangxi from sharing equally in development, particularly in the mountainous areas. This is so despite the fact that the State Council and the Party Committee give some special attention to old revolutionary bases, especially in education for

children. Now, there is the beginning of a realization that the mental development of children begins at an early age - before school - and it is hoped this will bring more help to the pre-school area which has, according to the Federation's Director, been hampered by a very great lack of funds. Because Jiangxi is not as well-developed, generally speaking, "walking on two legs" is encouraged. In practical terms, that means taking various approaches to day-care and pre-school, according to the possibilities. The state-run and factory-run kindergartens are, therefore, better staffed and equipped than the grassroots efforts run by residence committees, or than the individual nurseries and kindergartens. The community-run programmes are receiving part of their funding from government or the Women's Federation, but mainly, the costs are covered by payment of fees (part of which may be reimbursed if a single-child family), and from the grassroots administrative fund. Individually-run efforts depend primarily on fees, but may also receive some local and Federation support.

Mme. Chen, Director of the Provincial-level Child Welfare Department of the Federation, made a well-organized presentation of the various pre-school and parent education activities in which the Federation is involved. She emphasized WF's work with the "non-formal" community-run and individual kindergartens and described support provided for training of pre-school teachers, updating equipment, and improving health care in kindergartens. She also set out various approaches to parental education:

For the training, the Women's Federation cooperates with normal schools and the education bureau in organized training courses. The training is provided at the provincial level for "key" teachers and heads of kindergartens in a 4-5 month course; and at the county and township levels for teachers in shorter (10 days to a month) theme-oriented courses treating a specific skill or topic. These are usually held at vacation times. All teachers working in community-run schools have had a chance to participate in at least one course. Some of the training is in conjunction with the CDCC. Another training line involves night school courses given by Nanchang Normal School (evenings over a 4-6 month period), or correspondence courses (from Beijing), or television courses.

The Federation helps organize activities for teachers - by area or county, bringing them together to share experiences. These activities are sometimes formal (with invited lecturers) and sometimes informal, discussing problems met in work and with some joint preparation of teaching plans. In these meetings, it is possible to draw on the experience of older, better-trained teachers. Competitions are also held among teachers as a way of encouraging self improvement. Initial selection for competition is done by the votes of parents, then areas of performance are organized.

The WF also helps provide and update equipment. The basic criterion is that toys and equipment must be safe (including non-poisonous).

Improved health care includes help in assuring that curricular activities include health-building habits. In larger pre-schools it is possible to have a clinic and a full-time health person. In others, the health responsibility may be combined with another. The health equipment is modest. Immunization is required. Emphasis is on disease prevention.

1) Setting-up a mechanism to promote and animate. A "society of family education" or "leading group" is set up at each organizational level. These people - which includes people from various walks of life and with different expertise - makes up the team working in family education.

2) Training. 1,700 people have received short-term training at various levels within the province.

3) Publicity/information. Publicity is provided through radio, television, bulleting boards and brochures telling of basic methods and activities.

4) "Research." The "research" component seems to me to be a collecting of available information rather than research per se, but I am not clear about this. I was told that in 1986 a meeting was held to which 400 papers were contributed and in which the 60 best papers were selected. Also mentioned was an activity of collecting thesis and papers on family education.

5) Parent schools for newly-weds, pregnant women, mothers with very young children, pre-school parents, grandparents, and primary school parents. Apparently, the schools for newly-weds have been less successful. It is hard to get the classes together. The activities organized jointly with MCH (pregnant mothers, peri-natal, grandmothers) are also somewhat less successful although young mothers seem to be eager, it is harder to organize the classes than is the case where all share having their children in a kindergarten. However, in some places this seems to work. For example, in I Chin(?) district, programmes involving pre-nuptial check-ups as well as pre-natal and peri-natal checks are said to be well received. In the country, every village has a community-run kindergarten with a parents school.

6) Advisory services. Advisory services are set up on special days and sometimes a room (within the school, for instance) is provided where parents can not only come to look at available materials but also have periodic advice from experts.

7) Special activities (quiz in newspaper, singing performances, family sports, etc.).

I was told that China does not have a regular rural extension services with extension workers paid by the state. However, at the grassroots level, the Women's Federation's cadres may select women to visit homes. At an annual meeting on children's work within the Federation, a report was made on this home-visiting activity (WF organizes such a meeting every year or two to share experiences).

In response to a question about pressures by parents to get their children into "better" primary schools affecting pre-school curriculum, I was told that:

o Pressure is being reduced by providing more outlets and reducing population.

- o The system of "key" primary schools is being given up and children will attend primary schools in the areas where they live.
- o There is now no exam for entrance into primary school. (There is, however, an "interview," which is to provide information about the child to assist the teaching.)
- o When parents of pre-school children complain that their children are not learning to read, they are told this will occur in primary school and that the pre-school is preparing them for that in various ways. To counter this parental pressure, an attempt is made to communicate regularly with parents.

In response to whether or not the curriculum draws on real-life experiences of children, I was told that it does and given the example of role-playing in the kindergartens. Examples are given in parental education courses where play is emphasized.

Nanchang, October 19

Visit to a State-Run Kindergarten

Having visited a community-run and an individually-run kindergarten, we now turned to a large and extraordinary state-run kindergarten. I was apparently the first foreigner to visit this particular institution (there are 4 in the city and Nanchang is not on the usual route of visitors).

Run by local government, the kindergarten was set up in the 1950s. It serves more than 700 children in 20 classes, providing daily care and education for aged 3 to 6-1/2 children of civil servants. There are 91 teaching staff. Each class has two teachers plus a "nurse" (assistant). All teachers are normal school graduates or normal college graduates, or hold a certificate in a special area selected for their ability. Assistants are secondary school graduates selected for their potential. They help prepare the children for meals and play and supervise recreation. They also clean classrooms.

Hours are from about 7:30 to 4:30. The day officially begins at 8:20 with exercise. We were treated to a performance of the exercises in the large courtyard where half the children were assembled (the area would not hold all 700 children spread out in their class groupings). Each class of students had an exercise routine that was done in unison to music played over the loud speaker. Every routine was different and was built around a different prop (ball, chair, streamer, dumbbell, tamborine, etc.,) providing both exercise and some dancing. Apparently, the groups change their props and their routines each term. This performance was very practical because the students had been at it for some time. There were a few stragglers, but generally they performed with enthusiasm.

Following exercises, children return to their classrooms for a first period of instruction at 9:00. I am not sure how that period works or how long it lasts. Lunch begins at 11:15 (for the 3-year olds). After lunch,

children wash hands then nap. At 2:30 there is a snack followed by exercise and play.

In dramatic contrast to the other kindergartens visited, the state-run kindergarten had space in abundance. The exercise area could have held all 700 children. Behind that paved space was lawn and some children's rides. In front an even larger space with a small pagoda and grass and flowers. Each class of about 35-40 occupied two large rooms (35' x 25'?), one a classroom, the other a room filled with beds for naptime. In between the two is a bathroom. The school has its own kitchen and bakery.

The school seeks close cooperation with parents. At least one meeting per semester is held with each parent. Schedules are posted so parents will know what is taught.

Moral education is important at the school. This includes courtesy as well as love of country and ideology. Discipline is kept, but without physical force. It was suggested that single children are mischeivous at home but obey teachers.

Occasionally, field trips or picnics are organized. Also puppet groups and others are brought in.

A visit to one classroom included a music lesson in which children were taught a song about an eagle who tired to take some little chickens, but the mother hen protected her chicks and a hunter shot the eagle. These parts were acted out by children using headbands with chick, hen, or eagle on them. The were enthusiastically involved.

Visit to a Community-Run Kindergarten

This "key" community-run kindergarten was much like the first in its rather cramped quarters - despite completion of a new section (in 9/86). As the first, it takes in children on a daily basis, a weekly basis, and/or on an irregular basis during vacation months. The 357 children are organized in 7 classes covering three grades. Special interest classes are also given. Children live in the vicinity and come from homes of civil servants, workers in small factories or private enterprises.

The city district, the party, and the Women's Federation (both city and district) have contributed to the school. This school was given an award by the Women's Federation.

Teachers have an average age of 25. None are graduates of normal schools. Turnover because of marriage is something of a problem. To upgrade the teaching staff, short-term courses have been arranged. In addition, there are moral education classes and competitions among teachers.

The school is fortunate to have the full-time services of a retired pediatrician. The doctor told us all children have been immunized. They have a yearly physical. Weight and height are checked quarterly. A system has been developed in which colored papers are used to indicate whether a parent has said a child has a health problem. If so, the doctor can examine.

Parental education is provided through a parents school.

Teachers sometimes make home visits.

I asked if writing was taught in the kindergarten. No. SEC says no. Parents ask for that to be done but they are told that the best way for a child to learn at these ages is through play and observations and stimulation.

A performance included "items" by both students (who danced and played musical instruments) and teachers (5 teachers danced very well). One act in the performance featured an orchestra including 12 electronic keyboards, several of which cost more than 1,000 yuan. These had been purchased by parents for their children.

We asked about salaries. Teachers start at 60 yuan/month, move to 70 at the end of a year and level off at 80 after 2 years.

There are four smaller kindergartens in the same community. The key kindergarten helps with occasional training and by setting up demonstration classes.

Xinyu, October 19

Trip to Xinyu

After 4-1/2 hours drive (including flat-tire time) through pretty red, yellow, and green countryside, we arrived at Xinyu City and were treated to an evening performance bringing together acts from several kindergartens and two family acts (one a "disco" act that was very well done). The visit to Xinyu must rank as one of the most memorable of the entire trip.

