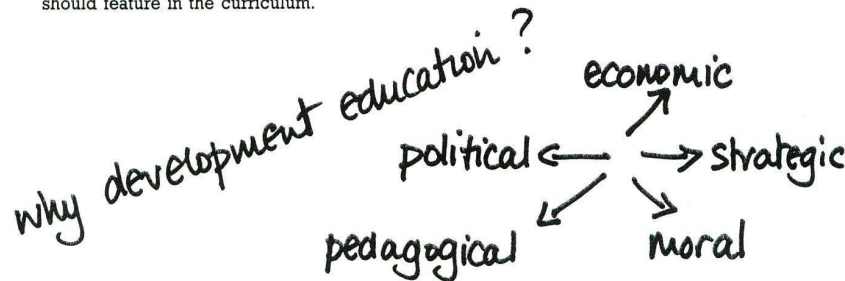


Development Education - A British/Irish Dimension?

Opposition to apartheid, famine in Ethiopia, assassinations and deaths in El Salvador, disaster in Bhopal... "Live Aid" telecasts, aid appeals, political rallies... are all events which have captured public attention and concern over the past few months and years. They are, to a very significant extent, the face of the wider world which bombards us. They are the images and events which condition many of our reflexes and responses.

The responses which these events and images have produced are many, cash donations being the most obvious. However, there are two other interrelated responses. One, an explicit recognition that there is a need for a more widespread and balanced awareness of wider world issues here in the West. Two, a demand that education about international and development issues be given a priority in order to ensure that responses tackle causes and become more effective in dealing with problems and issues.

Ultimately this begs the question of why development education and what is its relevance to the classroom. We would suggest that there are at least five inter-related reasons why world development issues should feature in the curriculum.



Economic:

Economically the world has become more inter-related and integrated than ever before. The growth of transnational companies, technology, communications... the advent of the "global" plan, the world as a market... all mean that economic decisions and choices affect many parts of the globe at one and the same time. Today's decisions in New York, Lomé, London or Dublin mean tomorrow's results in places and for people many thousands of miles away.

Political:

The emergence of the EEC, the UN, Comecon etc... World Summits and regulations... the demand for democracy and informed participation... all require political literacy... and not just in a local setting... Again decisions taken thousands of miles away.

Strategic:

Growing tension, unease and conflict... the arms race and the threat on nuclear war... the lack of dialogue and justice... all threaten our security.

Moral:

The need to respond to obvious widespread injustice, inequality poverty and even death at the world level.

Pedagogical:

We need to recognise that the majority of the world's population does not live in the "developed world", that they are increasingly influencing world development issues and that this should be manifested in our curricula. Students need to be intellectually and practically armed to deal with the world as it will be structured in years to come.

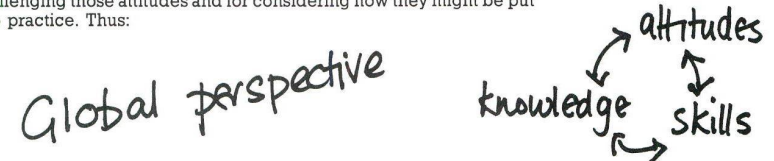
What is development education about?

Traditionally development education has been perceived to be about the "Third World", about poverty, hunger, inequality and our responses to them - charity, aid etc. Many of those involved in aid organisations, both governmental and non-governmental still assume this to be the "Raison d'être" of development education. Embodied in this view of development education is usually a traditional view of development, itself centred on western conceptions of progress. Development involves the transfer of western technology, knowledge, finance and institutional structures. The belief usually is, despite the rhetoric, that we have the answer. This view of development is, of course, an ethnocentric and partial view and usually evokes an educational response which centres on information/knowledge and transmission models of learning. It has been increasingly challenged in recent years.

Some now see development education as a perspective which seeks to link and analyse "the development issue" at both local and global levels. In this view, development is a universal phenomenon changing over space and time, a phenomenon characteristic of all countries and peoples and not specific to the "Third World". Indeed they would argue that it is impossible to analyse developments in any one place without reference to the global dimension. Thus development education is about appreciating the global as well as the local debates/decisions and choices surrounding strategies for development. Development education can thus engage development just as readily at local as at global levels. Development education is therefore as much about our society as it is about the "Third World".

