The New Nation

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During the British period, despite some major reforms for the improvement of education, the curriculum of the time reflected a definite bias towards a liberal arts programme. Areas of learning such as science, technology and commerce were regarded to have less value than literature and language, history, philosophy and so on.

At the time of independence, Pakistan found herself with no organized system of technical and vocational education. There were some artisan and trade schools and a number of private schools teaching elementary business skills, But these avenues of training were capable of providing only a small fraction of the trained persons required by growing. business and industry. The schools encouraged excessive attention to literacy skills and training for governmental occupations. The education was

highly academic and less job oriented.

A DIFFERENT VIEW

.Viewing this, the Commission on National Education 1959 severely criticized the prevailing secendary edcation curriculum of Pakistan for providing only bookish education with heavy emphasis on liberal arts programme and irrelevant education terminal students. The Commission pointed out that high school graduates were not being prepared for a vocational career because of unsuitable curricula and it gave realistic suggestions for the improvement and reorganization of the commerce curriculum and recommended establishment of the commercial institutes in Pakistan.

Accordingly, during the Third Five-Year Plan of Pakistan (1965-70), sixteen commercial institutes were established

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from 1965 to 1967 in East Pakistan in the sixteen district headquarters under the supervision of the Directorate of Technical Education for producing skilled office assistants.

The commercial institutes offering two-year Diploma-in-Commerce course at the 10—2 stage were attached to the polytechnic institutes with a view to minimizing costs and maximizing the use of the facilities available there, with the understanding that the commercial institutes would be made separate later on, barring the Dhaka Commercial Institute

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for the smooth running of the commercial institutes. Notenough rooms were provided to carry on practical and theoretical classes of the commercial institutes and very small number of teachers and students were provided with residential and hostel accommodation in the campus in comparison with those of the polytechnics. The financial matters including the development budgets were dealt with by the polytechnic principals, where the instructors-incharge of the commercial institutes had very little to say. After independence, Bangladesh

inherited all these sixteen commercial institutes established from 1965 to 1967 in East Pakistan.

BANGLADESH CONTEXT Immediately after independence, the leaders of Bangladesh realized that the system which could serve best the needs of the then colonial rulers was absolutely incapable of taking care of the requirements of the needed manpower of the 'newly independent and developing. nation. It continued to produces mass of educated but unproduc." tive people who found themselves not only jobless but also alienated from the society. Thus, the nation was spending millions of taka and was producing innumerable unemployable peopie. In this grave situation, the government set up an Education Commission in July, 1972 to examine critically the existing system of education and suggest ways and means for a better

education system with a view to building up the nation through it. The Commission submitted its report in May, 1974 with well-thought out recommendations of different aspects of education including the separation of the attached commercial institutes from the polytechnic institutes. But instead of separation, the attached commercial institutes were converted into one of the departments of the polytecanic institutes in September, 1974; while in 1981 five of the fifteen attached commercial institutes were separated and made independent. Later da in January, 1984 all the commercial institutes, both attached and independent, were transferred from the administrative control of the Directorate of Technical Education to the atministrative control of the Sa condary and Higher Education Directorate.