The city of Xinyu is a mushrooming place with a population, at present, of 800,000. The city has just been granted status as a prefecture. It's rapid growth is related to the presence of two steel plants and textile and chemical industries. Iron ore and coal are available nearby.

Xinyu was chosen as a place to visit because it had several good features. First, local authorities and the part committee attach importance to children's welfares they have helped with establishment of an experimental kindergarten, have a "key" kindergarten in each township, created playgrounds, children's palaces and activity centres as the city has grown, helped develop an active parental education programme, and have started children's activity centres for local people. Second, the people of Xinyu seem to have a strong concern for child development. Third, there is a proud team of women cadres there. Their job is to mobilize and coordinate local efforts. Xinyu City was said to be advanced in relation to other parts of the province. 95.8% of the 3-6 year olds in Xinyu (including small outlying towns) attend kindergarten. (This based on a Federation study.)

Visit to the Women's Federation Kindergarten

This experimental kindergarten was impressive. In the briefing, I was told that the kindergarten served 320 kids in 8 classes, attended by 16 teachers, 80% of whom had graduated from normal schools. The 2,500 square meters included space for play, a dining room and a kitchen, a health post, a room for the teachers, and a large parental education room as well as the standard classrooms. As in the state-run schools, classrooms matched a teaching room with a napping room with a bathroom in between. The curriculum followed was the standard 6-subject SEC curriculum (language, arithmetic, art, music, physical education, and nature study). In this experimental kindergarten some children were learning English. A medical doctor and an assistant came daily and they would examine all 320 children upon entering the school, assigning them a colour-coded card depending on their condition. In their spare time teachers provide some short-term training for rural kindergarten teachers. They also have self-improvement activities, including, for instance, a comparative education session that was scheduled during the week of my visit in which teachers would look at pre-school programmes in England and the Soviet Union. I was told that the teachers average age is 20 and that their salary begins at 60 yuan (\$16US) per month. With the addition of a yearly bonus, the salary is about 90 yuan per month. The Director's base salary is 86 yuan per month. Teachers help make materials.

One of the main reasons for visiting this school was to know something more about a parents school started in 1986. A large room in the kindergarten was set up for the parents school. In that room we were shown a video tape on early education that had been prepared by the local television station. It was well done. The room contained magazines and books parents could borrow. On the walls were:

- o Regulations for the parent school urging parents to follow principles and teachers to be strict with themselves, indicating that meetings would be held once per month, and stipulating that enrolled parents who missed two sessions would not be allowed to continue.
- o Curricula for the children so parents would know what their children were doing.
- o Results of quizzes given to parents (e.g. A child, aged 3, does not want to eat. What do you do? Multiple choice.)
- o Decorations.

On the previous Sunday (which was not a regular class) about 80 parents came to the room. The Secretary of the Party participated.

Visit to State-Run Kindergarten, Ken Yie County

The county administrator indicated that efforts had been made to enhance the status for pre-school teachers and to make conditions more reasonable. Rural teachers are paid the same as others and the pre-school salary is the same as the primary school salary.

The large kindergarten (436 children; 26 teachers of whom 7 are normal school graduates) had been a modest school prior to 1986 when, with combined efforts of the Women's Federation, the County, and the SEC, a new plant was constructed. The roomy facilities were completed, except for the kitchen (however, I was told that children could easily go home for lunch because they live in the vicinity). The kindergarten had associated with it a parents school that met every Saturday even for 1-1/2 hours. An activity room with books for parents was part of the school. Although the physical plant had been up-graded, the Director said they could still not accommodate all the children who wanted to come to that school and, the teachers needed additional training.

Visit to Plantation Kindergarten and Parent School

In 1982, a plantation run with funds from overseas Chinese set up a kindergarten. The plantation pays teachers salaries and built the kindergarten - a modest structure with two rooms, each about 10 meters square, with a reception area and small office between the two. There are two classes and two teachers. Each year, parents are charged 4 yuan per year (I believe that is the correct figure) as a token. The kindergarten serves about 60 children but only about 40 were present when we visited, presumably because it was a rainy day.

The classroom was fairly larger. There did not seem to be electricity. It contained a foot pump organ and a blackboard. On the walls were 5 felt picture decorations made by the teachers. Each child had a towel, hung on individual books along one wall of the room. Children were seated in chairs at one side of the room when we came in so that a small performance could be given. These children seemed much more reserved than the city children (they did become very lively, however, once we were departing).

In the village, a community room, about 1/4 mile from the kindergarten, served as a location for a parent school. I do not have specific information about the parent school.

Visit to Guang Village, Qiao Township, Fen Yie Country

From the county seat we drive through some beautiful countryside to arrive at Guang Village. The village is surrounded by rice fields and then by mountains beyond. It is one of 12 settlements and lies 30 kilometers from the capital of the township. In the village are 816 households with 4,217 people. The village is relatively well off, thanks to crops of tea and fruit, and some lumber and coal in nearby hillsides. Moreover, this village has a long educational tradition, going back to the Tong Dynasty when a village member successfully passed the civil service examination. It has been awarded the status of a "civilized village."

As we approached the village, one large three-story building of modern square architecture stood out above the two-story stone and tile cluster of houses. That turned out to be the multi-purpose community building we were to visit; a new and frankly, lavish structure in comparison with the surroundings. Construction was begun in 1985 and it took about a year to complete the building. The cost of the 2,900 square meter structure was 360,000 yuan (about \$97,000US). Money came from enterprises and factories in

the 12-village complex. A primary school was also built in the village that cost 640,000 yuan. These two were built instead of putting up an office building because the village thought this more important. To help the initiative, 11 leading members in the village each donated 1,000 yuan. The village attaches such importance to education that they subsidize kindergarten through high school. If a child passes an entrance examination to high school or vocational school, parents are given 100 yuan (or 60 yuan for vocational).

The multipurpose centre houses a nursery (age 2) and a kindergarten and has space for after-school activities. Its 48 rooms are not yet filled, but there are plans for each room. Within the facility is a sizeable music room and an exercise room. We visited one room in which the children were jumping into and making their way across a kind of swimming pool filled with colourful plastic balls about 3 inches in diameter. They had a grand time swimming through this plastic sea that had been donated by the Women's Federation. In another room we saw a host of small children standing around rather large play tables filled with purchased toys, some of which were battery run, others provided by moving the toy's wheels along the table surface rapidly and firmly to build up power that would send the car (or plane) across the table. The children did not know how to use the toys.

I found this "rural" visit puzzling. As a show piece, this was impressive in terms of the physical plant, but one had the feeling of a huge investment that, at least for some years, would be very under utilized and poorly utilized. It is hard to fault a community for wanting the best. And, the presence of the structure and equipment does provide the possibility for marvelous things to happen. I wondered about the role of the Federation in helping promote such an effort and I wondered why they chose to show me that rural example.

A Banquet

I cannot leave Xinyu without commenting on a dinner the night of the 20th. This 10-person feast brought together the Mayor of the city, the Deputy Party Chief, Women's Federation cadres (from Xinyu and Nanchang). The two chauffeurs for the Women's Federation, a photographer, the interpreter and me. The meal was notable for the comradely gathering with its few visible signs of social status and for the extraordinary and tasty fare, ending with a turtle soup, complete with turtle.

Xiamen, October 21

Meeting with Women's Federation

We were met at the airport by Madame Dong of the provincial Women's Federation and by Madame Ye who directs the WF in Xiamen. The afternoon meeting following our arrival was to examine the schedule and to provide a briefing. We were joined in the meeting by Mr. Shi of the Children's Foundation and by the deputy director of WF in Xiamen, who accompanied us through much of the visit.

The briefing began with some figures for Fujian Province. The 9 prefectures (78 districts and counties) that make up the province have a population of about 26 million, of which almost 90 percent is rural. In the province there are now 9811 nurseries and kindergartens (of all types). The growth since 1979 has been rapid. Staff, for instance, has increased from 13000 to 31879. In the 10 cities of the province, enrollment of children age 3 and below was said to be about 50% and for children of kindergarten age, almost 100%. The corresponding figure for kindergarten enrollment in rural areas is about 40%. Looking at the total enrollment in nurseries and kindergartens as a percentage of the total number of children under 7, the present coverage is 36 percent. The breakdown by kind of kindergarten is as follows:

<u>Kind</u>	<u>Urban</u>		<u>Rural</u>	
	<u>% institute</u>	<u>% children</u>	<u>% institute</u>	<u>% children</u>
State kindergarten	5.9	31.3	-	-
Res. comm/township	11.6	20.9	58.8	63.7
Primary attach (ages 5/6)	15.0	5.2	23.6	28.7
Private	23.6	4.0	14.5	3.1
Enterprises, gov. agency	43.0	37.3		
Plantation			1.7	2.2
Overseas donation	.6	1.0	1.0	2.3

The reason given for the rapid development in recent years was that many women in rural areas have started their own business on the contract system so they needed day care. Also, some farmers have new money and think it is important for their children to be educated. In one village, for instance, peasants donated 70,000 yuan to build a house for use as a kindergarten for 50 children of pre-school age (see below). The emergence of privately-owned kindergartens has contributed to the growth.

The Women's Federation has a department for community-run kindergartens. It has contributed through assistance with general planning, training of teachers, moral education, and in several other ways to the advance of early education. In addition, the Federation has organized an extensive system of parental education.