The "aid" model of development and of development education usually assumes either that today's world system is basically sound and not in need of replacement or, alternatively, that such questions are "political" and therefore not the concern of educators. Those who view today's development problems as arising from fundamental injustices, imbalances and inequalities reject this argument and instead argue that development is a political issue and that, therefore, development education is as much about political choices as anything else. Hunger, inequality, injustice... the arms race, apartheid etc are ultimately political constructions and therefore need to be challenged politically. In this view development education is about identifying debating/discussing and analysing political perspectives and choices in relation to world development. It is not about political indoctrination but about analysing a spectrum of political views and opinions. This is often where development education and campaigning for development part company.

Ultimately development education is about good education in a global framework. It should endorse and practise educational methods which are based on learner centred approaches of enquiry, debate and decision making. It should start, we believe, with an exploration of attitudes and values, develop the skills necessary for debating the role of such attitudes, introduce new content aimed at expanding or challenging those attitudes and for considering how they might be put into practice. Thus:



'Half the Lies are True' is about Ireland and Britain in a wider world framework. It is about debating the divisions between us, our differing perspectives on the world; it is about political discussions and debates about our futures; it is about development, injustice and inequality but it is also about misunderstanding and mutual incomprehension.

In this context local development is seen as a microcosm of global development involving the same range of issues, perspectives, difficulties and opportunities. 'Half the Lies are True' is about discussing the issue of international misunderstanding in our own context.

Going Local

Introduction

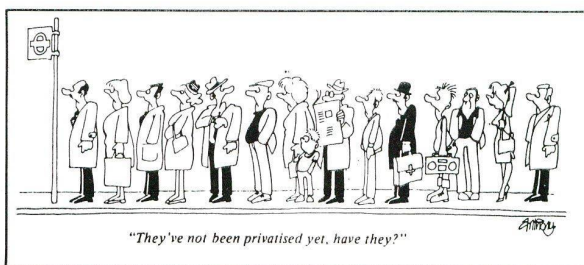
Development Education, as we have said in the introduction, tends to be linked with "Third World" issues in isolation from issues closer to home. Furthermore, we tend to teach about these two types of issues as if they were fundamentally different. In this section we introduce a few examples of development education "going local" to illustrate the argument and to set the scene for the Greystones seminar. This seminar was itself an application of the "going local" approach to development education, in this case exploring the relationship between Britain and Ireland.

The idea of "going local" can provide a useful introduction to development issues. We are able to come to terms with some of the complexities - indeed some of the contradictions - of an issue in our own locality because we are more able to relate to the range of ideas, views and influences which are part of any situation. We can also begin to develop skills in unpacking an issue in order to review some of the basic principles involved.

We are, in both Birmingham and Dublin, familiar for example, with debates about the development of transport policy:

- about the extent different forms of transport are integrated.
- about the priority given to cars.
- about the arguments for and against building new roads.
- about public transport fares.
- about the real costs of transport systems in terms of the environment, health budget, accidents and the emergency services.
- about the ownership of "public transport".

Each of these return to the base line a question of...who should gain from the development of the transport system? To explore these issues is to explore the priorities which are influencing the development of our cities.



The study of a local development issue can help us ask more effective questions about issues in other places. The process can of course also work the other way. The questioning of development priorities in another context may help us to see local issues more clearly. Will the disadvantaged in Birmingham really gain by giving priority to the development of a conference complex...or will it be part of widening the gap between rich and poor? (see page 8)

"Going Local" allows you to start with issues about which there is more familiarity and therefore different views. There is a greater opportunity for students to challenge each other about their analysis...or their attitudes and assumptions, as they bring their own experience into the classroom. Such group skills are important to build up for the study of less familiar issues, that are further away.

As a result of responses to ideas such as these in 'Priorities for Development', 'The World in Birmingham' and '75/25: Ireland in an Unequal World', we have become aware of the danger of seeing the local case study as an easier introduction to development education.

