

APPENDIX XII

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(1) The Committee believes that the foundation of proper forestry lies in correct forest education and that care should be taken not only to maintain, but to raise, the standard of that education. It draws attention to the fact that the profession itself must be judged in large measure by the level at which this standard is set. The Committee emphasizes that forestry is an art requiring observation and judgment, relying upon the sciences to no small degree, but not exclusively upon them.

(2) The Committee therefore recommends that the field of recruiting shall be made as wide as possible and that Governments, where this field has proved to be unduly narrow, shall expand arrangements for the selection of students by intrinsic merit in advance of their qualification in technical forestry. It further recommends that the essential post-selection technical training shall be on a probationer or scholarship basis in the case of men who are so qualified at the time of selection as to be eligible in all respects for professional employment other than in forestry, where this is necessary to attract men of the required calibre. It would add, however, that in such cases a period of cadet service in the field is an invaluable guide to first selection and an essential preliminary to the final stage of technical training.

(3) The Committee considers that provision should be made for the promotion of outstanding men from the sub-professional to the professional or officer grade, but stresses that this should only be possible by passage through the professional qualifying course, necessarily on a scholarship basis.

(4) The Committee considers that the activities of the forest exploiting agencies, whether they be private companies or State concern separate from the Forest Services, must be as much regarded as a part of the planned management of forests as are the activities of the Forest Services themselves. If these agencies are to carry out their work to the prescriptions of planned management it is essential that they shall employ and be able to obtain executive or sub-professional staff with a technical forestry training. It therefore recommends that Governments shall expand, if necessary, the existing facilities for the training of men for sub-professional posts in the State Forest Services or with private owners of forests, to accommodate the additional men required by the exploiting agencies on terms which must be decided by local circumstances.

(5) The Committee stresses the principle that no professional officers' school should be created or maintained unless it can be thoroughly well equipped and has the full-time services of an adequate instructing staff with field experience. The ever-widening scope of forestry training necessitates consideration as to whether the present staff of the Forestry Schools and the duration of the courses given by them are adequate.

(6) It strongly recommends that research by the teaching staff and post-graduate students should be encouraged and provided for. It does not consider, however, that post-graduate students should be allowed to instruct, except in specialist subjects, until they have had practical experience in the field as successful working forest officers.

(7) The Committee emphasizes that while sub-professional schools, with a definitely regional character, must teach technique for direct application, the professional schools must concentrate upon the basic principles of forestry as a foundation on which the forest officer may build by practical experience.

(8) The Committee considers that more stress could profitably be laid in professional schools upon the principles of land acquisition and management and upon matters of tenure, tenancy, and especially the social consequences of forest conservation or afforestation. A forest officer's work is the administration of a large and complex estate, and in some countries informed attention to these matters is as important as the practice of silviculture.