- 1) General planning. Babies from the baby boom generation are now parents. Therefore, in spite of the success of the one-child policy, numbers have increased rapidly creating an additional pressure for general

planning. In 1983, the Women's Federation set a plan calling for an increase in the percentage of children under 7 enrolled at a rate of 3% per year. That has been realized. Comparing 1986 with 1979, there has been an increase from 16 to 36 percent. The goal is 45% by 1990. The plan also calls for improvements in the quality of existing institutions. A hope was expressed that all community kindergartens could be at the same standard as state-run institutions.

In Xiamen, the city has appropriated approximately 3 million RMB (US\$810,000) for community-run kindergartens, of which about one-third was spent on revamping 26 old existing institutions. Twelve kindergartens have been newly established. In Fuzhou, the city government has spent 7.1 million RMB to construct kindergartens in areas on the edge of the city. In Huian (?) county, a concerted effort has resulted in up-to-standard kindergartens for about one-third of the children, even though this is a relatively poor area. In short, growth has been impressive and targets have been met.

2) Teacher training. About 9 or 10 percent of all kindergarten teachers have normal school training and all are found in state-owned institutions accounting however for 30 percent of all enrollment. The following figures were provided for different kinds of teachers in the system:

Pre-school normal colleges and schools	7.7%
General normal school graduates	1.7
Senior high school graduates	32.6
Junior high school graduates	41.3
Primary school graduates	16.3

To upgrade teachers, training is provided in short term courses, either by sending teachers to regular classes in the normal school or through spare-time training in which cadres from the Women's Federation or health or others give courses. As an example, the WF organized 7 courses of two weeks each during 1984 that were skill oriented (puppets or arithmetic or music) with experts doing the teaching. A three-tier training system can train 20,000 teachers every year so almost all teachers in Fujian Province can participate in some training. The SEC will set up a pre-school training centre. That was contrasted with the correspondence approach being taken in Xiamen where it will be possible for practicing teachers to obtain a diploma after three years of participation in the programme. This system was favored because teachers do not have to stop working to obtain their diploma. A goal of the training is, by 1990, for 50% of the teachers in community-run kindergartens to have a certificate.

3) Moral education. The Women's Federation assists in the provision of moral education for pre-school teachers. That education tries to instill in the teachers a love for children, devotion to their work, equal treatment of children, good manners, a collaborative spirit, and a desire to study hard.

4) Other activities. In 1984, a national competition for teachers in community-run schools was organized to see who had the best skills. That is being repeated in 1987. The competition is intended to provide an opportunity at different levels for sharing of experience and as a form of recognition (see below).

Mr. Shi of the Children's Fund indicated that leaders and public figures in Xiamen have a long tradition of support for pre-schooling. The Children's Fund was set up in that vein. Many retired leaders now participate on a voluntary basis with teachers in raising money to support activities through the Fund. Another group supporting pre-schooling are the overseas Chinese. The extraordinary example of the Jin Mei educational complex was cited. This complex, funded by a business man who made his fortune abroad, includes educational institutions at all levels and is equivalent to a city district. With the arrival of community-run pre-schools, one concern of the overseas Chinese has been to help improve the quality of these schools. In 1986, 200,000 Hong Kong dollars were donated which were administered through the Women's Federation.

Parental Education

In the briefing, we were told that the single child policy meant that parents have fewer experiences in parenting. Also, after liberation, more women worked so there was less time for the education of their children. The present generation of parents who were part of the cultural revolution did not get a parental "apprenticeship" from their parents. Furthermore, children have more to explore today. Research dealing with family influences on juvenile delinquency identified four family patterns.

- (1) Strict parents who nevertheless manage appropriately.
- (2) Indulgent parents whose children were spoiled.
- (3) Spankers.
- (4) Broken families.

About 70/80 percent of all children live in less than ideal family environments so parent education seemed important. That education includes education, health, and nutrition.

The Women's Federation is strengthening parental education in three ways. The first is by organizing what are called educational research societies. The second is through training programmes. The third is through direct help in setting up parental education activities such as schools and advisory services.

Educational research societies have been created that combine experts, linking the masses with theoretical positions. There are 78 branches of the society. The functions of a research society remained unclear to me.

1) Training programmes. Four training courses for parental education have been offered at the provincial level each year. Every county and city sends one person for training. At the provincial level, 400 people have been trained, but over all, 10000 people have been trained in 900 training programmes. Content of the training programmes includes:

- (1) Knowledge about basic principles of family education (for instance, the importance of education at home for children and how to combine kindergarten education with education at home.
- (2) Knowledge about pre-natal care, the outcomes of pregnancy, scientific child rearing, and good feeding habits.
- (3) A systematic overview of education at home for children under 4.
- (4) Parental education for those with primary school children.

A book has been published summarizing these areas of parental education that can be used as a text for teachers and parents. Another text is being prepared for primary school children and their parents. A book is being edited for parents of kindergarten children. These texts are classified by children's age. Key members of family educational research societies are creating texts to provide guidance to cadres. At local levels (e.g. in Xiamen), groups have been organized to talk about family education. In all, 34 texts exist, classified by the age of the child. About 250,000 copies have been printed. Without these it would be hard to reach parents.

2) Direct help. Parental schools have been set up in association with kindergartens, primary schools, high schools, and for newly-weds, expectant mothers, and grandparents. Schools have been organized by residential committees, factories and enterprises. The number of schools in the province has grown from 350 in 1985 to 2943 in 1987. In order to be sure that the schools will be maintained it is important that they:

- (1) Seek support from and be run in combination with schools
- (2) Attend to the characteristics of adult education. They should not try to put too much into one period so that parents do not feel the schools are a burden. And, in order to avoid being boring, they should treat problems of interest to the parents.
- (3) Involve responsible leaders.

Another form of direct help comes through advisory services. In Xiamen, both permanent and mobile forms of advisory services exist. In addition, the services are made available on special days. In Fujian province, 120,000 people have received attention through the various advisory services.

3) Another form of parental education occurs through publicity. This includes various forms of propaganda exhorting parents to be teachers through example, to study on their own, etc. In addition, awards are given to model parents.

4) Other activities include: organizing events for parents and children, quizzes, contests, and dramas.

Xiamen, October 22
Goulongyu Island

Goulongyu Island lies immediately opposite Xiamen, five minutes away by ferry boat. Before WWII, the island was the location of many consulates and of homes of wealthy Chinese. The island is famous for fostering musical talent. That interest and support is evident in the building where boats land which was constructed in the form of a piano, in posters, and in construction of a performance hall for children. Serving a population of about 30,000 people on the island are two community-run kindergartens, one state kindergarten, one nursery (where there are only two year olds), and 4 kindergartens and 4 nurseries attached to factories. We visited both a community-run and a state-run kindergarten.

Pen Mountain Kindergarten

This community-run kindergarten enrolled 160 children, all from the local community, in 4 classes. Eight faculty and one helper are employed. The director is a graduate of a pre-school normal school, worked in a primary school, then in a programme of transition from pre-school to primary, and then took over the kindergarten. Established in 1958 for children of overseas Chinese, the kindergarten is located in a house donated by overseas Chinese but a large annex is being constructed.

Of the 8 teachers, one is a high school graduate but has 27 years of experience in kindergartens; five are graduates of pre-school courses attached to vocational schools; and two are recent graduates of junior or senior high school. The director said that the graduates with pre-school training were better prepared for their job because they know how to deal with children and have a better teaching methodology. She specifically mentioned their ability to play the organ, dance, sing, and paint. They also learn about child psychology. On the other hand, the director suggested that the normal school college graduates (as contrasted with the vocational school graduates) are not as suited for work in the pre-school because their training is too theoretical. In the vocational schools, most of the training time is focussed on specific skills and includes six months of practice teaching and acts as the assistant to an experienced teacher. Before 1985, the rate of teacher turnover was high. In 1985, when Xiamen became a special economic zone, conditions improved and the salary system in community kindergartens changed. From that time on, kindergarten teachers were considered full members of the collective entitling them to the same salary and benefits as teachers employed in the state-run kindergartens. Before, the salaries were lower and they had no job guarantee or benefits. This change resulted in requests by some former teachers to return.

Looking through a window from the courtyard one could see 40 children grouped at tables in a space that was about 4 meters square. The teacher was in front of the group of children. A foot-pump organ was in the corner. Children were playing with some plastic construction toys. Later, children were playing a game that involved putting plastic objects in a tamborine. During recreation, in the courtyard, children were playing donkey tag in groups of 8 children at a time with the others looking on and cheering enthusiastically. Despite the space limitations and the traditional form of

"teaching," I did not feel an oppressive atmosphere. The children seemed to be involved in what they were doing and the teachers were lively.

The new building would accord with SEC standards for space. It included rooms for napping and a music room.

Sunshine Kindergarten

This state-run kindergarten was larger, enrolling 487 children in 12 classes, and employing 35 staff (including directors, assistants, and maintenance personnel). The school was first set up in 1898, making it most unusual. After the war it was moved into the quarters of a villa-like building, complete with swimming school. Additional facilities have been added and the physical plant was of high quality. The grounds included a garden in with flowers for all seasons. Rooms were attractively decorated by the teachers with materials they had made.

All of the children come from families in which both parents work. About 200 of the children have lunch at the kindergarten and nap there; the rest go home for lunch. Two snacks are provided.