The access to basic food, the availability of health care, water or the right to shelter/housing...to education...to employment are all important issues. When we consider them in the context of our own society they are clearly political issues. Why do we label them as "development issues" in a "Third World" context?

There are many issues in our own locality which reflect the patterns of development/underdevelopment. These patterns are fundamentally similar to those in the so called "Third World". The use of different labels distances these issues from our own experience. Too often we make them into interesting case studies...we do not relate them to the real political issues that they are.

Aid for example has a strong popular image...of charity...of us helping them. We rarely use materials which draw parallels between our experience as aid receivers (see page 11) and our assumptions as aid donors. A debate, for example, about whether students should receive loans for higher education rather than grants is about perceptions of, on the one hand, the grant as a right and on the other as "aid" which should be cut back.

At the time of writing Ethiopia is much in the news, and the focus of many discussions about aid. These reports from Ethiopia and the responses to them over the last year have been a classic example of how an apolitical popular analysis is first suggested and then legitimised. The focus has been on the need for food aid and the problems caused by the weather, to the almost complete exclusion of other more serious questions and issues, (another potential application of the title 'Half the lies...'). Something of how the process of selective reporting works, is revealed in the Irish Rock Magazine, *Hot Press's* coverage of the Live Aid Concert.

Hot Press reported that the British press wanted a statement from U2. Bono gave some quotes to *Island Press* executive Rob Partridge who took it to the Wembley pressroom, but the hacks saw it, they judged it unsuitable. For the record, this is what worried the tabloids: (U2's original statement):

"U2 are involved in Live Aid because it's more than money, it's music...but it is also a demonstration to the politicians and policy-makers that men, women and children will not walk by other men, women and children as they lie bellies swollen, starving to death for the sake of a cup of grain and water."

For the price of Star Wars or the MX missile offensive-defence budgets, the deserts of Africa could be turned into fertile lands. The technology is with us. The technocrats are not. Are we part of a civilization that protects itself by investing in life...or investing in death?"

Later, an *Island* spokesman commented dryly: "It wasn't what they wanted. They preferred something glib."

Amid all the glamour, music and accolades surrounding Live Aid, the real issues, expressed eloquently by U2 above tend to disappear. "Popular opinion" does not, as a consequence, see famine in Ethiopia as a political issue.

Going Local

a new conference centre.

The idea of 'going local' is a two way process. The questions we ask about development issues in our own locality can help to build up skills in asking questions about situations in other parts of the world. The complexity, contradictions and different view points which we are able to come to terms with in a familiar context, offer a basis for insights into less familiar situations.

The process is important the other way round too. The questions we ask about a situation in another part of the world when applied to the local context may help us to see through some of the complexities and get to the basic issues.

There is a proposal for a major new conference centre in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).

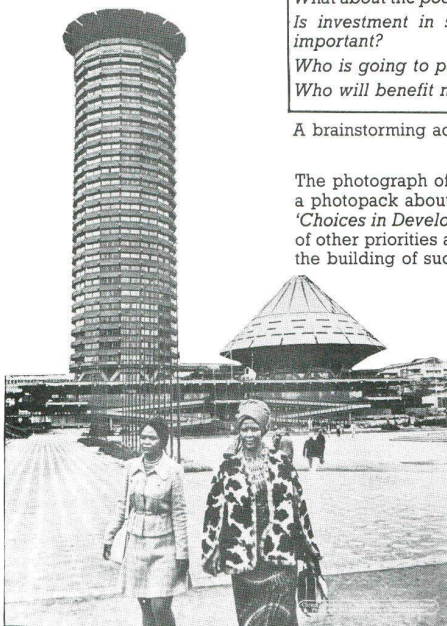
The conference centre will, it is argued, help attract business and tourism to Ethiopia. It would also provide an ideal venue for political conferences such as the O.A.U. (Organisation of African Unity) and enable Ethiopia... "to take its rightful place as one of the leading African states." The conference centre will it is agreed create jobs and demand for a number of services needed by visitors.