Of the 24 teachers, 12 were graduates from pre-school normals; eight had finished correspondence courses from the pre-school normal in Xiamen, and four had taken pre-school courses attached to high schools. The director said that when teachers arrive they are not exceptionally creative, but the school provides an atmosphere of trying new ideas which brings out creativity.

In general, the kindergarten follows the six subjects set out by the SEC. Learning is through play. Three kinds of play were distinguished: creative play (e.g., go to the hospital to observe what is being done and come back and role play); kinetic play or construction play (e.g., swimming, football); and cognitive play (e.g., the children are taken outside to observe the world and then come back to describe what they have seen, tell stories, and learn songs about nature). Every week children make some toys by themselves, using paper, clay, sticks, and other materials that are available.

The kindergarten (and a nursery school that we did not visit) are attached to a primary school which enrolls 600 children in 19 classes. The most unusual characteristic of this primary school and kindergarten, consistent with the tradition of Goulongyu Island, is the extra attention given to music. In fact, the former director had created a special programme of learning through music. Children's musical sense is used to develop discrimination and imagination, for instance. We were told proudly of a visit by an American psychologist from Harvard who came specifically to look at that programme, examining the psychological effect on children of learning through music. We were, of course, treated to a performance by selected children from the kindergarten.

Four of the primary school classes are for students with special abilities. These children follow a regular course but spend extra time on an activity, usually piano or violin. The ability to support children in these special music activities was surprising to me, but I was told that in 55 cases, students come from homes where there is a piano and 121 students own violins.

One of the reasons for our visit was to hear about a parent school that is attached to the primary school. In 1984, a parent's committee was established in the school and in 1985 a parent school was begun. The principal task of the school is to disseminate knowledge about basic education. That is done in various ways.

1) Lectures have been given to a group of 400 parents covering themes such as: the importance of family education and how to handle moral education, the psychological development of primary school children, legal information, health care at home for children, aesthetic education. Of the 400, 270 have received a certificate of completion of the basic course.

2) Teaching materials have been provided for self education.

3) Advisory services are available for parents.

4) Activities have been organized in which both parents and children can participate or in which parents observe the children (or vice versa). As might be imagined, the first example given was the organization of music activities.

5) Parents are encouraged to subscribe to magazines. A recent survey showed that, on the average, families subscribed to three magazines that were for children.

Several examples were provided of experiments that the school has tried out. Children in the 3rd grade are involved in a pilot project learning Pinyin. The school has an experimental programme relating learning of characters to the ability to speak. One course emphasizes learning from observing the immediate environment. A special place is given in the school to drawing as well as to music.

I assume that the conditions for parental education in this particular location are very different from what one would expect to find in rural Xiamen, let alone Inner Mongolia.

A Teacher's Competition

The purpose of this competition among pre-school teachers was to provide an opportunity for teachers to learn from each other as well as to recognize good teaching. The competition was organized by the Women's Federation. The particular session I was privileged to observe was the second round at the level of the prefecture. Winners would subsequently compete at the state level. In the first round 21 teachers had been selected, from which four would be chosen. A selection committee consisted of specialized educators and pre-school normal faculty. All 21 participants were from community-run preschools, some of which were rural, and none were normal school graduates.

The competition covered seven areas: singing, dancing, playing the organ or piano, drawing, making toys and teacher's aids, story-telling, and preparation of lessons. A first-place award was made in each of the categories. The final selection was made on the basis of overall performance. It was not possible to observe all parts of the competition. However, the best drawings

were displayed as were all of the teaching aids produced. And, the first two winners in categories of dancing, playing a musical instrument, and story-telling performed for the group. In the drawing competition, participants were asked to copy a picture. There was no doubt about which was best because the winner not only drew well but added several individual touches that made the picture stand out. The teaching aids were, for the most part, decorations or aids rather than "hands on" toys. The winner had made a set of finger puppets on the five fingers of a glove. This was very well done. The winner of the dancing competition danced very well — obviously better than the second place participant who also performed. However, the particular routine that was danced by the second place person seemed much more suited to the movements of the children who would presumably be following them than those of the winner.

At the time awards were handed out, Mme Ye emphasized the learning purpose of the exercise, played down winning and urged the participants to take advantage of what they had learned to improve their teaching.

Although creativity was present in the competition, I did not feel that was an important criterion for judging the teachers.

Correspondence Course

In the evening we visited a lecture that was being given as part of a pre-school correspondence course. Students are for the most part practicing pre-school teachers. To be admitted they must have passed the standard entrance examination for Senior High School. The course lasts three years. Students enroll for two terms each year and take three courses per term. Reading materials are supplemented by lectures during the first three and one-half months of the term. The final two and one-half months are spent reading and reviewing for examinations. The texts used were compiled by experts from a six-province region under the supervision of the Society for Early Education of the State Education Commission. At the end of the three years graduates are awarded a pre-school normal school certificate.

The particular session we attended was being given by a teacher from Xiamen Normal School. The topic of the session was, "the senses." The lecturer was well organized and animated, keeping the attention of the group of 50 or so that was present. The material given supplemented that in their standard readings. The presentation was straight lecture. That was very different from what I had expected which was a group discussion of materials read before the meeting. The instructor indicated that sometimes she asked questions but that most was lecture. The lectures had to be specially prepared given the limits on time. Also, she said she gave students experiments to do in their own classes, related to the lessons. These were not, however, specific exercises and were more in the vein of "When you are in your classrooms this week, observe how your children are using their senses."

The correspondence courses are still in an initial stage. The hope is to expand the coverage through correspondence courses."

Xiamen, October 23

Our first stop was a factory-run kindergarten, nursery, and creche. The glass factory employs 2700 people, about half of whom are women of which about 200 are of child bearing age. Some of the employees live in factory housing, but many commute from Xiamen about a half hour away. The kindergarten and nursery enroll 150 children and the creche 16. Only five of the children are from families not employed in the factory.

At the time of the visit to the creche there were only 3 or 4 children present but I was told that the creche hours are flexible so others might come later. Mothers from the factory can come to breastfeed two times a day. This was the time for breastfeeding but there was only one mother availing herself of the privilege. I was told that with the single child policy, many families prefer to have their very young children at home.

Among the 10 teachers were 2 pre-school normal teachers, 4 graduates from pre-school programmes attached to vocational schools, and 4 junior high school graduates with short term training of six months in a middle school with a pre-school training programme. The director said that after the teachers had been trained they became better teachers. They had acquired skills (playing the organ), and knew more about child psychology. Before they were sometimes harsher (e.g., asking children to keep their hands behind their back), and now give more freedom, using encouragement rather than punishment.

The school was not crowded. Children were observed sitting at tables in rows. When asked about the organization, the director replied that in the classroom, the tables remain that way because it is better for learning. There is another room for play without tables, and there is a separate music room. The daily programme of the kindergarten was as follows:

- 7:00 Children begin arriving because the factory begins at 7:30. Some have had breakfast and play outside. Others can have breakfast. A health worker checks each child as they enter (see below).
- 8:15 Exercises in groups.
- 8:30 First lesson. The length of the lesson varies from 10 to 20 minutes depending on the ages of the children. If the lesson is shorter, the teacher fills in time with singing and play.
- 9:00 Wash and snack.
- 9:30 Second lesson.
- 10:00 Toilet, wash, and prepare for meal at 10:45.
- 10:45 Meal followed by outside play.
- 12:00 Nap.
- 14:00 Get up from nap. Children dress selves and make beds.
- 14:30 Play.
- 15:00 Wash and afternoon snack.
- 15:30 Games, organized play, music, handicrafts.
- 16:20 About ten minutes of ideological education during which the teacher may talk about the children's behavior during the day.
- 16:30 Wash for second meal.
- 16:45 Meal.
- 17:00 From this time on parents pick up children at the gate.

The director explained to me the system of checking that is used each day with each student to provide health monitoring and to teach health habits. When each child is delivered to the school at the gate, the monitor checks in four ways: by looking, by touching (is the forehead warm, for instance), by asking parents, and by making a physical check (of pockets, for instance). If a child has a health problem, a colour-coded card is given that alerts the teacher and leads to a more thorough check later. The director said that at the beginning there were many more health and cleanliness problems than at present.

Children's Paradise

This smallish amusement park had a very pretty entrance with fountains and flowers. On the premises were bumper car rides and two large whirling rides that were new, but not well maintained. There were no ping pong tables on the grounds, but there were billiard tables — perhaps a symbol of the changing times. The area of one-plus hectares had a staff of 15 of whom only 4 were on contract. The park was supported by a monthly donation of the urban construction bureau and by funds from the 5 cent admission fee. I was told there were sometimes organized activities with schools that brought children to the park. Older citizens use the park in the morning for their exercises. Last Sunday 100 to 200 people came to the park. The man in charge wished he had more space.

Rural Kindergarten (Individually Run)

We travelled through sugar cane and rice fields, along good road to arrive at a small "natural village" of slightly more than 2000 in which a kindergarten was functioning where there was once a chicken farm. The village provided 70,000 yuan for the proprietor of the kindergarten to build a house which is a kindergarten on the ground floor and private home above. The kindergarten was set up four years ago.

The proprietor/teacher cares for a group of 54 children between the ages of 3 and 5. (A preschool for children aged 6 is attached to the local primary school.) That accounts for about 80 percent of the 3-to-5 age group in the village. (On the day of the visit, three children age two were also present in the class.) A fee of 3 yuan per month is charged. If that cannot be paid the fee is reduced or, in a few cases, waived. Children go home for lunch. A morning snack is provided. Hours are flexible. Parents send the children when they can. Child care is provided even on Sundays if necessary. The only time the preschool is closed is when the teacher participates in a monthly meeting with other teachers.

The teacher had a junior high school education. At age 19, before she was married, she worked in a preschool for 3 years. At that time she had some short term training. Then she married and raised chickens. Since beginning the kindergarten four years ago, she has participated in 3 short term training sessions of two weeks each. These were theme-oriented training sessions organized by the district. When asked what training she would like most to have, she said she would like to improve her language and story-telling and would like more basic knowledge of child psychology.

Helping the teacher on a voluntary basis was a niece. Support was also provided through a system of itinerant supervision set up by the district. When we visited, a "tutor" was present who was responsible for 40 kindergartens in the area. The tutor/supervisor, a normal school graduate in her early 20s, made periodic visits to preschools and also organized one class or lecture per month for about 50 preschool teachers in the area. Visits to more remote areas might require staying for a day or two. Travel was by bicycle or bus. The tutor also participated in a monthly meeting of the Women's Federation.

The 54 children were packed into one room, about 4 meters by 10 to 12 meters. As in other preschools, the children were playing with some small plastic discs that fit together, but each child had no more than four or five discs. By arranging the children 3 to a desk, they could all fit into one end of the room leaving space for the performance given for us. This was a much less polished performance than others we had seen. The main item in the room was a foot-pump organ that the teacher used effectively. Walls had some decorations made by the teacher. The preschool did not have a play area, but the teacher would take children out to the fields or to other areas in the community.

A health kit, apparently unused, had been provided to the teacher and she had received training in its use. A doctor from the township and a health worker come to the school to make regular check-ups and to give immunizations. The last visit had been in July (my visit was mid-October) and the next visit was programmed for November. The quarterly schedule is adhered to unless there is an emergency. Each summer, children have a physical checkup. The teacher said there were few major health problems and that the most common problem was skin rash, particularly in the Spring. There are few cases of diarrhea.

When asked about the use of local materials in her work, the teacher went into another small room (which did not seem to be used) and brought out a variety of items that had been made from discarded cigarette boxes or plastic cola bottles or cloth scraps. These were apparently tucked away for the visit as substandard items that should not be shown. That led to a conversation about the use of local materials and incorporation of local games into the activities of the children. Some of that was being done, but without recognition of the value of the efforts. Much more could have been done. (For instance, we were served colas and the tops were discarded when they could have been used so that more children in the class could participate in group activities involving rhythm instruments made from the tops.)

This was about as close as I got to a rural area. I was impressed by the potential of the supervisory system which, however, was overloaded. Madame Ye of the WF seemed to agree that strengthening the tutor/supervisor system in rural areas would be a good investment.

Xiamen, October 24

This was a full day, including a briefing by Madame Ye, and visits to a kindergarten for which the Women's Federation was directly responsible, a community-run kindergarten supported by funds from overseas Chinese, a parent

advisory service for pregnant women and parents of very young children, and a library. At the end of the day, discussions were held with staff from the Xiamen Normal School.

In the briefing, the following statistics were provided for Xiamen:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Children 3 to 6	45077	11832	33245
Children under 3	42305	9840	32465
Kindergartens and Nurseries	250	195	55
Enrollment in Nurseries	5582	4830	754
Enrollment in Kindergartens	30450	12155	17695
Total teachers	1943	1345	598
% teachers trained in pre-school normal or vocational		22%	2%
Average number of students per teacher		13	31

Between January 1986 and June 1987, 48 training programmes were organized in which 1418 people participated.

A priority in the preschool area in Xiamen during the last two years has been to upgrade facilities, both by constructing new buildings and by renovating old ones. 18 kindergartens have been rebuilt. The funds for this have come from a combination of the government and donations from overseas Chinese. The status of Xiamen as a favored economic zone has helped to make funds available. One reason for placing such a high priority on facilities is that the situation had been allowed to deteriorate for many years because Xiamen (Amoy) was a closed city, given its position opposite Taiwan. Over a period of more than 30 years, little had been done to improve the city, including preschool facilities. The Women's Federation has played an important role in this effort.

Another major activity of the Women's Federation has been to help establish parents schools. Of 283 parent schools, 108 are attached to kindergartens, 135 to primary schools, 14 to middle schools, and 26 in other locations. Together, these have enrolled 70,635 parents. Most of the schools have been established in the last two years. Thirty-nine training courses have been organized for core members responsible for the parent schools.

Other activities of the Federation have included:

- o Organizing lectures (1262 lectures to 760000 people)
- o Providing advisory services (241 sessions for 14306 people using both mobile and permanent facilities)
- o Compiling and distributing educational materials (100000 copies of a textbook for family education have been distributed)

In the area of parent education, Madame Ye pointed to a desire to improve the teaching. She wanted to establish training centers and models. She also felt a particular need to improve programmes in rural areas.

Kindergarten of the Women's Federation

This kindergarten had been functioning only since February of 1987. The excellent facilities were almost completed. The complex included a music room with 7 children's pianos, a small garden plot in which the children had planted vegetables, playground space, and rooms for the children to take naps. A swimming pool was being built. In short, the facilities were first rate.

The 360 children (8 classes in 4 age groups) were drawn from nearby housing units. The 25 staff included 16 teachers, 3 cooks, a nurse, a doctor, a janitor, a vegetable buyer, and the administrator. All teachers were young (ages 18 to 28) and unmarried and were trained in preschool classes attached to vocational schools. As in other places, the teachers had participated in in-service training. Teachers shared some other jobs — such as bookkeeping and care for the library so their work load is heavy. However, they have preparation time, obtained by pairing teachers so that one can prepare while the other takes charge of the class. The teacher's room was extremely well organized. Among the materials displayed on walls were results of teachers interviews made during home visits at the beginning of the year. When we visited, several teachers were hard at work preparing materials for their classes.

The director lives in the school so is available at all hours. She is determined to create a model school, beginning with the establishment of a well-organized system of activities. To that end, the director emphasized the importance of providing ideological education for her staff and a good system of management. Rules have been set for arrival and departure of the teachers and for behavior. Teachers must have a plan. Every week the director checks all 16 teaching programmes, comments, and advises. She observes classes and provides feedback to the teachers. Each week, teachers are organized to see one demonstration lesson given by one of the teachers, following which there is a discussion. Each day, the doctor and a "teacher on duty" tour the classrooms to observe the sanitary conditions.

The most instructive part of this visit was the illustration of the central role a director plays in supervising and upgrading teachers. That kind of daily and systematic supervision is missing in small preschools in rural areas where teachers are isolated.

The Overseas Chinese Kindergarten

Started in 1956 with funds from overseas Chinese, this kindergarten has grown since 1984 from floor space of 600 square meters to 4200 square meters. The present enrollment is 520 children, ages 2 to 6. The facilities include a music room, an exercise room, a swimming pool, playground, clinic, preparation room for teachers, and rooms for children to nap. Four of the 18 classes are nursery classes. Children are provided with 2 meals and 2 snacks each day during the working hours from 7:00 to 17:30. The institution follows the standard 6-subject SEC curriculum.

The admission charge for this community-run school is 32 yuan per month. In their first year, teachers are paid a base salary of 42 yuan per month, but with bonuses and incentives, they earn about 80 yuan per month in addition to which they have medical insurance. In the second year earnings increase to 90 yuan and in the third year to 110. Most of the teachers are full staff, i.e., they have a guaranteed job and pension. A few are under 3 to 5 year contracts. There is no problem of teacher turnover.

The director has 28 years of experience with preschools, as a teacher and administrator. She provides personal guidance to her teachers.

When I asked about the wisdom of helping to provide such high standard facilities, it was suggested that community run kindergartens ought to be as high quality as state-run kindergartens so that employees of the state would not always be favored.

In the opening session, the Vice Chairman of the SEC, Mr. Liu Jing indicated his satisfaction with the projects and his hope for further collaboration. In looking ahead, he noted that an evaluation of primary schooling would be carried out in 1988 and adjustments would be made accordingly. He listed four areas that would be receiving priority: liberation areas; remote and minority areas; mountainous areas; and economically underdeveloped areas. He also indicated that emphasis would be given in another project cycle to:

- 1) Consolidation of primary school training.
- 2) Extension of kindergarten training.
- 3) Consolidation of university level training of teacher trainers.
- 4) Further stress on publication and information dissemination.
- 5) Opening of work on training for junior middle school (as part of achieving a universal nine-year basic education).

The Vice-Chairman also stressed the importance of improved health and hygiene as project goals. He said that the current and next round should go all-out on immunization education in conjunction with the All China Women's Federation and local departments. A particular concern mentioned was eyecight.

In his opening remarks, Hansson aimed, Representative of UNICEF in China, noted that as universal basic education is taught, a key problem in most areas will be preparing teachers to teach well rather than simply preparing more teachers. To do so will require working on attitudes as well as skills and creating the conditions, opportunities, and incentives for teachers to learn continuously throughout their professional lives. Innovative ways are called for to use better existing institutions for continuous growth and learning. Cooperative networks of normal universities, schools and others will need to be strengthened. Teacher training must be seen in relation to the processes of curriculum and materials development, evaluation, and examinations, and teachers and managers will need to be able to relate programs to local circumstances.

Conference of Directors on the Strengthening of
Co-operation in Teacher Training, Fuzhou
October 26-31, 1987

The conference was organized by the State Education Commission (SEC) in collaboration with UNICEF. It was the third in a series beginning in 1984 and was the occasion for taking stock of the UNICEF/SEC collaborative projects intended to strengthen teacher training for pre-school and primary schools. It was as well, a time to look ahead to a next project cycle. Because much of UNICEF's assistance has been to provide audio-visual equipment, a great deal of emphasis was given in the meeting to that topic.