What questions come to mind?

Is this the most important priority?
What else could this sort of investment be used for?
Should they not be concentrating on more basic needs?
What about the poor? Do they gain anything from a centre such as this?
Is investment in small scale agricultural development not more important?
Who is going to pay for it? Why?
Who will benefit most from it?

A brainstorming activity may raise questions such as these.

The photograph of the already established centre in Nairobi is from a photopack about development in Tanzania and Kenya. This pack, 'Choices in Development' could be used to take further the question of other priorities and models of development which are assumed in the building of such a centre.



Dublin and Birmingham proposals

There are currently plans to develop new conference centres in both Dublin and Birmingham. In Dublin there is a plan to restore and extend Dublin Castle. The Irish Presidency of the European Council of Ministers in 1990 is given as one of the major reasons for this IR£22 million project. What does this say about how Ireland sees itself in Europe?

In Birmingham proposals are well advanced for a £109 million plan to be completed for Birmingham City's Centenary — 1989. The City is seeking financial support for the project from the E.E.C. and the U.K. Government.

The extract from publicity promoting the idea offers a long list of benefits to Birmingham.

How do the promoters see the future of Birmingham?

Is this the most important priority? Should they not be concentrating on more basic investment in Birmingham people and their needs? Could this level of investment not produce more jobs?

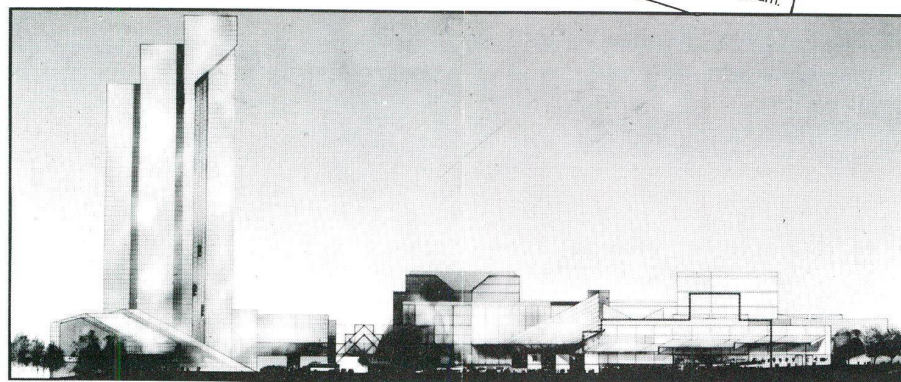
Who is going to pay for it? Why do they think it worthwhile?

Who will benefit the most?

How do your own answers to these questions influence your thoughts about the conference centre in Addis Ababa?

How do the questions you asked about the Addis Ababa proposal help you to question the Birmingham one?

- ### 7. THE BENEFITS TO BIRMINGHAM
- It complements the City's aims on economic regeneration and urban renewal.
 - The City of Birmingham's commitment to the European Community by providing a venue for meetings and the exchange of knowledge at a European level. America achieves a common market and an important part of this success is a massive network of Convention Centres. Europe needs to follow.
 - The creation of 2733 new jobs and support to 10,000 jobs in the service sector as a consequence of the scheme.
 - The creation of £54 million new income per annum to the region.
 - Of the total new business created, 55% will be new business to the West Midlands region, 6% will be new to the U.K. and 3% will be additional to Europe.
 - The extra generation of 23,500 business visitors to the U.K. and 11,400 extra business visitors to Europe.
 - Increasing the size of Birmingham City Centre and intensifying its sub-National importance.
 - Act as a catalyst to increase private development activity in the Inner City.
 - Providing a strong focus for developing regional tourism.
 - Regeneration of the Canals for tourist purposes.
 - Stimulating the local craft and souvenir industries such as the Jewellery Quarter.
 - Providing a range of facilities for local community use.
 - It will complement the National Exhibition Centre.
 - It will broaden the City's economic base — Birmingham, a Business City.