DAY 1, October 26

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- 1) Continuation of primary school training.
- 2) Extension of kindergarten training.
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Ahmed indicated that Mr. Liu's suggestions were in accord with UNICEF thinking and that UNICEF and the SEC will begin to set the specifics soon as they prepare further cooperation.

Mr. Meng remarked on the importance of a dual strategy combining the more conventional strategies with advanced technology, and combining the use of inexpensive equipment and materials in rural areas where social development lags with more up-scale materials and equipment in urban areas. He noted that the most important function of using local materials is to motivate and give ideas to teachers so they can function well in their less favoured environments.

Following the opening ceremony, several papers were presented during the remainder of the day. These papers were, for the most part, descriptions of ways in which the UNICEF support had been used at different levels and in different regions of the country. The papers were:

1) Fujian Provincial Educational Commission, "Enhancing the guidance of project schools and speeding up the training of teachers for primary schools and kindergartens"

2) Fushou Normal School, "Implementing the cooperative programme seriously: striving hard to raise the effectiveness of projects"

3) Ma Honglue, Tangshan Kindergarten Teachers' and Normal School, "Making the most of the UNICEF-aided equipment to serve the needs of teaching and education in Tangshan Normal School: report on application of the UNICEF-aided equipment in Tangshan Kindergarten Teachers' and Normal School, Hebei Province"

4) Huazhong Normal University, "To work in cooperation, strengthen teacher training and strive to develop preschool education, report on the preschool teacher training net in South-Central China"

5) Sichuan Educational Commission, Chengden, "Conscientiously implement the cooperative programme between PRC and UNICEF and realize its aims"

6) Mr. Gong Naichuan, Educational DEpartment, Beijing Normal University, "The key to effective use of the supplied equipment lies in training qualified people positively"

7) Preschool Normal School of Sang Dong, Ji Nan, "Increasing efficiency of receiving aid projects, serving and training provincial preschool teachers"

8) People's Education Press, "Report on project progress of development and production of preschool and primary school teaching and reading materials"

9) Beijing Teaching Aides Centre, SEC, "Strengthening cooperation, promoting development of primary education"

DAY 2, October 27

The Kindergarten Training Centre of Fujian Province. In the morning, a visit was made to the Kindergarten Training Centre. This boarding institution is a secondary-level school that enrolls 620 young women, most of whom come from, and are expected to return to, rural areas. The girls begin their day at 5:40 am and end it about 9:00 pm. Faculty and staff total 145.

A tour of the facilities included a look at the classroom, labs, audio-visual equipment and rooms, the library, a dancing room, a botanical garden, and a model kindergarten. We watched the student body do their rhythmic exercises in the mid-morning, something they do twice a day.

The model kindergarten was very impressive. For the first time since coming to China, I saw a situation in which children were allowed broad choices of activities. The kindergarten had plenty of space and materials. Children were busy with a great variety of activities. This kindergarten seemed to rank with the best I have seen.

UNICEF has provided support through the collaborative project for a) capital construction, b) equipment, and c) personnel. The government has contributed more than the agreed upon counterpart funding. The audio-visual and printing equipment is installed and in use. An audio-visual centre has a library of 218 video tapes that have been shown 2,500 times in the school and 75 outside. Figures were produced for in-service training use: 6,832 have watched videos in mountainous areas. In some cases this viewing was not only by teachers but also by the public through parent schools, in association with the Women's Federation.

The school has a closed circuit television system.

A room is available for demonstration and micro-teaching and I was told it was indeed used for these purposes.

We saw several tapes that had been produced for use in the school. One dealt with the making of toys and teaching aides. The video did not begin with the concept behind the toy and did not show the use of the toy; rather, it concentrated on how to make the toys. I was told that other videos picked up concepts and use, an interesting kind of compartmentalization.

We were also shown an exhibit of toys and teaching aides, many of which were made from local materials. Present at the display was an extremely talented gentleman who worked with the school and who could, in seconds, produce magnificent, artistic, and durable cut-out creatures (grasshoppers or butterflies, for instance) from small white sheets of stiff plastic.

A survey of 1986/87 graduates of the Kindergarten Training Centre indicated that 95 percent are involved in 1987 as preschool teachers, 90 percent in the mountainous areas of the province. This figure was impressive and did not correspond with other statistics we had heard about normal school graduates and their locations.

The school had pictures of two famous preschool educators painted on a wall of the mainstairway: Maria Montessori and Chen Hequin.

Fuzhou Normal School. The afternoon was spent at the Fuzhou Normal School. An introduction to the school is reproduced below, taken from a nicely-presented pamphlet about the school.

A Brief Introduction to Fuzhou Normal School

Fuzhou Normal School, a new-type school with its attractive scenery, stands on the north side of Yu Shan Hill, where it once was the relics of Ao Feng Academy of Classical Learning. A correspondence department, a department for training art teachers and two primary schools are attached to it. It is also a cradle to train qualified teachers, as well as the teachers in-service, of primary schools. In Fujian Province, it now becomes the centre to carry on the experiments of teaching, the scientific research in education and the education with electrical audio-visual aids among the normal schools.

Our school has a long history. Previously called Quan Min (All Fujian Province) Normal School, it was set up in 1903. After the foundation of the People's Republic of China, the main efforts were concentrated to train teachers and resurgent education. As a result, our school develops vigorously: the ranks of the excellent teachers are growing steadily and the advanced teaching equipments are increasing. At present, the total area of the school is 56 mu, including 18,000m² of architectural complex. In our school, there are 167 teachers and staffs, 691 students and 11,880 correspondence students. The total value of teaching equipments reaches to more than 600,000 yuan. In the library, there are more than 50,000 copies of books and the data for audio-visual teaching can be played as long as nearly 2,000 hours.

Under the guidance of the line of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh central Committee of our party, we are determined to reform in our school and realize that our school is to train future teachers. So, we devote much attention to the training of the thoughts of wouldbe teachers among the students, to the training of fundamental skill and to the teaching of elementary knowledge. We try our best to exert our favourable influence on the students' characters as future teachers. We require them to study earnestly and further improve themselves on every side, which are the excellent traditions in our school. To do all these is for the purpose of making them become persons of having softy ideal and morality, of the highly educated, of observing discipline to meet the need of the construction of the four modernizations. The quality in our school teaching has been steadily upgrading. In 1985, our school was bestowed as an advanced unit on education and an advanced unit on popularizing the common spoken Chinese in our country by the Fujian Provincial authority and Fuzhou Municipal authority respectively. It is also appointed by the National Education Committee as a co-operative school between our country and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund to further train the teachers in the primary schools.

Our school education on every aspect is like a spring breeze to make flowers bloom and our students are spread far and wide in Fujian Province. Fuzhou Normal School feels no qualms in this era, as well as in its history. It will march on towards the modernizations, towards the world, towards the future.

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At the normal school, which trains primary school teachers, we saw a video tape describing the institution. The tape was made by the man in charge of audio-visuals at the school. It was artistic and informative, the best such production seen during the trip. On a simpler scale, the AV man had also designed some clever movable props illustrating scientific principles in simple ways — to be used with overhead projectors.

As in the morning, we were provided with figures on the cost of the equipment and its uses, both in the Normal school and outside. The equipment was being put to good use here and, perhaps, a bit more creatively than in other places.

Following the briefing and a rapid tour of the large campus (where we saw such unusual extracurricular activities under way as taxidermy, building model airplanes, playing the French horn, and a mathematics quiz), we went to the nearby primary school where normal school students do some practicing. This was a student activity afternoon in the primary school as well as in the normal school so we were again treated to a wide variety of activities — from ping pong to stamp collecting.

An Evening Performance. We were treated, and I mean really treated, to an outstanding stage show presented by students (and faculty) from the various educational institutions throughout the city of Fuzhou. One of the highlights was a piano performance by a seven-year old child prodigy. In conversation afterward, she indicated that she wanted to be a world class pianist, that she practiced 6 hours or more each day and that she loved to play — so much so that she would forget to eat when she was practicing. The performance of the young girl, which was sensitive as well as technically good, made me wonder whether the real test of how China fosters creativity might lie more in how the country handles its gifted children than in the structure of its regular preschool curriculum. (This girl was to audition for admission to a special school for gifted pianists in Shanghai.) The performance also featured a very creative dance based on a lotus blossom theme, danced by young girls aged 10 or thereabouts. It provided another evidence of tremendous creativity at work.

DAY 3, October 28th

This day was devoted to lectures by the foreign "experts." In the morning, Dr. Yeoh Oon Chye from the Institute of Education in Singapore spoke about teacher training in that country. The most interesting part of his presentation, in my opinion, was a discussion of what he called API, or Assignment for Period of Induction. API represents a carefully thought out strategy linking pre-service training to practice. Also of interest was Dr. Yeoh's treatment of "action research" as part of the strategy to link theory and practice.

A copy of my presentation, which underwent various transformations and was still not properly directed to the normal school audience to which it was delivered, is attached.

DAYS 3 and 4: These were essentially tourism days for the foreign experts, while the Chinese participants got on with their work.

DAY 5, October 31st

The following is a brief summary of working group reports and of the closing comments made by Manzoor Ahmed.