Going Local

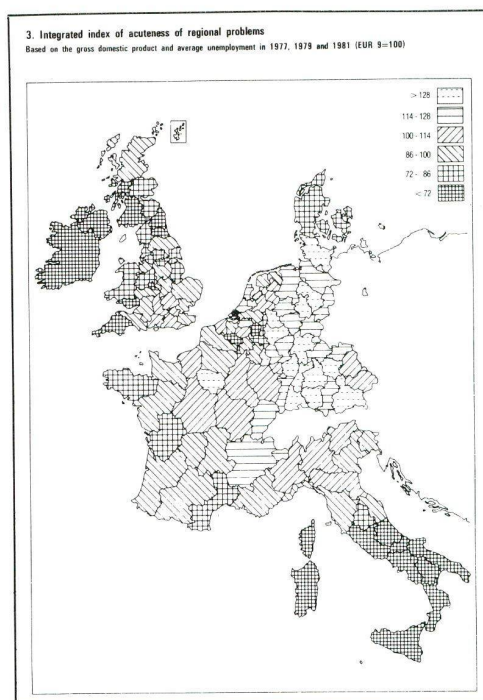
E.E.C. AID

Usually when we use the term "aid" we immediately think of the Third World. Alongside other keywords such as hunger, disaster and even development, the "aid" has become, to a large degree, a synonym for the Third World. The term "aid" itself is also associated with notions of charity, generosity and selflessness. Many people in development education have opposed the constant emphasis on aid because it tends to promote a particular image of the Third World and because it is often used to avoid having to deal with the more politically difficult and sensitive issues of justice as distinct from charity.

One useful and appropriate way to focus on the whole issue of aid, how it is perceived, is to examine EEC aid, not to the Third World, but to the member states of the Community. The arguments used to justify, for example, European regional development aid are similar in tone and content to those of "aid debates" at the global level. The discussion over which regions should get how much, what such aid should be used for and what its results are, are again similar to those in relation to the Third World.



Peace in our time



However, the major difference in these aid debates is, of course, that we in Europe find it very difficult to perceive of ourselves as recipients of aid. Furthermore, our governments and our Euro-politicians certainly demand a "fair share" of European Regional Development Fund aid not as a matter of charity but as one of right. In fact one of today's most vigorous debates within the Community is over who exactly are the net beneficiaries of Community membership.

In the preamble to the Treaty of Rome, which set up the European Community, the member States committed themselves to unifying their economies and to ensuring harmonious economic development by narrowing the gulf between different regions and to promoting the further development of less developed areas. This was to be achieved in 3 ways:

- Co-ordinating the regional policy of member States to ensure the effective and sustained use of resources;
- By taking into account the regional impact of EEC policies;
- By providing direct aid to the regions (via the European Regional Development Fund).

In the first 10 years of the ERDF (1975 to 1984) its finances increased eightfold to a budget in 1984 of 2140 million ECUs (European Currency Unit) or 7.8% of total EEC budget. In this first decade 91% of all funds went to 5 countries - Italy, Britain, France, Greece and Ireland. In terms of spending per head of population Ireland received most, followed by Greece and Italy.

The funds are most often used to create jobs or maintain existing ones, for restructuring industry and for providing roads, ports, industrial estates, power-stations etc.

New regulations for ERDF funds came into force in January 1985 and provide for the division of funds on the basis of the following % ranges.

Belgium	0.90 to 1.20%	Ireland	5.64 to 6.83%
Denmark	0.51 to 0.67%	Italy	31.94 to 42.59%
Germany	3.76 to 4.81%	Luxembourg	0.06 to 0.08%
Greece	12.35 to 15.74%	Netherlands	1.01 to 1.34%
France	11.05 to 14.74%	U.K.	21.42 to 28.56%

So all member States, to a greater or lesser degree, are in receipt of aid via the ERDF. Member States also receive other grants and subsidies ("aid") via the European Farm Fund, and the European Social Fund.



"The figures look better if you squint at them"

The case of the Transnationals

Of the 100 largest economic powers in the world in 1980, 53 were countries and 47 were transnational corporations (TNC's). Today the power and wealth has increased even more. As the Brandt Report noted, these huge companies control between one third and one quarter of all world production and this figure is rapidly increasing. In 1982 the total sales of foreign subsidiary companies amounted to some \$1150 billion, a figure greater than the GNP of all developing countries.

The sheer wealth and power which these huge transnationals can wield and the impact their strategies have on development at world level, have led to demands that strict controls be instituted to prevent the abuse of this power. Some development commentators have advocated that developing countries should not become involved with TNC's because their impact is fundamentally negative while the benefits are negligible. The arguments and concerns have become an integral part of the content of development education.

Because development education has traditionally had an explicit concern with Third World countries there has been a preponderant concern over the impact of TNC's on weaker and more vulnerable developing countries. This is as it should be. However, it has sometimes led to a neglect of, or a lack of awareness of, their equally widespread impact in the developed world. At the Greystones seminar some participants reflected on the fact that they found it easier to identify parallels between the impact of TNC's on Ireland and the Third World but seemed to find it difficult to perceive of Britain or, more specifically the West Midlands, in a similar fashion. It seems that our tendency to define the concept "Third World" in narrow geographical terms leads to difficulties such as this.

Yet the literature of both development studies and political economy is littered with examples of how TNC's view the world (developed and developing) as their stage of operations. They analyse how this international division of labour allows TNC's to choose between different countries, to play them off against each other, to locate different types of activities in different places (e.g. research and development here, part production there, assembly elsewhere etc.), and to minimise the controlling power of any one State. It facilitates the shifting of capital and investment globally thus taking advantage of tax allowances, cheap labour, "Stable" Regimes, resource bases etc.

Thus, increasingly, all countries of the world feel the impact of TNC investment in both its positive and negative aspects. While an area such as Ireland has experienced a short-term inflow of capital since 1960, an area such as the West Midlands has experienced a capital outflow. The West Midlands may then pick up TNC investment in high technology and research (but not in labour intensive industry) while Ireland experiences an increase in component assembly investment. Overall many developed countries are experiencing a flight of capital to certain developing countries thus leading to widespread job losses.

Thus any approach to TNC's needs to take the global as well as the local dimension into account, the attraction of TNC investment to States throughout the world as well as their impact, and the differing roles of developed and developing worlds in this international division of labour.

TNC s and the Developing World

The U.S. and Britain, followed by West Germany and Japan, are the countries whose TNCs own the largest stocks of direct overseas investment. However, between 1971-80 the share of global foreign investment held by U.S. Corporations fell from 48% to 42%. The Dutch share fell from 8% to 7.8% while the British share rose from 13.8% to 14.5%. The Japanese share increased from 2.6% to 7.3% equal to that of West Germany.

The International Labour Organisation has shown that this shift towards certain sectors and countries in the Third World has been accompanied by a decline in job creation in the "home" country and a rapid increase in job creation in the developing world. This involves in particular, the transfer of manual jobs to overseas locations where taxes are less, wages lower, trade union rights fewer and governments more sympathetic to the needs of capital. In turn this has led to a fundamental change in the employment structure of the developed world.

This increased investment in the developing world has not been evenly spread. In the mid 1970's, more than 50% of all investment was in Latin America, 21% in Africa and 19% in Asia. A quarter of all investment is in oil-exporting countries, the majority of the remainder is located in just 15 countries especially Peru, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil or Venezuela. Other increasingly important locations include Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong where Free Trade Zones are expanding rapidly. A national breakdown reveals that TNC's control 70% of manufacturing jobs in Singapore, 35% in Kenya and 20% in both Brazil and Mexico.

The impact of this investment trend is examined in detail by R. Barnett, and R. Muller (1974) '**Global Reach: The Power of the Multinational Corporation**'.

TNC s: The Irish Experience

In 1958 the Irish Government published a programme for economic expansion which represented a new departure in Irish development strategy. It represented a turning away from a failed internally oriented one. Ireland's development strategy was henceforth to seek its "engine of growth" in "industrialisation by invitation", i.e. by inviting in transnational corporations.