Working Group Reports. Reports were presented by five working groups. Each group first presented an evaluation of the conference, then gave main points resulting from a review of the second cycle of the SEC-UNICEF cooperative teacher training projects, and finally presented comments, suggestions and proposals for a next cycle of cooperation. Each of these reports stressed how valuable the conference experience had been as an exchange of views and experiences. Some mentioned that the conference had helped to clarify goals, that the presentations were informative, that this was a timely conference, etc.

The five working groups represented the five institutional clusters that had been gathered together: the 5 university normals; the 9 minority teacher training projects; the 18 kindergarten teacher training schools; the 23 primary school teacher training normal colleges; and the representatives of teacher training divisions of the SEC in the provinces.

Working Group 1: The University Group. This group had taken a special interest in distance learning and through their network had made progress in creating materials dealing with preschool curricula and methods. In looking to the future, the group indicated a need to improve the efficiency of implementation by shortening the cycle of importing equipment and by increasing coverage. They promised to produce more video tapes as well as programmes of parental education. Five concrete activities were outlined for the coming year:

- a. Production of a national video show dealing with how to educate children at home.
- b. Compilation and editing of comparatively high quality textbooks for training through correspondence courses.
- c. Research by training institutions into areas "that need help" (these areas were not elaborated in the verbal presentation).
- d. An international conference on preschool education, as one way of increasing international exchange of ideas and information.
- e. Establishment of a national kindergarten information centre. One function of such a centre would be to obtain information from other countries and to publish and distribute it within China.

Working Group 2: The Minority Teacher Training Group. This group stressed that even though the projects had only been in operation for a short time, much of the donated equipment was already being usefully employed. Several hundred thousand copies of teaching materials had been published and video tapes and several thousand cassettes had been made. More than 1000 minority teachers had been trained for primary schools.

Several problems were mentioned:

- a. The need for spare parts.
- b. The need for a different kind of vehicle for mountainous areas (the Toyotas provided by UNICEF did not perform adequately).

A need for music equipment and "childrens psychological equipment was mentioned. (I interpret the latter as a need for toys related to cognitive development and as part of the unfortunate tendency to overlook locally available materials that could serve the same purposes.)

Working Group 3: The Kindergarten Teacher Training Group. This presentation was mostly "thank yous," noting that the use of equipment had already been talked about and there was no need to repeat what was said.

Working Group 4: The Primary School Teacher Training Group. Among the specific uses of equipment noted was the "Normal School in the Sky," using materials produced with the UNICEF-donated equipment. Also mentioned was Shaanxi's radio broadcast normal school and Giling's seven different courses in teacher training. To improve project impact in the coming year it was suggested that:

- a. Coordination between schools could be strengthened, focussing on management in project schools.
- b. Greater emphasis should be given to the production of software. Specifically, a software competition is planned for next year among project schools.
- c. The SEC should set up a private association for audio-visual education in teacher training schools.
- d. Project schools should work out standards for training in normal schools.

In order to realize these goals, it was hoped that equipment for the cycle would arrive as soon as possible.

Working Group 5: Teacher Training Divisions Group. The group noted that the provinces have given greater counterpart support than required under the agreement. The following were noted as ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the projects:

- a. The time for delivery of equipment should be shortened.
- b. Additional attention should be given to rural and mountainous areas, distinguishing the mobile coaches according to whether they will be used in urban or rural areas.
- c. Project schools should coordinate production of software.

Closing Remarks by Manzoor Ahmed

The UNICEF Representative, Manzoor Ahmed, stressed the need to look at education and teacher training as systems. Rather than focussing on individual pieces (e.g., AV equipment, or training), emphasis should be placed on how the pieces (or sub-systems) relate to the whole. Teacher training is part of a larger system of basic education which in turn is part of an education/science/technology development system which is part of a broader system of national development.

Any system has inputs, processes to transform the inputs, and outputs. In the teacher training process:

- a. Inputs may be:
 - trainees for inservice and preservice programmes
 - facilities
 - teachers and personnel
 - finances
- b. Processes include:
 - learning activities
 - curricula
 - examinations
 - management and supervision
 - setting objectives
- c. Outputs may be:
 - Different types of trained personnel (direct)
 - Children who learn better (indirect)
 - Greater fulfillment of individual goals (indirect)
 - Contributions from better learning (indirect)

There is a tendency to focus on inputs and on trained personnel as the outputs. Inputs, processes, and outputs for teacher training are influenced by broader factors such as national goals and demographic trends. It may be as important to affect these conditioning factors if teacher training is to be changed as it is to work within the teacher training sub-system. If the conditions cannot be changed they need at least to be understood.

Against the systems background stressing a look at relationships, Ahmed suggested specific principles and actions that might be considered.

1. There is a need to look at teacher training as a continuous process. Presently, there is a tendency to separate pre-service and in-service training with the latter for those who did not obtain pre-service training. However, in-service should be for all, not just for the "underqualified." Specific actions that might help build continuity include:

- a. Instituting a bridge from pre-service to in-service, as was described in Mr. Yeoh's lecture.
- b. Using experienced teachers to provide on-the-job in-service training.
- c. Organization of self-learning applied to and within the school setting (not just in correspondence courses unrelated to everyday teaching responsibilities).

d. Creation of supervisory arrangements related to clusters of teachers meeting periodically.

2. There is a need for networking that looks beyond local experimentation and across bureaucratic boundaries.

3. Stress should be placed on the purposes and uses of A-V and other aides. To facilitate that, it might be possible to:

a. Produce catalogues of available materials.

b. Agree on purposes to be served and assign production responsibilities.

c. Hold competitions.

4. There is a need to reach children who do not go to preschools. In that effort the SEC and ACWF might work together to strengthen programmes of parental education.

The Conference of Directors on the Strengthening of Co-operation in Teacher Training was officially closed by Mr. Meng of the SEC who noted the considerable progress made since the first meeting in the series and who looked forward to continuing cooperation with UNICEF in a next cycle.

END

ALL-CHINA WOMEN'S FEDERATION

— A Brief Introduction

The All-China Women's Federation was established on April 3, 1949. Earlier, during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression between 1937 and 1945, women's federations for national salvation in the Communist-led resistance base areas had played an important supportive role in winning the war. Shortly before the inception of the People's Republic of China in 1949, women's organizations in the liberated-areas and progressive women's organizations in the areas thitherto controlled by the Kuomintang merged into the All-China Democratic Women's Federation, whose name was later changed to the All-China Women's Federation.

Led by the Chinese Communist Party, the ACWF is a broadly-based national mass organization. It represents and unites women of various ethnic groups in all walks of life. Women's federations are also set up at provincial, autonomous regional, municipal, county, township and village levels corresponding to government administrative system. At the grassroots in rural and urban areas are women's representative conferences in the villages and in the neighbourhoods at the level of residents' committee respectively. There are now altogether 70,000 professionals specializing in woman work at all levels.

Organizational Structure of Women's Federations at Various Levels:

All-China Women's Federation

Women's federations of
provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities
directly under the Central Government

In charge of rural women's work

City or prefectural women's federations
County women's federations
Township women's federations
Women's representative conferences at
village level

In charge of urban women's work

Municipal women's federations
District women's federations
Subdistrict women's federations
Women's representative conferences at
residents' committee level

Women's federations maintain close ties with the masses through representatives, and accept group membership instead of individual membership. There is no membership fee, and the operational funds are mainly furnished by the Government. The election of representatives to the women's congresses or conferences at various levels follows the principle of equitable distribution by area and occupation. Representatives should keep in close contact with women in their constituencies, bring to the attention of women's federations the views and needs of women, carry out tasks involving the interests of women and serve the women and children in general.

Through the admission of group members, the All-China Women's Federation strengthens its ties with women of all circles. Any national or local women's organizations willing to

apply for affiliation to a women's federation may become a group member when approved by the national or local women's federation concerned. For example, the Women Workers' Committee of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions and the YWCA of China are all group members of the ACWF. The Women Engineers' Friendship Association in Shanghai, the Women Teachers' Friendship Association in the city of Qingdao, the Women Writers' Friendship Association in Shanxi Province, and the Women Self-Employed Workers' Association in Heilongjiang Province are all group members of the local women's federations in their respective areas.

The leading bodies of the ACWF and of local women's federations are elected by women's congresses or conferences at the corresponding levels.

The leading bodies of the ACWF

The highest organ of the ACWF is the National Women's Congress. The functions and powers of the leading bodies are as follows:

The National Women's Congress:

To convene once every five years;

To discuss and decide on the guiding principles and tasks of the national women's movement;

To examine, discuss and approve reports on the work of the ACWF Executive Committee;

To amend the Constitution of the ACWF;

To elect Members of the ACWF Executive Committee.

The ACWF Executive Committee:

To convene a plenary session once a year;

To implement the resolutions of the National Women's Congress;

To deliberate and decide on the major issues in the work for women;

To elect the President, Vice-Presidents, and Members of the ACWF Standing Committee.

The ACWF Standing Committee:

To convene a plenary session every six months;

To discuss and study the major problems in the work for women;

To designate a First Secretary, and a number of Secretaries and Alternate Secretaries to form the ACWF Secretariat.

The ACWF Secretariat:

To handle the day-to-day work of the ACWF.

The tasks of the ACWF

In the light of the general objective of the nation's economic and social development and the tasks set forth at the Fifth National Women's Congress held in 1983, the ACWF has, in the past few years, focussed on the following tasks:

1. To educate women in the ideas of emancipation of women and equality of the sexes; to encourage and guide women to work and study hard to continuously raise their ideological level, deepen their understanding of politics, improve their general and professional knowledge and acquire production skills so as to contribute more to the nation's material and spiritual well-being; to cite those women who have scored outstanding achievements.