The programme did not really get going until 1960 and by 1980, over 950 projects had been established employing some 80,000 people or 34% of total manufacturing workforce. The Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement of 1966, EEC membership in 1973, generous tax concessions, political stability, generous plant, training and equipment grants and, in the 60's and early 70's, a "good" industrial relations record, all made the Republic a particularly attractive location for investment in a European context. However, the recession, rising costs, increased union activity, a lessening of tax advantages, the opening up of cheap labour markets in Greece, Spain and Portugal have helped to lessen Ireland's attractiveness.

85% of all investment in foreign firms is in companies originating in the U.S., Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands. U.S. investment has increased from 28% of total in 1973 to 42% in 1981 while British investment declined from 39% to 26% in the same period. Investment has been located in a wide variety of industries such as mechanical and electrical engineering, food, drink, tobacco, textiles and clothing. Since 1978 investment has been concentrated in both mechanical and electrical engineering, consisting of 60% of all Industrial Development Authority grants.

The pros and cons of such investment in both the Republic and Northern Ireland are briefly discussed in Regan, C. (1984) 'The World at their Feet' in '75:25 Ireland in an Unequal World.'

Bye-Bye West Midlands: Hello World

In recent years the economy of the West Midlands has experienced a period of severe industrial decline which mirrors that of the British economy as a whole. Manufacturing employment in the West Midlands has traditionally displayed a higher than average concentration in a small number of large companies. In 1976, 10 companies accounted for 43% of manufacturing jobs in Birmingham alone; in 1978, 30 manufacturing establishments, each employing over 1000 workers, accounted for no less than 32% of total manufacturing employment. Thus local manufacturing jobs remain dependent upon, and vulnerable to, the growth strategy of a small number of large companies.

In recent years, these "traditionally West Midlands" companies, have been transformed into TNCs through the acquisition of overseas subsidiaries. In the same period the top 10 of these companies had an average of 39 subsidiaries operating in 17 foreign countries (including Ireland). All 10 have announced massive redundancies in the West Midlands to the point where many of them can no longer be considered as major employers in the area.

From: Gaffikin, F. and A. Nickson (1984) '**Jobs Crisis and the Multi-Nationals: The Case of the West Midlands**'.

Learning Jointly

Development Education and the Curriculum in Britain and Ireland. The Greystones Seminar.

This seminar and the Project outlined on page 64 are based on taking the ideas and arguments for development education "going local" a stage further.

The seminar in Greystones involved a small invited group, the core of whom were consulted about plans earlier in the year at meetings in Dublin and in Birmingham.

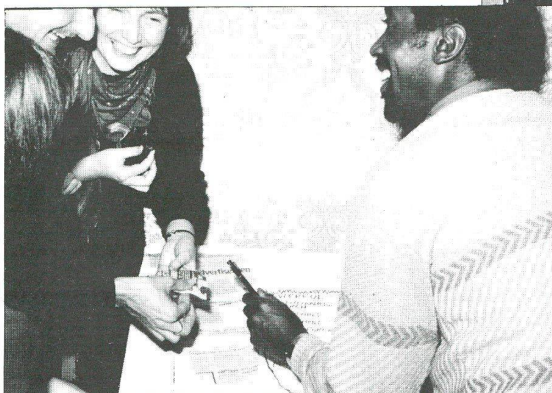
The experience of Trocaire and DEC Birmingham in co-operating over some small pieces of work, suggested that a lot could be gained from time out to see our work in the context of Ireland/Britain in the modern world. It would, not least of all, be valuable to meet people attempting to tackle similar development education issues in the other country. This may even lead to other co-operation in the long term.

It was also hoped that a forum of this type would provide evidence for the potential of more work on the historical dimension of development education.

Friday evening
Group activities to enable us:

- to begin to know each other
- to begin to work together
- to prepare for Saturday

These will also begin to explore our different education systems, perceptions and analysis. Participants will all be asked to bring several copies of various newspapers with them to help with this process.



Dave's Diary

"I don't want to share!!" (Diary: 10 a.m. Saturday)

"Again I'm asked to think about what I want to consider seriously. I don't - I want to be entertained. I want to find a structure which encourages the unexpected, the personal experiences and contacts.

I don't want to share my own agenda because I haven't got one. Do you only have an agenda to explore if you believe you know the answers and wish to persuade others? I'm interested in the questions I haven't thought of, the idea that I haven't got! Not the ones I have already.

On the Friday evening I wrote a flowery introduction to what these notes were going to be. The introduction was stimulated by a visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral. This was my first contact with a La Touche outside the realms of the conference proper (The Seminar took place in La Touche Hotel, Greystones). Three La Touches share a brass plaque in St. Patrick's: a father (an officer in the Bengal Lancers or similar regiment) and his two sons. One died at Hooge, the other at Gallipoli.

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori?

But whose country?

Even more striking in St. Patrick's was a vast relief in the north transept commemorating those who died storming the Soh Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon in the "Burmese Wars", accompanied by a large but less impressive (no exotic pagoda portrayed) memorial for the "China Wars". Imperial conquest and the pursuit of the opium trade (and death) beneath rows of regimental flags and above poppy-wreaths from Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador and others.

"We will remember them; but not how or why they died. Or who." The common soldiery is by and large forgotten. Only officers of note or wealth retain such individuality as a brass plaque may provide.

Joe Lee began to give me some of what I wanted, encapsulated in my "biggest worry" of the first day. "That, despite the nice people here, I might leave thinking I had gained more personally by exploring Dublin/Ireland alone, talking to people in bars and cafes and stations and streets, and learning from them and from the feel of the country." For this was my first visit to Ireland.

He provided breadth and detail and vision and style. Or, perhaps, he provided an analysis apparently coincidental in many ways with the spirit of my own ideology. Apparently, for it is more difficult to spot the structure when almost all events enwrapped within it are foreign and unknown.

For my ignorance of Ireland, history, politics, all, is massive. And while I was there, I felt it, painfully. Just to see a newspaper and not to know the hidden messages that you must read before you read. Not to know people, issues, places. . . I wanted to know then. But do I now?

Back to Joe Lee. His themes. "Fed on fantasy, illusions"; "Living a lie"; "No identity to sacrifice for, no collectivity to respond to." And his solution: "national unity might mobilise whatever idealism there is."

This, to me, was one of the themes of the conference. People were for ever talking about the importance of national identity. With little dispute. I was told (on objecting) that you don't need nationalism or community if you're a member of a powerful nation or group. As a non-Scot, non-Irish, non-black I didn't need an identity. Perhaps Margaret Thatcher can supply it for me!

But who constructs these identities? Those who claim to speak for nation or community or (sometimes) class too, frequently proclaim their own constructions. Those who differ are traitors.

I ought to say something about the overt (such as it was) agenda of the conference. But others will say it better. In retrospect, it worked very well. There were so many stimulating ideas that I could not do them justice. Many were half-formed or worse but these frequently seemed more promising than offerings from those with well-stocked gladstone bags of patent remedies.

And retrospect made me appreciate too well why the organisers could not appear to arrogate to themselves the role of convening a FORUM with a quasi-substantive output of well-formed formulae and bold rhetorical declarations.

To protect the guilty, I cannot recall the most lasting memories. Friends new-found - if perhaps only briefly. Old friendships renewed; some at length. Friendship lubricated by alcohol, fortified by food, aired by sea breezes and exhilarated by travel, and spaced by the quite remarkable flexibility of the La Touche catering staff. And above all, fostered by conference (dis-)organisation which fostered warmth and conversation more than self-aggrandisement and recitation.

All in all, a weekend oasis in the desert warfare of institutional factionalism, away from the tyrannical commands of Generals Deadline, Can't and Won't.

My ideas - still opaque, lacking the immediate spur of direct 'professional' application. But a revived interest. E.g. re-read "The Great Hunger", but sadly found it most fascinating as a massive example of human sacrifice to what some of 'us' in Britain now call Privatisation and the Free Market. British (English?) insularity still rules, and will doubtless grow stronger as the memories fade. There is little to reinforce consciousness of Ireland in my daily life except the stories of the mass media.

Dave Dunn