In order to prompt women to acquire general education and professional and technological expertise, women's federations at various levels, working in close coordination with government functional departments, organize literacy classes and technological training courses and develop vocational education, assist educational departments to materialize the nine-year com-

pulsory education programme and help more female junior and senior middle school graduates to undergo suitable professional training.

2. To publicize and implement the principles of sex equality and protection of women and children's rights and interests laid down in the Constitution and other legislations; to cooperate with government departments to consolidate the legal system for the defence of women and children; and to apply the law as a weapon to safeguard women and children's legitimate rights and interests.

Women's federations in provinces, autonomous regions and Central-Government-administered municipalities and some cities and counties have set up legal advisory services and public liaison services to help women who need legal advice to solve their problems.

3. To ensure the healthy growth of children, publicize scientific child-rearing methods through various channels, give advice to parents on upgrading family education and motivate and assist social resources to set up various types of child care facilities and public catering services.

4. To promote "Five-Good Families" and help enhance socialist spiritual well-being in homes. In the past few years, 20,780,000 homes across the land have been cited as "Five-Good Families".

5. To unite on a wide scale with women compatriots of all circles in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan and those residing abroad to jointly contribute to building and reunifying the motherland. To develop friendly exchanges and cooperation with women's and child welfare organizations and professional workers for women and children in other countries, and to increase understanding and friendship with women of other countries in joint efforts for the defence of women and children's rights and interests and the maintenance of world peace.

The operational departments of the ACWF:

Publicity and Education Department

To sensitize women and society at large to the significance of women's role, status and achievements;

Educate women to set high ideals and develop self-respect, self-improvement and a sense of their own worth, and commend the outstanding ones;

Collaborate with relevant departments to eliminate illiteracy among women and upgrade their general and technological education so as to help raise their cultural and professional qualities;

Give guidance to women on matters concerning courtship, marriage, family relations, family planning and the norms of "Five-Good Families".

Department of Women and Children's Rights and Interests

To carry out publicity and education work concerning laws and policies on women and children's rights and interests, and monitor their implementation;

Investigate and study related problems and legislative proposals;

Present to appropriate departments legislative proposals and measures for improvements;

Attend to women's personal visits or letters of complaint and offer the complainers legal advice when necessary;

Cooperate with relevant departments to ensure adequate labour protection to the female workforce.

Child Welfare Department

To take the lead in coordinating the work of various children-oriented departments—a task entrusted by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to the ACWF;

Supervise and assist nurseries and kindergartens to strengthen management and teachers' training, upgrade pre-school education;

Publicize scientific child-rearing among parents.

The China Children's Fund has its office in this department. The Fund sets up a council composed of personages from the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee, Government ministries, national mass organizations and individuals who are enthusiastic supporters of the children's cause. The Fund solicits donations from various sources in society and provides financial aid to needy regions and minority peoples' areas to help develop child welfare there.

Policy Research Department

To investigate and identify practical problems facing women, and present to relevant departments proposals in connection with principles and policies concerning women;

Study new situations in the work for women, promote theoretical research in women studies and organize national symposiums to exchange the results of academic research in this field.

Organization Department

To take charge of the personnel management of the ACWF and its affiliated units;

Keep in contact with the structuring, staffing and management of women's federations at all levels from provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government down to grassroots units;

Sponsor pooling of experience in the training and selection of women cadres;

Provide liaison service between ACWF and Members of the Standing Committee and Executive Committee of ACWF, group members of the ACWF, and women of other democratic parties.

Department of History of Women's Movement in China

To collect, collate and edit historical materials on Chinese women's movement. Currently, the focus is on the period between 1919-1949.

International Liaison Department

Aimed at winning peace and friendship, the department develops friendly exchanges with women's and child welfare organizations of other countries and international agencies, arranges friendly mutual visits and receives delegations from women's and child welfare organizations and professional workers for women and children from abroad and exchanges experience with them to help enhance understanding and friendship. Entrusted by the Government, the department organizes delegations to international conferences and other important activities sponsored by women's and child welfare organizations within the UN system.

The department cooperates with international, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies to serve women and children at home.

The ACWF College for Managerial Personnel

Its predecessor, the ACWF Women Cadres School, was established in 1949. In 1984, the School was transformed into an institution of higher learning for training women managerial personnel. The College offers three specialized courses in women's liberation movement, pre-school education administration and law. Most of the students are full-time women cadres from women's federations at various levels. Students are admitted to the College after passing a standard college-level entrance examination. The 1986 enrollment is 600. The College is still being refurbished and extended.

Introduction of CDCC

THE CEILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER OF CHINA

The Child Development Center of China (CDCC) is a multidisciplinary applied research institution under the umbrella of the All China Women's Federation.

CDCC enjoys the support of the Chinese government and of various agencies, organizations and individuals concerned with child development. It also receives considerable financial assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund as one of its priority projects.

By way of a multidisciplinary approach and with an all-China focus, CDCC promotes the overall development of Chinese children through:

.....APPLIED RESEARCH: Research emphasis is being placed on prevention of perinatal, neonatal, infant and child morbidity and mortality as well as on other priority health, nutrition, education, social and development problems. The results of these researches are being used to design practical interventions and to improve the services for mothers and children. Special attention will be given to problems surrounding the proper development of "the only child"

.....SITUATION ANALYSIS: Extended field visits are under-taken periodically to

study the problems as well as the social and economic conditions of children in various parts of China. Data collected during these field trips are forming the basis for indepth situation analysis and formulation of new research projects and priority programmes. In this respect special attention is given to remote rural and national minority areas where needs are greatest.

.....EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE: Various types and levels of workshops, seminars, symposia and lectures are organized to provide opportunities for child care workers and other child development specialists to share their experience and improve their professional competence.

.....TRAINING AND DEMONSTRATION SERVICES:

CDCC provides in-service training for various types and levels of key professionals working in the field of child development. A multi-disciplinary practice-oriented training approach is being developed.

.....PUBLICITY AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

Research findings are being published and widely disseminated in the form of books, pamphlets, posters and a journal. Various types of audiovisual materials and public exhibitions on child development topics are an integral part of the publicity and public education programme.

.....COUNSELLING SERVICE:

Various types of counselling services on child rearing and development are provided to mothers, grandparents, childcare workers and policy makers.

.....DOCUMENTATION:

The CDCC Headquarters maintain a small but up-to-date library and databank serving as reference center for child-care workers and other professionals in the field of child development.

Introduction

The ACWF runs an English monthly "Women of China" to introduce to readers abroad the Chinese women's achievements in national development, their growth, their everyday life and their attitude and approach towards courtship, marriage, family relations, family planning, home education and so on. Its circulation reaches around 140 countries and regions. To spur the work for women within the country, the ACWF publishes the Chinese monthly "Chinese Women", and the Chinese newspaper "Chinese Women Journal".

THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER OF CHINA

The Child Development Center of China (CDC) is a multidisciplinary applied research institution under the leadership of the All China Women's Federation.

CDC enjoys the support of the Chinese Government and of various agencies, organizations and individuals concerned with child development. It also receives considerable financial assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund as one of its priority projects.

By way of a multidisciplinary approach and with an all-China focus, CDC promotes the overall development of Chinese children through:

---APPLIED RESEARCH: Research emphasis is being placed on provision of personal, neonatal, infant and child morbidity and mortality as well as on other priority health, nutritional, educational and development problems. The result of these researches are being used to design practical interventions and to improve the services for mothers and children. Special attention will be given to problems surrounding the proper development of "the only child".

---SITUATION ANALYSIS: Extended field visits are undertaken periodically to

.....INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:

CDCC keeps contact with foreign child development institutions and organizations by way of project co-operation, exchange of publications and mutual study tours.

The CDCC Headquarters Building is located in Guanyuan, Beijing. It has a total floor space of 7,000 square meters.

Under the supervision of the directorate consisting of a director and two deputies are three research sections (child nutrition; child growth and monitoring; child psychology and education research) and seven operational divisions namely Programme Planning Information; Publicity; Training; Equipment; Personnel and Administration divisions. The Headquarters Building includes a library, reading rooms; a exhibition halls, computer rooms, conference rooms, laboratories, training rooms; a counse llingclinic and other facilities.

The directorate is assisted by an Experts Committee which is a consultative body consisting of renowned personalities and scholars hailing from various disciplines such as child health, nutrition, psychology, education and sociology. The main function of the experts committee is to assess and evaluate progress of research work, publicity, training and experience exchange activities and to review the qualifications of CDCC staff.

presently CDCC has four associate centers namely, Center for Maternal and child health; Center for Child Health Care; Center for Child Nutrition and Center for Child Psychology.

These Associate Centers are staffed by professionals from Teaching Hospital of The Beijing Medical University; The Institut of Child Health Care of Beijing; The

Institute of Nutrition and Food Hygiene attached to the Chinese Academy Preventive Medicine and the Institute of Psychology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Under CDCC coordination, the four Associate Centers are undertaking studies on various aspects of physical and mental development of children.

In order to assure an all-China focus of CDCC activities, four regional centers have been established in Shanghai; Cuangdong; Xinjiang and Heilongjiang. The major function of these regional centers is to serve as models for propagating modern child rearing methods and to continuously analyse the problems and needs of children and women in their respective regions.